Latin American Studies

Administered by the Latin American Studies Committee;
Enrique Yepes, Program Director
Emily C. Briley, Program Coordinator
(See committee list, page 354.)

Latin American Studies is an integrated interdisciplinary program that explores the cultural heritage of Mesoamerica, the Caribbean, and South America. Its multidisciplinary approach is designed to bring the scholarly methods and perspectives of several disciplines together in fostering increased understanding of Latin America’s history, political and economic realities, cultural diversity, and a range of aesthetic expression. Competence in Spanish (or another appropriate language such as French or Portuguese, with the approval of the administering committee) is required, and it is recommended that students participate in a study-away program in Latin America.

Requirements for the Major in Latin American Studies

The major in Latin American Studies consists of nine courses.

1. One of the following: Latin American Studies 207, Latin American Cultures (same as Spanish 207); Latin American Studies 209, Introduction to Hispanic Studies: Poetry and Theater (same as Spanish 209); Latin American Studies 210, Introduction Hispanic Studies: Essay and Narrative (same as Spanish 210).

2. Two of the following courses:
   a. Latin American Studies 252, Colonial Latin America (same as History 252), or Latin American Studies 255, Modern Latin America (same as History 255).
   b. A 200-level course in anthropology or sociology focused on Latin America.

3. A concentration of four additional courses centered on a particular geographic region (Andean region, Caribbean, Mesoamerica, Southern Cone, etc.) or theme (colonization, cultural hybridity, indigenous cultures, globalization, development issues, gender relations, etc.). The four-course concentration will be selected by each major in consultation with the faculty in Latin American Studies. The courses for the concentration should be primarily at the 200 or 300 level.

4. An elective course in Latin American Studies, outside of the student’s area of concentration.

5. In the senior year, each major will have the option of completing:
   a. a one- or two-semester independent study project or honors thesis, or
   b. a 300-level seminar approved for Latin American Studies credit.

A maximum of three courses from off-campus study programs may count toward the major with the approval of the director of Latin American Studies. Courses in which D or Credit (CR) grades are received will not count toward the major.

Requirements for the Minor in Latin American Studies

The minor consists of at least one Spanish course at Bowdoin beyond 204 (or another appropriate language): Latin American Studies 255, Modern Latin American History; and three additional courses, two of which must be outside the student’s major department.
Independent studies can meet requirements for the minor only with the approval of a written prospectus of the project by the director of Latin American Studies. Courses in which D or Credit (CR) grades are received will not count toward the minor.

Program Honors
Students contemplating honors candidacy must have established records of A and B in program course offerings and present clearly articulated proposals for scholarly research. Students must prepare and defend an honors thesis before a program faculty committee.

First-Year Seminars
For a full description of first-year seminars, see pages 147–57.

(Same as Africana Studies 14 and English 14.)

[25b.d. Tasting Hierarchies: Food in Latin America. (Same as Anthropology 25.)]

Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced Courses

A chronological survey of the arts created by major cultures of ancient Mexico and Peru. Mesoamerican cultures studied include the Olmec; Teotihuacan, the Maya, and the Aztec up through the arrival of the Europeans. South American cultures such as Chavin, Naca, and Inca are examined. Painting, sculpture, and architecture are considered in the context of religion and society. Readings in translation include Mayan myth and chronicles of the conquest. (Same as Art History 130.)

Surveys various musical traditions of the Caribbean, paying attention to the relation between sociohistorical context and artistic practice. Organized by geographic region, but addresses such larger issues as colonialism, nationalism, race, gender, and class. (Same as Africana Studies 138 and Music 138.)

The study of a variety of journalistic and literary texts and visual media, together with an advanced grammar review, designed to increase written and oral proficiency, as well as appreciation of the cultural history of the Spanish-speaking world. Foundational course for the major. Three class hours per week and one weekly conversation session with assistant. (Same as Spanish 205.)
Prerequisite: Spanish 204 or placement.

An introduction to the cultures of various French-speaking regions outside of France. Examines the history, politics, customs, cinema, literature, and the arts of the Francophone world, principally Africa and the Caribbean. Readings include newspaper and magazine articles, short stories, and a novel. Students see and discuss television news, documentaries, and feature films. Conducted in French. (Same as Africana Studies 207 and French 207.)
Prerequisite: French 205 or permission of the instructor.
209c - IP. Introduction to Hispanic Studies: Poetry and Theater. Every semester. **Romance Languages Department.**

A chronological introduction to the cultural production of the Spanish-speaking world from Pre-Columbian times to the present, with particular emphasis on the analysis of poetry and theater. Examines major literary works and movements in their historical and cultural context. (Same as Spanish 209.)

Prerequisite: Spanish 205 (same as Latin American Studies 205) or permission of the instructor.

210c - IP. Introduction to Hispanic Studies: Essay and Narrative. Every semester. **Romance Languages Department.**

A chronological introduction to the cultural production of the Spanish-speaking world from Pre-Columbian times to the present, with particular emphasis on the analysis of essay and narrative. Examines major literary works and movements in their historical and cultural context. (Same as Spanish 210.)

Prerequisite: Spanish 205 (same as Latin American Studies 205) or permission of the instructor.

[211b.d - ESD. IP. Global Sexualities. Local Desires. (Same as Anthropology 210, Gay and Lesbian Studies 210, and Gender and Women's Studies 210.)]

[225b - IP. Globalization and Social Change. (Same as Sociology 225.)]

[229b.d. Maya Archaeology and Ethnohistory. (Same as Anthropology 229.)]


Analyzes selected economic issues of Latin America in the twentieth century (and into the twenty-first century). Issues covered include the Import Substitution Industrialization strategy, the Debt Crisis of the 1980s, stabilization programs, trade liberalization and economic integration, inflation and hyperinflation in the region, and poverty and inequality. Important economic episodes of the past three decades such as the Mexican Crisis of 1994–1995, the Chilean Economic Miracle, dollarization in Ecuador, and the recent crisis in Argentina will also be examined. (Same as Economics 225.)

Prerequisite: Economics 101 and 102.


Focuses on family, gender, and sexuality as windows onto political, economic, social, and cultural issues in Latin America. Topics include indigenous and natural gender ideologies, marriage, race, and class; machismo and masculinity; state and domestic violence; religion and reproductive control; compulsory heterosexuality; AIDS; and cross-cultural conceptions of homosexuality. Takes a comparative perspective and draws on a wide array of sources including ethnography, film, fiction, and historical narrative. (Same as Anthropology 237 and Gender and Women's Studies 237.)

Prerequisite: Anthropology 101 or Sociology 101, or permission of the instructor.

[238b.d. Culture and Power in the Andes. (Same as Anthropology 238.)]


Introduces students to the history of Latin America from pre-Columbian times to about 1825. Traces developments fundamental to the establishment of colonial rule, drawing out regional comparisons of indigenous resistance and accommodation. Topics include the nature of indigenous societies encountered by Europeans; exploitation of African and Indian labor; evangelization and the role of the church; the evolution of race, gender, and class hierarchies in colonial society; and the origins of independence in Spanish America and Brazil. (Same as History 252.)

Seminar. Texts, novels, and films help unravel Argentine history and culture. Topics examined include the image of the gaucho and national identity; the impact of immigration; Peronism; the tango; the Dirty War; and the elusive struggle for democracy, development, and social justice. (Same as History 254.)


Examines the evolving relationship between the environment, politics, and culture in Central America and the Caribbean. Topics include the environmental impact of economic development; colonialism; the predominance of plantation monoculture, slavery, and other forms of coerced labor; and political instability. (Same as Environmental Studies 256 and History 256.)

[258c.d. Latin American Revolutions. (Same as History 258.)]

[266c.d. IP. History of Mexico. (Same as History 266.)]


Examines slave narratives and anti-slavery novels from the United States and Cuba (where almost all of the nineteenth-century writings in Spanish originated). Situates these works in their historical and literary contexts and explores the ways in which authors enter politically charged debates about slavery, gender, and sexuality. Authors include the orator, editor and statesmen, Frederick Douglass, the enslaved poet Juan Manzano, the feisty narrator Esteban Montejo, Martin Delany, known as the father of Black nationalism as well as the once enslaved authors and activists Harriet Jacobs and Louisa Picquet, and Jamaica’s famous woman warrior, Nanny. Spanish speakers will be encouraged to read primary texts and criticism in Spanish. Writing intensive. (Same as Africana Studies 268 and English 268.)

Prerequisite: One first-year seminar or 100-level course in English or Africana studies.

Note: This course fulfills the literature of the Americas requirement for English majors.

[323c.d. The War of the (Latin American) Worlds. (Same as Spanish 323.)]

[324c.d. Empirical Africa: Exoticism, Race, and Gender. (Same as Africana Studies 324 and French 324.)]

[326c.d. A Body “of One’s Own”: Latina and Caribbean Women Writers. (Same as Gender and Women’s Studies 326 and Spanish 326.)]

[331c.d. United States-Latino Literature in Spanish. (Same as Spanish 331.)]

[332c.d. Poetry and Social Activism in Latin America. (Same as Spanish 332.)]

[335c.d. Conquest and Sovereignty in Latin American Literature. (Same as Spanish 335.)]

[337c.d. Hispanic Short Story. (Same as Spanish 337.)]

[338c.d. Shining Path and the End of the World. (Same as Spanish 338.)]

[339c. Borges and the Borgesian. (Same as Spanish 339.)]


Studies nineteenth- and twentieth-century Argentinian and Uruguayan authors, focusing on the political and historical contexts in which they created their fictional works. Main course topics will include the representation of the city in Southern Cone literature, the relationship between fiction and visual arts during the twentieth century, and the discourses of political
identity in Argentina and Uruguay. Authors will include Esteban Echevarría, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Roberto Arlt, Silvina Ocampo, Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Luisa Valenzuela, Ricardo Piglia, Juan Carlos Onetti, among others. (Same as Spanish 340.)

Prerequisite: Spanish 209 (same as Latin American Studies 209) and 210 (same as Latin American Studies 210), or permission of the instructor.


A contextualized study of key texts from the Colonial period with special attention on the way in which our historical and ideological distance informs our readings. How do contemporary scholarship on the concepts of history, text, and power enhance or limit our understanding? Texts include letters and journals of the conquistadors, mestizo narratives of lost empires and cultures, treatises on the legal status of the natives, and narratives of shipwreck and adventure in the New World, among others. (Same as Spanish 341.)

Prerequisite: Spanish 209 (same as Latin American Studies 209) and 210 (same as Latin American Studies 210), or permission of the instructor.


An examination of the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) and its impact on modern Mexican society. Topics include the role of state formation since the revolution, agrarian reform, United States-Mexican relations, immigration, and other border issues. (Same as History 351.)

Prerequisite: Spanish 209 (same as Latin American Studies 209) and 210 (same as Latin American Studies 210), or permission of the instructor.

401c,d–402c,d. Advanced Independent Study in Latin American Studies. The Program.

Mathematics

Professors: William H. Barker, Stephen T. Fisk, Adam B. Levy, Chair; Rosemary A. Roberts, James E. Ward, Mary Lou Zeeman**

Associate Professor: Jennifer Taback

Assistant Professor: Thomas Pietraho

Visiting Assistant Professor: Mohammad Tajdari

Adjunct Lecturer: Leon Harkleroad

Postdoctoral Fellow: Helen Wong

Senior Department Coordinator: Suzanne M. Theberge

Requirements for the Major in Mathematics

A major consists of at least eight courses numbered 200 or above, including Mathematics 200 and 201 (or their equivalents), and a course numbered in the 300s. Students who have already mastered the material in Mathematics 200 or 201 may substitute a more advanced course after receiving approval from the department chair. Courses must be passed with a C- or better (including Credit) to count toward the major.

A student must submit a planned program of courses to the department when he or she declares a major. That program should include both theoretical and applied mathematics courses, and it may be changed later with the approval of the departmental advisor.