

Latin American and Latino Studies

Website: <http://las.cas.lehigh.edu/> (<http://las.cas2.lehigh.edu/>)

The Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS) Program is an interdisciplinary initiative that explores the diverse cultures, histories, and contemporary realities of Latin America and U.S. Latinx communities. The program examines transnational issues such as migration, environmental justice, economic growth and development, social movements, and media representation. A key focus is Latin America's geopolitical and economic role, with its vast natural and strategic resources, coveted by cutting-edge technology companies, influencing global discussions on climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable growth and development. Students critically analyze the intersection of international demand for these resources with issues like Indigenous rights, extractivism, public policy, and regional security.

The program also emphasizes the social, political, and economic significance of Latinx communities in the U.S., shaping discourses on immigration, racial justice, health equity, and cultural identity. Students gain a deep understanding of their historical and contemporary contributions to the U.S. society, exploring power dynamics across borders. LALS faculty come from diverse disciplines, ensuring students develop both regional expertise and a global analytical framework.

Students in the program will:

- Develop bilingual and bicultural skills through coursework and community engagement.
- Analyze historical and contemporary issues in Latin America and U.S. Latinx communities.
- Understand the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, and class.
- Apply cultural and geopolitical knowledge to real-world issues in fields like health, engineering, business, and education.
- Engage ethically with Latin American and Latinx communities through research and advocacy.

The program provides a foundation for careers across fields, from STEM to the arts, law, economics, public policy, and public health. Students explore topics like sustainable infrastructure, climate governance, health disparities, and cultural identity. They are equipped to address issues such as migration, human rights, and global diplomacy, preparing them to make a meaningful impact. Students are also encouraged to participate in faculty-led programs, community-based projects, and co-curricular events that connect academic learning with real-world engagement.

THE MAJOR (36-40 CREDITS)

The **LALS major** offers a rigorous interdisciplinary path for students who wish to understand Latin America and U.S. Latinx communities through diverse disciplinary lenses.

Key Features:

- 36–40 credits of approved coursework across multiple disciplines
- Completion of SPAN 012 or a more advanced Spanish course
- Study abroad strongly encouraged (e.g., Lehigh in Latin America)
- Optional capstone project or honors thesis
- Emphasis on both regional and transnational perspectives

The major in Latin American and Latino Studies requires a minimum of 10 courses with four courses at the 200/300 level. Students are required to possess intermediate language proficiency in Spanish. Courses taken as study abroad may fulfill program requirements with approval of the program director.

BA LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES

Required Core Course ¹ 4

LAS/GS/HIST 049	The True Road to El Dorado: Colonial Latin America
LAS/GS/HIST 050	Heroes, Dictators, and Revolutionaries: Latin America since Independence
LAS 110	Latinx & Latin American Media

LAS/SPAN 152	Cultural Evolution of Latin America	
Language Requirement		4
SPAN 012	Intermediate Spanish II	
Humanities Requirement ^{2,3}		7-8
Two classes from the list of electives that carry a HE or AL distribution.		
Social Sciences Requirement ^{2,3}		7-8
Two classes from the list of electives that carry a SW distribution.		
Additional Electives ^{2, 3}		14-16
Four courses chosen from the list of approved electives. Additional electives may be chosen in consultation with the Program Director.		
Total Credits		36-40

1

Courses taken and not used to fulfill core requirement may fulfill elective requirement.

2

No less than three courses in Latino Studies.

3

No more than two courses in Spanish at the 200/300 level may count toward the major.

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ELECTIVES

Each semester, a complete list of Latin American Studies course offerings can be found on the web site or in the Office of Interdisciplinary Programs, Maginnes Hall, 280. Other courses approved by the program director.

ANTH 117	Archaeology of Latin America	4
ANTH 178	Mesoamerican Archaeology	4
ART 173	Special Topics in Studio Practice	1-4
ECO 303	Economic Development	3
HIST 368	Seminar in Latin American History	4
IR 177	International Relations of Latin America	4
IR 222	Political Economy of North-South Relations	4
IR 323	Political Economy of Industrialization and Development	4
LAS/GS/HIST 049	The True Road to El Dorado: Colonial Latin America	4
LAS/GS/HIST 050	Heroes, Dictators, and Revolutionaries: Latin America since Independence	4
LAS/ANTH/GS 117	Archaeology of Latin America	4
LAS/HIST 149	Narcos: The Global Drug Wars	4
LAS/SPAN 152	Cultural Evolution of Latin America	4
LAS/AAS/SOC 155	Afro-Latino Social Movements in Latin America & the Caribbean	4
LAS/ANTH 184	Indigenous Cultures of Latin America	4
LAS 192	Lehigh in Latin America	3-4
LAS/GS/MLL/ENGL 202	Latin America In Fact, In Fiction	4
LAS/SPAN/FILM 213	Introduction to Hispanic Literature and Film	4
LAS/SPAN 243	Indigenous Cultures in Spanish America	4
LAS/SPAN 263	The Spanish American Short Story	4
LAS/SPAN/FILM 265	Spanish and Latin American Cinema	4
LAS/GS/ENGL/MLL 302	Travel and Adventure in Latin American Fiction	4
LAS/SPAN 320	Literature of the Spanish Caribbean	4

LAS/HIST 369	Columbus on Trial: A Critical Reading of the Spanish Conquest	4
LAS/SPAN 391	Special Topics	4
LAS/SPAN 392	The City and the Country in Spanish American Narrative	4
LAS/SPAN 393	The Boom and Beyond	4
POLS 335	Latin American Political Systems	4
POLS 336	U.S. Foreign Policy and Latin America	4
POLS 337	Religion and Politics in Latin America	4
POLS/WGSS/GS 342	Gender and Third World Development	4
SPAN 099	Language & Culture Abroad I	0-8
SPAN 199	Language & Culture Abroad II	0-8
SPAN 299	Language & Culture Abroad III	0-8

LATINO STUDIES ELECTIVES

Each semester, a complete list of Latino Studies course offerings can be found on the web site or in the Office of Interdisciplinary Programs, Maginnes Hall, 280. Other courses approved by the program director.

COMM 150	Health Communication	4
ECO 234	The Economics of Gender and Race	3
LAS/ENGL 105	Intro to Latino/a Literature and Culture	4
LAS/AAS/SOC 106	Race and Ethnicity in the Americas	4
LAS 110	Latinx & Latin American Media	4
LAS 211	Business Spanish	4
LAS/ART 227	Latin American Art	4
LAS 270	Spanish for the Health Professions	4
LAS/SPAN 325	Hispanic Literature of The United States	4
POLS 336	U.S. Foreign Policy and Latin America	4
SOC 115	A Nation of Immigrants: The American Experience	4

THE MINOR (15-16 CREDITS)

The **LALS minor** is a flexible option that complements majors across colleges and prepares students for careers or further study involving Latin American or Latinx populations.

Key Features:

- 15–16 credits of interdisciplinary coursework
- Completion of SPAN 011 or higher-level Spanish
- Transferable credits from study abroad (e.g., Lehigh in Latin America)
- Co-curricular engagement encouraged (lectures, festivals, film series)

MINOR IN LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES

Required core course (choose one)		4
LAS/GS/HIST 049	The True Road to El Dorado: Colonial Latin America	
LAS/GS/HIST 050	Heroes, Dictators, and Revolutionaries: Latin America since Independence	
LAS 110	Latinx & Latin American Media	
LAS/SPAN 152	Cultural Evolution of Latin America	
Language Requirement		4
SPAN 011	Intermediate Spanish I	
Electives ^{1,2}		7-8
Total Credits		15-16

¹

Elective courses (7-8 credits) chosen from LAS cross-listed courses or collateral courses. Credit may be received for other courses including study abroad, in consultation with the Program Director.

2

Special topics courses in Art and History may be applicable electives to the Latin American Studies minor. Refer to course listings for ART 269 Special Topics in Art History, ART 273 Special Topics in Studio Practice, ART 370 Special Topics in Museum Studies, and ART 375 Museum Internship. Students should consult with the Program Director for approval of any of the previous listed courses.

Courses

LAS 049 (GS 049, HIST 049) The True Road to El Dorado: Colonial Latin America 4 Credits

Examines the initial encounters of peoples of Iberian and African origins with the indigenous civilizations of the Western Hemisphere. Explores the development of a colonial economy and its global reach. Focuses on the birth of a distinctive Latin American society and culture, with attention to the Latin American patriots who fought for their freedom. No prior knowledge of Latin American history required.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 050 (GS 050, HIST 050) Heroes, Dictators, and Revolutionaries: Latin America since Independence 4 Credits

Examines the 200-year-long struggle of Latin American peoples to gain political representation, economic equality, and social justice. Explores key historical events in Latin America from the movement for independence in the early nineteenth century to today's modern societies. Topics include the wars of independence, the rule of caudillos, foreign military interventions, export economies, populism, social revolutions, the Cold War era, state terror and military dictatorships, and the war on drugs.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 080 Independent Study 1-4 Credits

Independent work, research, and/or reading with a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 091 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

A topic, genre, or approach in literature, history, or social sciences not covered in other courses.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HE, HU, SS, SW, W

LAS 105 (ENGL 105) Intro to Latino/a Literature and Culture 4 Credits

This course provides an overview of the literary history and criticism of Latino/a literature and media. Through a combination of critical and literary theory, we will focus on works Latino/a-centered texts including poetry, prose, film, and television which portray issues of migration/immigration, colonialism, history, race, and gender. We will also examine the role of literature in the development of Latino/a Studies. Authors and scholars featured in the course include José Martí, Pura Belpré, Pedro Pietri, the Young Lords Party,.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

LAS 106 (AAS 106, SOC 106) Race and Ethnicity in the Americas 4 Credits

How is it possible that someone who is officially considered black in the United States can embody different racial identities throughout current Latin America? Even more, how is it possible that people considered white nowadays were not officially so in early twentieth-century US (although they were viewed as white in the Latin American context at the same time period)? This course offers a historical comparative analysis of the nature and dynamics of race between the United States and Latin America.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 110 (JOUR 110) Latinx & Latin American Media 4 Credits

The cultures, languages, and traditions of Spanish-language and Latinx media in the U.S. and globally will be examined. The course presents frameworks for understanding media development and performance, discusses the role of media in democratic societies, and identifies common patterns in Latin American media development, media ownership, media-state relationships, relations with societal groups and citizens, and media content. Students identify and analyze societal and international forces that explain why these patterns appear, persevere and, sometimes, change.

Attribute/Distribution: HE, SS

LAS 117 (ANTH 117, GS 117) Archaeology of Latin America 4 Credits

Explores the past of Latin America and the major civilizations that existed prior to European arrival and colonization. Extending from Mesoamerica through the Southern Andes, topics covered include the monumental structures, belief systems, and trade networks that made sure an entire continent was interconnected for millennia. This course also looks at the ways in which European colonialism has shaped the perception of these civilizations and how modern pseudoarchaeology continues to deny the accomplishments of indigenous cultures.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 149 (HIST 149) Narcos: The Global Drug Wars 4 Credits

Tobacco, sugar, coffee, opium, marijuana, cocaine. From Columbus's encounter with the New World to the rise and demise of Pablo Escobar and "El Chapo" Guzmán, drugs have been coveted global commodities. Through readings, discussions, and films, this course examines the history of drug production, drug trafficking, and the so-called "war on drugs" in Latin America.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 152 (SPAN 152) Cultural Evolution of Latin America 4 Credits

The historical and cultural evolution of Latin America. Discussion of representative literary works in their cultural and historical contexts. Prerequisite as listed below or consent of instructor.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 155 (AAS 155, SOC 155) Afro-Latino Social Movements in Latin America & the Caribbean 4 Credits

This course focuses on Afro-Latinos who make up nearly 70% of the population of the Americas. Despite the large amount of people of African descent living in the Americas, Afro-Latinos are an understudied population who face significant amounts of racial discrimination in their countries. Who are Afro-Latinos? Where do they live? How are they challenging the racism that they face? These are questions we will tackle in this course.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW

LAS 180 Independent Study 1-4 Credits

Independent work, research, and/or reading with a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 184 (ANTH 184) Indigenous Cultures of Latin America 4 Credits

This examines social change in Latin America from the perspective of indigenous peoples. Main goals are to develop an appreciation for the diversity of cultures found in Latin America, explore anthropological concepts like cultural ecology, ethnicity, acculturation, and religious syncretism, and to apply these concepts to contemporary issues, including cultural survival, human rights, and environmental sustainability.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, SS, SW, W

LAS 191 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

A topic, genre, or approach in literature, history, or social sciences not covered in other courses.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HE, HU, SS, SW, W

LAS 192 (GS 192) Lehigh in Latin America 3-4 Credits

Explore the geopolitical, economic, and ecological significance of Ushuaia. Students will delve into the historical British occupation of the Malvinas since 1833, examining its impact on Argentina's sovereignty and the global competition for resources. The course will cover the Malvinas' crucial geopolitical position, the economic interests tied to the region, and the ecological importance of the Antarctic freshwater reserves and other South American resources. This course offers a deep dive into the complex role of the South Atlantic region.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HE, SS, SW

LAS 202 (ENGL 202, GS 202, MLL 202) Latin America In Fact, In Fiction 4 Credits

This class couples a survey of Latin American literature in translation with an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Latin America. Departing initially from readings of literary and cinematographic works, our analyses will engage methodologies from multiple disciplines including history, sociology, and cultural studies. Accordingly, this course will examine critical developments in Latin American aesthetics along with the cultural climates in which they matured. This course assumes no prior study of Spanish, Portuguese, or Latin American culture.

Attribute/Distribution: HE, HU

LAS 211 (SPAN 211) Business Spanish 4 Credits

An introduction to business concepts and vocabulary in Spanish. Specialized professional vocabulary and business culture in Spanish-speaking countries.

Prerequisites: SPAN 141

Attribute/Distribution: AL, HU

LAS 213 (FILM 213, SPAN 213) Introduction to Hispanic Literature and Film 4 Credits

An introduction to the analysis of Latin American and Spanish cultural productions.

Prerequisites: SPAN 141

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 227 (ART 227) Latin American Art 4 Credits

Presents an overview of the origins and development of Latin American art since the independence period in the 19th century through the present. Understanding "Latin" American as a cultural construct that extends from Mexico to Tierra del Fuego and includes the Caribbean and Latinx cultures of the United States, the course examines key art movements and discourses across the region through the lens of historical and political events. Includes museum and gallery visits.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HE, HU, W

LAS 243 (SPAN 243) Indigenous Cultures in Spanish America 4 Credits

A survey of Spanish American narratives that deal with the relationship between indigenous and occidental cultures. While examining works created from the late 19th century up until present day, we analyze the construction of cultural identity in several countries including Bolivia, Ecuador, and Mexico. Analysis will include works of poetry, short story, novel, essay, and film by several influential artists: Clorinda Matto de Turner, Jorge Icaza and José María Arguedas, to name just a few.

Prerequisites: SPAN 141

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 263 (SPAN 263) The Spanish American Short Story 4 Credits

Comparative study of representative works by major writers such as Quiroga, Borges, and Cortazar, among others.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 265 (FILM 265, SPAN 265) Spanish and Latin American Cinema 4 Credits

An introduction to cinema in the Spanish-speaking world. Oral discussion and written analysis of selected films. Students view films independently.

Prerequisites: SPAN 141

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 270 (HMS 270, SPAN 270) Spanish for the Health Professions 4 Credits

For prospective medical personnel communicating with Spanish-speaking patients. Healthcare vocabulary, patient-provider interaction, and cultural background of the Latino patient.

Prerequisites: SPAN 141

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU

LAS 280 Independent Study 1-4 Credits

Independent work, research, and/or reading with a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 283 Supervised Research 1-4 Credits

Research project under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 284 Internship 1-4 Credits

Professionally supervised practicum experience in an area related to the field.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 291 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

A topic, genre, or approach in literature, history, or social sciences not covered in other courses.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HU, SS, W

LAS 300 Apprentice Teaching 1-4 Credits

Supervised participation in various aspects of the teaching of a course. Consent of instructor, department chairperson, and permission of the Dean required.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 302 (ENGL 302, GS 302, MLL 302) Travel and Adventure in Latin American Fiction 4 Credits

Centering on a corpus of works presenting tales of travel and adventure, this class offers an overview of Latin American narrative genres (including "fantastic" narrative, magical realism, and postmodern fiction) from the mid 20th century to present day. Through close readings of works by Adolfo Bioy Casares and Roberto Bolaño, among others, and the analysis of filmic representations of travel in Latin America, we will examine differing modes of perceiving the region defined as Latin America.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HE, HU

LAS 320 (SPAN 320) Literature of the Spanish Caribbean 4 Credits

Study of representative works with emphasis on Cuba and Puerto Rico. Writers include Barnet, Carpentier, and Rodríguez Juliá.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 325 (SPAN 325) Hispanic Literature of The United States 4 Credits

Discussion of fiction, poetry, drama, and film from the main groups in the U.S. Hispanic population. Discussion of Hispanic ethnic identity, bilingualism, and minority issues.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 326 (SPAN 326, WGSS 326) Tradition and Resistance: Women Writers of Latin America 4 Credits

Study of poetry and narrative works by Latin American women writers. Authors include Rosario Ferré, Rosario Castellanos, Elena Poniatowska, Cristina Peri Rossi, among others.

Prerequisites: SPAN 152

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 342 The New Narrative Spanish American Literature 4 Credits

Critical evaluation of distinguished works of Spanish American prose fiction of the 1960's and 70's. Readings by Donoso, Fuentes, García Márquez, and Vargas Llosa, among others.

Prerequisites: LAS 152 or SPAN 152

Attribute/Distribution: HU

LAS 345 Testimonial Writing in the Hispanic World 4 Credits

This course explores the genre testimonio, which confronts the official history of the Latin American and Spanish dictatorships and portrays the experiences and struggles of those who suffered political repression. The course focuses on the analysis of both literary and visual testimonios from the Hispanic world, as well as on theoretical issues concerning discourses of truth.

Attribute/Distribution: HU

LAS 350 (ENGL 350) Special Topics in Latino Studies 3-4 Credits

Selected works by Latinx Diaspora writers, poets, and artists. Course engages with an ethnic studies framework and approach to texts in terms of U.S. canon formation with attention to race, class, gender, language, and nationality. No prerequisite.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HU, W

LAS 369 (HIST 369) Columbus on Trial: A Critical Reading of the Spanish Conquest 4 Credits

In this seminar students master the history of the Conquest era (roughly, 1490s-1570s) in Spanish America and learn about the origins of colonialism. The course offers an opportunity to read critically some traditional European-centered narratives of the Conquest. It also incorporates the views and voices of Indigenous peoples and Africans. After reading classic primary and secondary sources, students judge for themselves the complex and rather tragic legacy of the encounter between Europeans and the Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Attribute/Distribution: CC, HE, HU, W

LAS 380 Independent Study 1-4 Credits

Independent work, research, and/or reading with a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 383 Supervised Research 1-4 Credits

Research project under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 384 Internship 1-4 Credits

Professionally supervised practicum experience in an area related to the field.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

LAS 386 (SPAN 386) Searching for Latin America: Constructing Fictions and Identity 4 Credits

Since its inception as an object of conquest, the misprized region known as Latin America has been the home to multiple contested identities. In examining written, filmic, and other visual texts from the pre-Columbian and colonial eras, the nation-building projects of the nineteenth century, the consolidated states of the twentieth century, and up to present day, this class will analyze what it has meant to be "Latin American" over the region's long history.

Prerequisites: SPAN 152

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU

LAS 387 (SPAN 387) Melodrama in Contemporary Spanish American Narrative 4 Credits

From the earliest works of Latin American narrative onward, melodrama has served as a fundamental tool for the structuring of dramatic conflict. Ranging from the programmatic social novel to the most parodic contemporary works, we will carefully examine the aims of melodramatic narration in works by Roberto Arlt and Mario Vargas Llosa, among others, as well as in various films and telenovelas.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 391 Special Topics 1-4 Credits

Intensive study of a topic of special interest not covered in other courses.

Repeat Status: Course may be repeated.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HE, HU, SS, SW, W

LAS 392 (SPAN 392) The City and the Country in Spanish American Narrative 4 Credits

Across the history of the region defined as Latin America, urbanization, on the one hand, and the isolation of national interiors, on the other, have contributed to a problematic relationship between the city and the country. In examining works by the likes of Roberto Arlt, José Donoso, and Mario Bellatin, among others, this course examines the dialogue between the ostensibly separate environs of city and country, and questions the ways in which they influence one another.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W

LAS 393 (SPAN 393) The Boom and Beyond 4 Credits

This class will examine works from the so-called Boom of Spanish American literature in the 1960s alongside texts produced following this crucial moment of artistic and social change throughout Latin America. Moving from the Boom toward the postmodern, we will consider works by Gabriel García Márquez, Manuel Puig, and Mario Levrero, among others.

Attribute/Distribution: AL, CC, HU, W