

Comprehensive exams in Latin American Studies
Guidelines (2015-2016)

1. The exams are required in three fields, with 1 to 3 written essays (take-home essays) in each field and an oral defense. Fields in which our students generally take exams include Latin American Studies as well as anthropology, art, Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies, education, history, literature/Spanish, music, political sciences, sociology and women, genders, and sexuality studies.
2. LAS graduate students planning on taking the comprehensive exams should form a committee of three CalStateLA faculty members. Students should work closely with these faculty members during their classwork and, when available, take a 500 level seminar in their chosen areas of study.
3. Students may take the comprehensive exams during the last quarter in which they are enrolled in classes or after they complete all coursework in their program. It is recommended that students take the comprehensive exams as soon after finishing their coursework as possible. Exams are offered every quarter with the exception of summer.
4. Students need to submit the COMPS form to the Director with the appropriate signatures no later than the 1st week of the quarter in which they will take their exams. The Director will issue a permit to register for LAS 596 once s/he receives the form with all signatures. Students will then register for LAS 596 no later than the campus add deadline.
5. Each faculty member in the committee will design a set of questions (usually 1-3) and help students develop a comprehensive reading list (usually between 8-10 books). Students should have their questions and reading list for each field no later than the 2nd week of the quarter in which they are planning to take the exams.
6. Students are encouraged to work closely with each faculty member during the quarter in which they take their exams (if not before) and must solicit and respond to faculty feedback. Students cannot contact their examiners after Monday of week 8 of the quarter in which they are taking the exam.
7. For each field, the exam will usually consist of 15-20 typed, double-spaced pages (although the length and format may change according to the discipline) and should include a clear system of citation and a bibliography. Students are encouraged to edit their papers carefully, and final copies should be as polished as possible.

8. Students have until 5:00 P.M on the Thursday of week 9 of the quarter to submit answers via email (everba@calstatela.edu; Maria.Santos9@calstatela.edu) or hard copy (typed) to the Latin American Studies office (KH 3095).
9. If students are unable to finish the exams on time, they need to drop LAS 596 before the campus drop deadline and immediately inform the Director.
10. The written exam is followed by an oral examination, usually in the 10th week of the quarter or during final examinations week. The Program Director will schedule the date and time of the oral exam. During the oral exam, each faculty member on the student's committee will ask questions based on the student's written responses (follow-up questions). Students are encouraged to find ways to bridge the three subject areas on which they are tested by identifying parallels or intersections among the three areas.
11. If a student fails any one of the three field exams, s/he will retake only the field(s) failed.* Students may take the comprehensive exams up to two more times if they do not pass on their first attempt.

* At the discretion of the Director and the student's committee, a student may be offered the opportunity to revise an essay that is slightly below a passing grade during the same quarter.

**Latin American Studies Program
California State University, Los Angeles
Comprehensive Exams**

Student Name _____
Student ID number _____
Address _____
Phone number _____
Email _____

Field	Professor (signature)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Program Director Signature _____
Date _____

* Students need to submit this form to the Director of the Latin American Studies Program (KH 3006) no later than the 1st week of the quarter in which they will take the exams.