Common Graduate Student Questions about MA Coursework

Demonstrating Language Proficiency
Students can demonstrate language proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese in a variety of ways:

1. Letter from a Literature professor with whom you took an upper division/graduate level Literature course, vouching for your language skills
2. Successfully complete foreign language exam in Spanish with Beatrice Pita (bpita@ucsd.edu) or Portuguese with Denise Paladini (paladini@ling.ucsd.edu). Students must contact them directly to schedule an exam
3. Be educated to at least the high school level in Portuguese/Spanish speaking country
4. Letter from Linguistics (if TAing for the dept)

Proof of language proficiency completion must be sent to the graduate coordinator to place in your academic file. All results or letters should be forwarded to the graduate coordinator.

Petitioning Courses
Petitioning courses to count towards your M.A. program requirements it quite common--most students will require 4 or 5 petitions.

Petitions must be approved by the director prior to taking the course. It is up to the director's discretion whether a course will be approved or disapproved. It is best to know this information before you complete a course.

Petitions for courses that have at least 50% Latin American content, but are not on our approved list of courses will only require that you forward the syllabus to the Graduate Coordinator, who will ensure the petition will be processed.

Petitions for courses that do not have at least 50% Latin American content, yet are still relevant to your research will require you to submit the syllabus and an letter of justification (email is ok) to the Graduate Coordinator. You may be required to approach the director personally to state your case if the justification is not clear from your letter. The director may make approval conditional upon completion of the course to review your coursework.

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Special Notes on Petitions

- When submitting the Graduate Student General Petition (next page) to OGS, be sure to have the student fill out the Reason for the petition- Kim Barrett will reject it otherwise! Also be sure it is signed by the student, that the director sign both lines as Graduate Advisor and "Dept Chair" (really, he's a program director), and that the student is enrolled for 12 units upon submission—OGS will not process it otherwise!

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Signing up for LATI 298
Graduate students are able to enroll in two LATI 298s for their MA Program. LATI 298 can be used as an upgrade Undergraduate course offered at UCSD (most common) or directed reading (uncommon).

When upgrading an undergraduate course, you will need to first speak to the instructor of the course you wish to take. The instructor must agree to work with you to create graduate level course work for the undergraduate course. Generally, students are required to attend class, complete assigned readings for undergraduates and any additional readings assigned to you, and complete a graduate level paper at the end of the quarter instead of the midterms/finals undergraduate students are required.

Students must select an undergraduate course on our preapproved list to upgrade. Any courses outside this list must be petitioned beforehand. See the section on petitions for more information.

Directed Study is used when an instructor creates an impromptu course that does not exist in the General Catalog and instructs a small group of graduate students. This is uncommon.
Students must demonstrate instructor approval by submitting the LATI 298 Request Form (next page) with the instructor's signature to the LAS Graduate Coordinator before the end of Week 1 of any given quarter. Please note that Associate-Ins are not eligible to teach LATI 298s.

Once the form is submitted, the Graduate Coordinator will email you the course number for you LATI 298. You will need to log onto WebReg and add the class to complete enrollment. Be sure to indicate the course will be 4 units.

Signing up for LATI 299
Graduate students should enroll in LATI 299 - Independent Research during their second year. Students are able to enroll in either one or multiple LATI 299s under different faculty (generally faculty who will be serving on your MA Thesis Committee) in a single quarter. Students assign their own units for each LATI 299, which will reflect the level of work you will be performing under the instructor. Students must maintain their fulltime status by enrolling in a minimum total of 12 units each quarter.

Once enrollment for the quarter begins, contact the Graduate Coordinator with the instructor you wish to enroll in a LATI 299. It is up to the student to contact the instructor of record prior to the creation of the LATI 299 to receive confirmation/permission to work with them. All LATI 299s are taken S/U.

How to create LATI 298/299:
Email Registrar-Scheduling <registrar-scheduling@ucsd.edu> requesting to create the course (LATI 298 or 299). Include the quarter, the instructor, and the instructor's PID.

MA Committee
Students are required to have a minimum of three committee members and they must be from at least two separate departments. Please review the Thesis Committee Membership Form (next, next page) to see who can serve on your committee.

Any faculty from an outside university (non-UC) may only serve as a fourth member on a thesis committee per petition to the Office of Graduate Studies. A letter of explanation indicating why the faculty member should be on the committee and the faculty's CV must be submitted when you Advance to Candidacy or submit a Reconstitution Form.

Uncommon Question: UCSD-SDSU Graduate Exchange Program
In 1985 the University of California, San Diego and San Diego State University formed a Latin American Studies Consortium and were funded as one of the twelve Title VI National Resource Centers for Latin America in the US.

In 1993, as part of the consortium a collaborative graduate student exchange program was implemented. The purpose of the exchange program is to expand the curriculum available to graduate students of Latin American Studies.

Approval Process- Graduate students must notify the Home Latin American Studies Program of their intentions to participate in the exchange program. Only students with graduate status and in good standing are eligible. They must complete the Graduate Student Exchange Form (next, next page) and obtain the required signatures before submitting it to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) for final approval.

The form must be submitted at least three weeks prior to the beginning of the term—either UCSD or SDSU, whichever occurs first; remember that the two universities are on different schedules! The student will pay fees at the Home Campus (UCSD) and is not eligible for any services or privileges on the Host Campus (SDSU).
Students must enroll for one course per term at the Host institution (UCSD) and must maintain their full time status through a combination of the courses taken at UCSD and SDSU. Courses will count approximately one for one toward the Master’s requirements although the credits computed will be different. Courses taken at SDSU are subject to petition if it is to be used for the program.