

# ROMANCE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

## Overview and Contact Information

The major program in Romance languages and cultures is designed to assure fluency in at least two Romance languages, as well as knowledge of the literatures and cultures they represent. The student is encouraged to view language/ literature/culture in its interrelatedness and combine linguistic proficiency with cultural and literary expertise. She will develop skills of communication and the critical tools to explore matters of aesthetics, cultural studies, history of ideas, and gender studies. A major in Romance languages and cultures can lead to a variety of national and international careers from government to fashion, from the culinary arts to banking, and from film to teaching.

## See Also

- French (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/french>)
- Italian (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/italian>)
- Spanish (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/spanish-hispanophone-studies>)

## Contact Information

**Nieves Romero-Díaz, Chair**

105 Ciruti Center  
413-538-2347  
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/romance>

## Faculty

**This area of study is administered by the Romance Languages and Cultures Committee:**

Ombretta Frau, Professor of Italian, Teaching Spring Only

Elissa Gelfand, Dorothy Rooke McCulloch Professor of French, Teaching Fall Only

Nieves Romero-Díaz, Professor of Spanish

Esther Castro, Senior Lecturer in Spanish; Spanish Language Program Director, Teaching Spring Only

Carolyn Shread, Lecturer in French

Martino Lovato, Visiting Lecturer in Classics and Italian

## Requirements for the Major

The Romance languages major includes work in two of the following Romance languages: French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. The student will select two languages, one for primary and one for secondary emphasis. The student is also encouraged to attain intermediate-level competence in a third Romance language or Latin. Students interested in Portuguese should consult the chair of the committee for appropriate Five College courses.

A minimum of 40 credits:

12 credits in Romance languages and cultures at the 200 or 300 level 12 but always above FREN-203, SPAN-201, and ITAL-201

**Additional 300-level Courses, divided as follows:**

16 credits at the 300 level dedicated to the language and literature of primary emphasis 16

12 credits at the 300 level dedicated to the language and literature of secondary emphasis 12

Total Credits 40

## Additional Specifications

- FREN-203 and below and SPAN-201/ITAL-201 and below do not count toward the 40-credit minimum.
- Advanced courses in the major should be chosen to provide both a varied background and a means of focusing and unifying the major.
- Qualified students are required to elect the Seminar in the Romance Languages (ROMLG-375).
- Normally the student is well advised first to broaden her acquaintance with the two principal cultures in which she is working, then to select a more specific aspect—a topic, theme, period, literary form, or genre, for example—around which to organize her choice of courses. Students desiring to develop an advanced knowledge of languages as their specific focus can consider advanced language courses in French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish that are available through the Five College Consortium.
- No more than 4 credits of independent study (not including thesis credits) may be counted toward the 28 required credits at the 300 level. Independent study credits taken as part of an honors thesis do not count toward the requirements for the major.
- Students should enhance their major by spending an academic year in a country where one of the languages of their major is spoken. Students who plan to take part in a study abroad program must consult both the chair of the Romance languages and culture committee and the chair of the target language. Normally, credits earned while studying abroad satisfy some of the requirements of the major.
- Students are advised to complement their study of Romance languages and cultures with related courses in the fields of humanities and social sciences. These courses should broaden the cultural and linguistic expertise of the student.

## Requirements for the Minor

Students are expected to select a Romance language for primary emphasis and another one for secondary emphasis.

A minimum of 16 credits:

For the language of primary emphasis:	8
At least 4 credits at the 200 level <sup>1</sup>	
4 credits at the 300 level, with completion of specified prerequisites	
For the language of secondary emphasis:	8
8 credits at the 200 level <sup>1</sup>	
Total Credits	16

<sup>1</sup> To count the courses must be above FREN-203, SPAN-201, and ITAL-201.

## Additional Specifications

- FREN-203 and below and SPAN-201/ITAL-201 and below do not count toward the 16-credit minimum.

- More than the minimum 4 credits at the 300 level are encouraged in the primary or secondary language.
- A student majoring in a Romance language may not include that language in a Romance languages and cultures minor.

## Course Offerings

### **ROMLG-295 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 2 - 4*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

*Notes: Independent study credits taken as part of an honors thesis do not count toward the requirements for the major.*

### **ROMLG-375 Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures**

This interdisciplinary seminar will focus on a comparative study of Romance languages or literatures. Topics will vary from semester to semester. Seminar discussions will be conducted in English, but students wishing to obtain language credit are expected to read works in at least one original language. Papers will be written in either English or the Romance language of the student's choice.

### **ROMLG-375HE Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'Heroes & Infidels: Masculine Identity and The Birth of Europe in Medieval Romance Classics'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

In this course we will read the canonical works that have shaped the national identity of European Romance countries such as Spain, France, Italy, Portugal, and Romania: from the medieval *Chanson de Roland* and *Cantar del mio Cid* to the early modern *Don Quixote*, *Os Lusíadas*, *Orlando Furioso*, and *Mesterul Manole*. We will discuss the performed masculinity of heroes, enemies, and mediators at the threshold between worlds. We will employ a decolonial critical approach to the Medieval, to question past and present wars against the infidel and their roles in the shaping of a modern European identity.

*Crosslisted as: SPAN-360HE, ITAL-361HE, FREN-321HE, MEDST-300HE*

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

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

*M. Lovato*

*Advisory: For Language Majors: two courses in culture and literature at the 200 level. Also open to non-language majors with no prerequisite.*

*Notes: Note: Students wishing to obtain 300-level credit in French, Italian, or Spanish must read texts and write papers in the Romance language for which they wish to receive credit.*

### **ROMLG-395 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

*Notes: Independent Study credits taken as part of an honors thesis do not count toward the requirements for the major.*