

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Overview and Contact Information

The Department of Spanish, Latina/o, and Latin American Studies engages in the multidisciplinary study of the past, current state, and emerging realities of societies and cultures of Latin America, Spain, the Caribbean, and the Latino/a heritage populations within the United States and their relations with each other and with the wider world. To that end, our courses adopt a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, including literary studies, film and media studies, social history, and politics.

The Department of Spanish, Latina/o, and Latin American Studies also collaborates closely with a number of other departments and programs on campus, frequently cross-listing courses with film studies, gender studies, history, and Romance languages and cultures. Regular co-curricular activities organized by the department (film series, lectures, etc.) also engage the larger college community in the interests of our students and faculty. In addition to providing opportunities for learning on campus, the department also strongly recommends that students study off campus in a Spanish-speaking context in order to enhance their language skills and to forge their own connections to place through language.

The Latin American Studies major is available only to students who entered the College before fall 2022. Students entering fall 2022 or later should consider a minor in Latin American Studies (p. 2); the Five College Certificate in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/latin-american-caribbean-latino-studies/>); or proposing a special major (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/bachelor-arts-degree-requirements/#themajortext>) with this focus.

The interdisciplinary minor in Latin American studies emphasizes critical approaches to the culture, history, society, and political economy of the region. As societies long defined by and in opposition to external powers, Latin America and the Caribbean have in modern times developed distinctive national and cultural identities celebrated on a world stage in art, music, and literature. The minor studies the region in its enormous geographic diversity—from plantation to highland Americas, from Mexico to Argentina; and linguistic variety—four European, several Creole, and numerous indigenous languages. Students pursue course work in several thematic and geographic areas.

See Also

- Critical Race and Political Economy (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/critical-race-political-economy/>)
- Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/latin-american-caribbean-latino-studies/>)

Contact Information

Justin Crumbaugh, Chair

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<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academics/find-your-program/latin-american-studies> (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academics/find-your-program/latin-american-studies/>)

Learning Goals

The three areas of the Spanish, Latina/o/x and Latin American Studies department share the following common learning goals:

- Recognize, examine, and interrogate the past, current state, and emerging realities and histories of the societies and cultures of Latin America, Spain, the Caribbean, and the US Latina/o/x population.
- Describe and interpret the character of their relations with each other and with the wider world.
- Distinguish among and employ multi/interdisciplinary, transnational, and cross-border perspectives.
- Analyze critically and articulate with logical arguments the diverse configurations and varying experiences of (classic, post, and neo) colonialism and diaspora in and among the regions, nations, and populations of our concern.
- Develop the ability to write, read, speak, and conduct research in the primary languages of our area(s) of coverage, particularly English and Spanish.
- Creatively contribute to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge through different modalities individually and collectively.
- Engage with and maintain a sustained contact with the local Latina/o/x communities.

Faculty

This area of study is administered by the Department of Spanish, Latina/o, and Latin American Studies:

Justin Crumbaugh, Professor of Spanish, Latina/o and Latin American Studies

Nieves Romero-Díaz, Professor of Spanish on the Alumnae Foundation, Teaching Fall Only

Adriana Pitetta, Assistant Professor of Spanish

Esther Castro, Senior Lecturer in Spanish; Spanish Language Program Director

Megan Saltzman, Senior Lecturer in Spanish

Flávia Cunha, Language Instructor in Spanish

Elena García Frazier, Language Instructor in Spanish

Antonio Illescas, Language Instructor in Spanish

Dimaris Barrios-Beltrán, Visiting Assistant Professor in Spanish

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 40 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
A command of Spanish or Portuguese		
A minimum of 40 credits in Latin American Studies including:		
LATAM-180	Introduction to Latin American Cultures	4
Two elective courses, at any level, in Latin American studies		8
At least one course, at any level, dealing with subjects outside traditional Latin America—that is, the non-Hispanic areas of the Caribbean or South America; indigenous peoples of the region; the migration of Hispanic or Caribbean communities abroad		4

At least two courses, at any level, outside the student's primary area of interest	8
At least one advanced (300-level) course on Spanish American or Brazilian literature taught in the language	4
At least three additional 300-level courses in Latin American studies	12
Total Credits	40

Other Requirements

- Students pick an area of interest within Latin American studies and plan their coursework in close consultation with their major advisor.

Additional Specifications

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- An elementary knowledge of the other language (Spanish or Portuguese) and study abroad are strongly recommended for all majors.
- It is also strongly recommended that majors complete an appropriate course in American, African American, or Latin American studies that assesses the role of the United States in Latin America, studies United States Latino communities, or compares related experiences across United States/Latin American boundaries.
- Programs for study abroad can be arranged throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Students who declare a Latin American studies major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement.

Requirements for the Minor

A minimum of 20 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
LATAM-180	Introduction to Latin American Cultures	4
One 200-level or 300-level Latin American studies course		4
At least one course at the 300 level		4
2 additional approved courses		8
Total Credits		20

Additional Specifications

- Courses in the student's major field may not be used to fulfill the requirements of the minimum minor. For example, a student majoring in Spanish may not use any Spanish course to count towards the both the Spanish major and the Latin American Studies minor.

Course Offerings

LATAM-180 Introduction to Latin American Cultures

Fall and Spring. Credits: 4

Examines the confrontation, assimilation, and transformation of Amerindian, African, and European cultures in Latin America from the sixteenth century to the present. Focuses on the processes in which distinctive self-images emerged in the region and how these images have been challenged and changed over time. Uses films, literature, and folk traditions to complement scholarly analysis of the emergence of a New World mentality.

Crosslisted as: HIST-180

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives

D. Barrios-Beltrán

LATAM-287 Topics in Latin American Studies

This course studies significant problems relating to Latin America in greater depth from the perspectives of appropriate disciplines. Some topics may be cross-listed with other departments.

LATAM-287DE Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Decolonizing Development'

Spring. Credits: 4

When and how did the notion of "development" emerge and spread? Why does nearly every country now aspire to it? What stigmas, hierarchies, and colonial logics does the term – along with "underdeveloped," "developing," and "behind" – mobilize? In the context of Latin America, the conceptual framework of development encounters significant complications not only with respect to material reality but also as a way of understanding place, time, and selfhood. In this course, students question conventional wisdom about development through the study of creative works by Latin American essayists, fiction authors, filmmakers, and painters.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives

Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive, Writing-Intensive

J. Crumbaugh

LATAM-287FM Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Frames of Mind: Tracking Power/Knowledge'

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

A frame of mind typically refers to a disposition or perspective, but the term also suggests a shaping of perception and thought. Something has already "framed" our minds, delimiting the scope of the conceivable. But what? This course radically interrogates the frameworks that structure and constrain our minds. Students trace the history of commonplace understandings-in academia and the "real" world-of mental health, diversity, gender and sexuality, and economic development in order to upend and defamiliarize operative assumptions. Works by Wendy Brown, Michel Foucault, Coco Fusco, Byung-Chul Han, bell hooks, Paul Preciado, Boots Riley and others.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities

Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive, Writing-Intensive

J. Crumbaugh

Advisory: The course is geared toward both first-year students with minimal experience with Philosophy and other students who have an interest in critical theory.

LATAM-295 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4

The department

Instructor permission required.

LATAM-387 Special Topics in Latin American Studies

This course studies significant problems relating to Latin America in greater depth from the perspectives of appropriate disciplines. Some topics may be cross-listed with other departments.

LATAM-395 Independent Study

Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8

The department

Instructor permission required.

Courses in Other Departments Counting toward the Minor in Latin American Studies

Code	Title	Credits
Anthropology		
ANTHR-216LA	Special Topics in Anthropology: 'Anthropology of Latin America'	4
ANTHR-216LT	Special Topics in Anthropology: 'Race and Religion in Latin America'	4
ANTHR-261	Cultures of Power in Mexico	4
ANTHR-316LA	Special Topics in Anthropology: 'Race and Religion in Latin America'	4
Critical Race & Political Econ		
CRPE-239	Latinx Urbanism	4
CRPE-240BR	Intermediate Topics: 'Borderlands Film and Literature'	4
CRPE-240EF	Intermediate Topics: 'Ethnographic Food Documentary'	4
CRPE-240FD	Intermediate Topics: 'U.S. Latinx Foodways'	4
CRPE-240LC	Intermediate Topics: 'La Cultura Cura: Healing Through Language and Culture'	4
CRPE-244	The Historical-Grammar of Black Feminist Thought Across the Caribbean and the Americas	4
CRPE-254	Nueva York	4
CRPE-261	Race, Racism, and Power	4
CRPE-352	Latina/o/x Studies in Action	4
CRPE-356	Latinas/os/x and Housing: Mi Casa Is Not Su Casa	4
CRPE-366	Disposable People: A History of Deportation	4
CRPE-374	Latinx Immigration	4
English		
ENGL-217LX	Topics in English: 'Latinx Literature in the U.S. and Beyond'	4
ENGL-361LP	Advanced Creative Writing Topics: 'Writing as Performance: Latinx and Latin American Poetry and Narrative'	4
Environmental Studies		
ENVST-339	Indigenous and Decolonial Ecologies	4
Film, Media, Theater		
FMT-230CN	Intermediate Courses in History and Theory: 'Latin American Cinema'	4
FMT-230LA	Intermediate Courses in History and Theory: 'Latin American Film History'	4
FMT-230LX	Intermediate Courses in History and Theory: 'Latinx Media'	4

FMT-330LP	Advanced Courses in History and Theory: 'Writing as Performance: Latinx and Latin American Poetry and Narrative'	4
French		
FREN-321AV	Genre Courses: 'About Vanguards and Revolutionary Ideas'	4
Gender Studies		
GNDST-206BF	Women and Gender in History: 'The Historical-Grammar of Black Feminist Thought Across the Caribbean and the Americas'	4
GNDST-333FM	Advanced Seminar: 'Latina Feminism(s)'	4
GNDST-333MC	Advanced Seminar: 'Latinas/os/x and Housing: Mi Casa Is Not Su Casa'	4
GNDST-333QH	Advanced Seminar: 'Queering the Horror: Collective Memory, Political Violence, and Dissident Sexualities in Latin American Narratives'	4
GNDST-333WE	Advanced Seminar: 'Weird Feelings: Unsettling Latin American Short Fiction'	4
History		
HIST-180	Introduction to Latin American Cultures	4
Latin American Studies		
LATAM-180	Introduction to Latin American Cultures	4
LATAM-287DE	Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Decolonizing Development'	4
LATAM-287FM	Topics in Latin American Studies: 'Frames of Mind: Tracking Power/Knowledge'	4
Politics		
POLIT-243	Introduction to Latin American Politics	4
POLIT-255PA	Gender and Power in Global Contexts: 'The Politics of Abortion in the Americas'	4
POLIT-267	The Politics of Finance and Financial Crises	4
Religion		
RELIG-181	Introduction to African Diaspora Religions	4
RELIG-331LA	Advanced Topics in Religion: 'Race and Religion in Latin America'	4
Romance Lang. & Literature		
ROMLG-375AV	Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'About Vanguards and Revolutionary Ideas'	4
Spanish		
SPAN-240CN	Visual Cultures, An Introduction: 'Latin American Cinema'	4
SPAN-250LM	'concepts and Practices of Power: An Introduction: 'Making Latin America: From Independence to the Present'	4
SPAN-250RE	Concepts and Practices of Power: 'Exploring Puerto Rican Resilience: Challenges, Migratory Waves, and Resistance'	4
SPAN-260BL	Studies in Language and Society: An Introduction: 'Being Bilingual'	4
SPAN-260CN	Studies in Language and Society: An Introduction: 'Spanish Across the Continents'	4
SPAN-330WE	Advanced Studies in Identities and Intersections: 'Weird Feelings: Unsettling Latin American Short Fiction'	4
SPAN-350MG	Advanced Studies in Concepts and Practices of Power: 'Spanish Migrations'	4

SPAN-350QH	Advanced Studies in Concepts and Practices of Power: 'Queering the Horror: Collective Memory, Political Violence, and Dissident Sexualities in Latin American Narratives'	4
SPAN-360AV	Advanced Studies in Language and Society: 'About Vanguards and Revolutionary Ideas'	4
SPAN-360LG	Advanced Studies in Language and Society: 'The Politics of Language'	4
SPAN-360SJ	Advanced Studies in Language and Society: '(Trans)Languaging Social Justice'	4