

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. Students majoring in Romance Languages 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

Ombretta Frau, Chair (Fall 2021)

Justin Crumbaugh, Chair (Spring 2022)

Cara Lapenas, Academic Department Coordinator

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<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/romance> (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/romance/>)

Learning Goals

The main learning goals of the Romance Languages and Cultures program are to:

- Assure (oral and written) fluency in at least two Romance languages, as well as knowledge of the literatures and cultures they represent.
- View language/literature/culture in its interrelatedness.
- Develop skills of communication and the critical tools to explore matters of aesthetics, cultural studies, history of ideas, and gender studies, among other areas of study.

Faculty

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

Ombretta Frau, Dorothy Rooke McCulloch Professor of Italian, Teaching Fall Only

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

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

Carolyn Shread, Senior Lecturer in French, Teaching Spring Only

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:

Code	Title	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.
- Students who declare a Romance languages and cultures major automatically fulfill the College's "outside the major" requirement.

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:

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

¹ 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-375AV Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'About Vanguard and Revolutionary Ideas'

Spring. Credits: 4

This course addresses cultural relations between Latin America and Romance languages and cultures through the concept of vanguard: the Latin American poetic vanguardias of the early twentieth century and controversies with the Italian and Spanish vanguardias; the influence of the Négritude anti-colonial movement in Latin American decolonial thinking and the political avant-garde movements and guerrillas of the '60s and '70s; the intersections between French surrealism and Latin American magic realism; and the emergence of the Cinema Novo and New/Third Cinema (the vanguard of political cinema in Latin America) in the context of Italian neo-realism and the French nouvelle vague.

Crosslisted as: SPAN-360AV, ITAL-361AV, FREN-321AV

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives

A. Pitetta

Prereq: 8 credits at the 200 level in language or literature.

Notes: Taught in English. 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-375HS Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'History of Romance Languages'

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

This course examines the structural evolution of Romance languages from Vulgar Latin to contemporary forms. A chronological account will be organized around themes of persistence (inheritance from Latin) and innovation (structural change). We will begin by exploring different theories about linguistic change. Then, using concrete examples, we will analyze the main stages of development of Romance languages by focusing on different features at all linguistic levels and relating them to historical and sociological factors.

Crosslisted as: SPAN-360RL, ITAL-361HS, FREN-321RL

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities

E. Castro

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

Notes: Taught in English. 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-375LT Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'Romance Languages Translate'

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

This seminar explores Romance languages, literatures and cultures through the prism of translation. By comparing translations from Spanish, Catalan, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Romanian between each other and into English, we will map out the boundaries, intersections and middle grounds of this language family. Students will engage with the different traditions of translation studies in these languages and critically analyze translators' paratexts. Selecting an individual translation project in a Romance language of their choice, through a process of revision and collaboration, each student will produce both a polished translation and a commentary explaining challenges and choices.

Crosslisted as: SPAN-360TR, ITAL-361TR, FREN-321TR

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

C. Shread

Advisory: Two courses in culture and literature at the 200 level.

Notes: 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-375MT Seminar in Romance Languages and Cultures: 'The Mind of the Traveler: Journeys, Expeditions, Tours'

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

Travel literature has always been a precious source for the study of culture, politics, arts and, last but not least, people. From Tacitus to Marco Polo, from Stendhal to Camilo Jose Cela, we will read and discuss authors who traveled for political, personal, and recreational reasons. We will also pay special attention to tales of emigration and immigration in the third millennium.

Crosslisted as: SPAN-360MT, ITAL-361MT, FREN-321MT

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language

O. Frau

Advisory: for language majors; two courses in culture and literature at the 200-level

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.