



COLORADO MESA
UNIVERSITY

General Guidelines for Spanish Practicum

SPANISH AND HISPANIC STUDIES PROGRAM
Department of Languages, Literature and Mass Communication
Colorado Mesa University

Practicum

Definition 1: A school or college course, especially one in a specialized field of study, that is designed to give students supervised practical application of previously studied theory.

Definition 2: a course involving activities emphasizing the practical application of theory, especially one in which a student gains on-the-job experience in a field of study.

Definition 3: North America work experience as part of study: a period of work for practical experience as part of an academic course

Note: Origin of PRACTICUM

German Praktikum, from Late Latin practicum, neuter of practicus practical

First Known Use: 1904

Spanish Practicum: General Guidelines

The Spanish Senior Practicum (FLAS 498) is designed to give Spanish majors practical experience in their field(s) of study. To meet individual student's needs and desired outcomes or goals, the course will have some flexible requirements and assignments tailored to individual students. However, in order to provide a consistent means of evaluating the experience, students must meet certain standards. This document discusses some of the general guidelines that the Spanish faculty has identified as important for helping each student find success in this endeavor. It should be noted, however, that your professor of record may place more concrete requirements (e.g. number of academic sources used during the research project or frequency of contact with professor) according to the specifics of your project.

General Guidelines

Preparation

1. Generally, prior to beginning the practicum, students will have completed all core courses in Spanish¹
2. Prior to registering for FLAS 498 you will meet with your advisor and professor of record (if different), who will help determine if you have reached an adequate level of oral and written proficiency in Spanish to be able to proceed with the practicum. Your professor of record may consult with the Spanish faculty in a program meeting to determine preparation of each candidate. This may include an additional evaluation of your linguistic and research skills.

Content

Hours

The Spanish practicum is a 3-credit course, and as such, the student is expected to invest a total of 135 hours (3 credits=3 hours of in class per week+2 hours of study per hour in class x 15 weeks=135 hours) during the course of the semester. These hours may include the time spent doing research, writing up the report, meeting with your professors, and preparing the oral defense, among other activities as determined by the professor of record. A log for time spent on various aspects of the practicum is also required.

Written Report

Each practicum must consist of an academic research project, written in Spanish. The document must be an academic manuscript, which will include a research element together with a works cited page. The typed document must be at least 3000 words (approximately 10 pages) in length but may be more as determined by the professor of record. It will consist of at least one draft and a final version. The use of Artificial Intelligence, Large Language Models, Google Translate or other translation software should not be used for the completion of this component. The professor of record reserves the right to grant a 0 if they believe the writing was not completed by the student. In the past, students have failed this course for this reason and have needed to repeat the course in order to graduate with a Spanish major.

Oral Defense

At the conclusion of the practicum, you will have an oral defense, also carried out in Spanish. This will be presented to at least two members of the Spanish faculty, one being the professor of record. The function of the other member(s) is to help measure the adequacy of the language and presentational skills of the student. The evaluation will be based on grammatical accuracy, lexical correctness, presentational skills, content, pronunciation, etc. The score on your oral defense will be an average of the professors' evaluations.

¹ The core classes include FLAS 300 Spanish Composition and Grammar, FLAS 304 Advanced Oral Production and Composition, FLAS 305 Advanced Spanish Grammar and Spanish English Contrasts, FLAS 311 History and Culture of Spain, FLAS 312 History and Culture of Latin America, FLAS 323/324 Introduction to Hispanic Literature I /II, FLAS 341 Introduction to Hispanic Linguistics, FLAS 441 Applied Phonetics and Phonology

Criteria for Successful Completion

Your grade will be determined on how successfully you complete your project. The oral defense will constitute a minimum of 10% of your grade. You must receive a 70% or higher on the oral defense and written paper to successfully complete the Practicum. Students must receive a B or higher on the Practicum to be eligible for graduation.

The weight of each portion of the practicum will be determined by the professor of record.

- Sample: 60% (paper), 20% (journal), 10% (log), 10% oral defense

The grade breakdown for this course is:

- A = 90 or above, B= 80-89, D=60-79, F=59 or below

Guidelines for each Track

Each of the three tracks in the Spanish degree may include distinct elements and procedures. Below you will find some possible project ideas; however, this should in no way dictate what the project must include.

Translation and Interpreting

Those majoring in the Translation and Interpreting track may consider doing one (or a combination) of the following activities.

Observation: Many students in this track have fulfilled part of their Spanish practicum by carrying out observations in various settings. This portion generally includes keeping a log of elements that the students have learned during these observations (e.g., grammatical constructions, phrases, and lexical items). Examples of observations have included the shadowing of translators in the Mesa County Court and at PrimeHealth (formerly the Marillac Clinic).

Translation: You may choose, in consultation with the professor of record, to translate documents for various entities. Former students have translated documents for schools in District 51, the Mesa County Detention Facility, and other community or private organizations.

Interpreting: Depending on the level of expertise, some students have interpreted in various settings (health care sector, court, business incubator).

Students who have completed an internship may choose to base their research project on internship activities, for example, analyzing best practices in translation/interpreting in the field of their internship, creating a translation guide for a specialized field, etc. While internships can inform the focus, work completed for an internship cannot be used to complete requirements for the capstone.

Spanish and Hispanic Studies

Those working in the Spanish and Hispanic Studies track may consider doing one or more of the following activities.

Literary Analysis: Many students in this track have analyzed the literature of important authors, literary movements, and genres. The focus is to be chosen in consultation with your lead professor.

Cultural Analysis: Students have analyzed social, historical, or cultural issues related to the Hispanic community in the US or other Spanish-speaking countries. For example, the role of culture in bilingual education in the United States of America or the impact of cultural competence in the field of radiologic sciences.

Linguistic Research: In consultation with your lead professor, you may devise a research project that analyzes some linguistic aspect of the Spanish-speaking world (phonetics/phonology, syntax, language contact, etc.). Similarly, you may consider carrying out a comparative analysis of variation within dialects of Spanish (e.g., sayings (dichos/refranes) from various Spanish-speaking countries).

Creative Writing: With permission from your lead professor, you may embark on writing short stories/poetry/comics in Spanish.

Spanish Secondary Teaching

In addition to student teaching (EDUC 499G), students interested in Spanish Secondary Teaching track must also carry out a Spanish practicum. Those in this track may consider doing one or more of the following activities.

Portfolio development: Beyond the requirements of the Education department, students could add to the teaching products in their portfolio. These products may include activities to develop cultural awareness, grammatical accuracy, lexical development, written accuracy, listening comprehension, and oral proficiency.

Teaching Methodology: You may also consider carrying out research on a specific teaching methodology (TPRS, Communicative Approach, etc.) or scholars/practitioners or organizations that promote them (ACTFL, Tracy Terrell, Steven Krashen, Bill Van Patten, etc.).

Observations: Students in this track may also wish to do additional hours of observation. This would include a log composed of critical comments of the teacher and his/her teaching style/methodologies. These observations may include visits to foreign language courses at Colorado Mesa University, or observations at the Dual Immersion Academy.

Two or More Tracks

In the case that you will be receiving a degree in more than one track, you may choose to fulfill the Spanish practicum requirements in one of two ways:

- 1) Complete a Spanish practicum for each track (6 or 9 credits)

2) Complete a Spanish practicum and an internship (FLAS 499)

3) Complete one Spanish practicum (3 credits) that combines aspects of the two (or three) concentrations within the project. For example, students doing Translation and Interpreting and Spanish Secondary Teaching may consider doing a teaching portfolio together with the translation of documents (perhaps for the school where you are assigned for student teaching). The project should show a balance between the two (or three) concentrations.

Deadlines

Before beginning of Semester of Practicum: Prior to the semester of your practicum, and after consulting with your desired professor as to his/her availability and your preparation, register for FLAS 498.

Within the first two weeks of Semester: Meet with your professor to decide what elements will be included in your project. Prior to your visit, send a typed, one-page proposal (in Spanish) on what you would like to do for the project. In the meeting, create a contract on what is expected of both the professor of record and the student.

Monthly: During the semester you will meet with your professor at least monthly to discuss progress with the project. More meetings may be needed as proscribed by professor of record or as requested by the student.

Four weeks prior to end of contract²: Turn in draft of paper.

Three weeks prior to end of contract: Receive feedback on the draft of paper.

Two weeks prior to end of contract: Turn in your paper and other materials to the professor of record.

One week prior to the end of contract: Meet with your professor of record to discuss any changes that are necessary in your project. Schedule a time for your oral defense.

Last week of the contract: Present your oral component.

Other

Special needs:

Students with a disability must notify the professor of record immediately, and have EAS contact the professor for any accommodations that must be considered. All reasonable efforts will be made to make necessary accommodations; however, it must be noted that community partners may not be able to offer the appropriate accommodations.

² The end of the contract date will be the week of finals, or the final week of the Summer/J-Term.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, are defined in the Student Handbook. No violations of this policy will be tolerated. In cases of any violation, the student will receive a grade of zero (0), and the case will be reported to the proper University authority. Your professor of record may set specific guidelines for use of artificial intelligence.

Incompletes:

In accordance with the Student Handbook, a student may be given an incomplete only in an emergency case and at the discretion of the lead professor.