SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

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http://span-port.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
R. Howard Bloch

Director of Graduate Studies
Rüdiger Campe

Professors Rolena Adorno, Roberto González Echevarría, Aníbal González-Pérez, K. David Jackson, Noël Valis

Associate Professor Leslie Harkema

Senior Lector I Ame Cividanes

FIELDS OF STUDY

Fields include Spanish Peninsular literature, Spanish American literature, Portuguese and Brazilian literatures.

The doctoral program offers: (1) a concentration in Spanish specializing in a single field of study (medieval, Renaissance/Golden Age, modern Spanish Peninsular, colonial Spanish American, contemporary Spanish American); (2) a joint concentration in Spanish and Portuguese offering the student the opportunity to work in both the Luso Brazilian and Spanish/Spanish American fields, with a specialization in either of the two fields. In addition, the department participates in (1) a combined Ph.D. program in Spanish and Portuguese and African American Studies offered in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies and (2) a combined Ph.D. program in Spanish and Portuguese and Renaissance Studies offered in conjunction with the Renaissance Studies Program.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Thorough command of the language in which the student plans to specialize and a background in its literature, as well as command of at least one of the two additional languages in which the student will need to fulfill requirements, are required.

Application must include GRE scores, a personal statement, and an academic writing sample in the language of the proposed specialization, not to exceed twenty-five pages in length. Students whose native language is not English must submit scores of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

The department requires two years of course work, sixteen term courses, a grade of Honors in at least two of these courses each year, and a minimum grade average of High Pass. Course work includes two required courses, SPAN 500, History of the Spanish Language, and SPAN 790, Methodologies of Modern Language Teaching, and four courses taken outside the department. Also required are a reading knowledge of Latin and a second language, which may be Portuguese or another language-literature. In the third year, the student is expected to pass the qualifying examination (written and oral components) and submit and receive approval of the dissertation prospectus. Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the dissertation prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D.

Participation in the department’s teaching and pedagogy program is a degree requirement. It consists of taking the required course SPAN 790 in the second year and teaching four courses during the third and fourth years of study. At least three of these must be courses in the beginning language sequence; viewed as an integral part of the course of study for the doctorate, this program includes supervision by the director of the language program and course directors. The fourth course may be a literature or culture course taught through a teaching fellowship.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS

Spanish and Portuguese and African American Studies

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese also offers, in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies, a combined Ph.D. in Spanish and Portuguese and African American Studies. For further details, see African American Studies.

Spanish and Portuguese and Renaissance Studies

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese also offers, in conjunction with the Renaissance Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Spanish and Portuguese and Renaissance Studies. For further details, see Renaissance Studies.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.
M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) The M.A. en route is awarded upon the satisfactory completion of eight term courses and two of the three language requirements (Latin and one other language).

COURSES

PORT 922a, Brazil’s Modern Art Movement  K. David Jackson
Study of Brazilian modernism in literature and the arts, centered on São Paulo’s “Modern Art Week” of 1922, from the perspective of the European avant-gardes (cubism, futurism, surrealism) and Brazilian content. Themes include the Cannibal Manifesto and cultural independence from Europe; and avant-garde practices in literature and the arts from the 1920s to the construction of Brasilia and São Paulo Concrete Poetry. Special attention to major authors—Oswald de Andrade, Mário de Andrade, Manuel Bandeira, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, Murilo Mendes, João Cabral, Haroldo and Augusto de Campos—and artists Villa-Lobos, Portinari, Di Cavalcanti, and Tarsila do Amaral. Includes influential visitors to Brazil, as well as radio, film, and music of the period.

PORT 925b, Brazilian Modernist Poetry  K. David Jackson
This course studies the generation of major poets who were part of Brazilian modernism, centered on the “Modern Art Week” of 1922 and the poetry written to express the individuality and character of Brazil’s language and culture at the onset of modernization, urbanization, and industrialization. Major poets include Manuel Bandeira, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, Cecília Meireles, Murilo Mendes, Mário de Andrade, Raul Bopp, Luís Aranha, Oswald de Andrade, Jorge de Lima, and Vinicius de Moraes. Points of analysis include form, use of language, themes of memory and modernization, cultural characterization, humor, and ethical and existential concerns.

PORT 975a, Experimental, Visual, and Concrete Poetry in Perspective  K. David Jackson
Brazilian concrete poetry in international perspective; production and theory of concrete poetry, translation, and criticism during the second half of the twentieth century. Brazilian concrete poets in the context of visual and concrete poetics. Representative works include “Pilot Plan” and Theory of Concrete Poetry, graphic and spatial poems, and public expositions of works. Brazilian concrete poets were among the leaders of an international neo-vanguard movement in the mid-twentieth century related to geometrical abstraction in painting. In the journals Noigandres and Invenção, and in Theory of Concrete Poetry, the Brazilians link their poetics to Pound, Mallarmé, cummings, and other inventive figures in world poetry, while relating poetry to graphic arts through reference to painting and to semiotics, including Fenallosa’s essay on use of the Chinese character. The exhibit in S. Paulo’s Museum of Modern Art in December 1956 was the beginning of the public exhibition of concrete poetry, now the topic of anthologies, websites, criticism, and museum retrospectives. Concrete poets dominated the production of poetry in Brazil for half a century with a major effect on cultural and intellectual life. Prerequisite: PORT 140 or equivalent.

SPAN 688a / CPLT 676a, Law and Literature in Modern Latin America  Roberto González Echevarría
A study of modern narrative works in Latin America from the independence and post-independence period in the nineteenth century to the age of drug trafficking and the AIDS epidemic today. The course begins with the Cuban Círilo Villaverde’s antislavery novel Cecilia Valdés (1880); moves on to the regionalist classic Doña Bárbara (1929) by the Venezuelan Rómulo Gallegos and the dictator novel El señor presidente (1946) by the Guatemalan Miguel Ángel Asturias; peaks with Gabriel García Márquez’s total novel Cien años de soledad (1967); and ends with the Colombiang Fernando Vallejo’s La virgen de los sicarios (1994) and the Mexican Mario Bellatin’s Salón de belleza (2009). The course follows the themes of the law, particularly Roman Law, and the way in which the characters are controlled or driven by civil and criminal law issues that constitute the plots of the novels. In Spanish.

SPAN 711b, Clarín/Galdós: La Regenta and Fortunata y Jacinta  Noël Valis
An in-depth reading of two nineteenth-century Spanish narrative masterpieces. We analyze the texts as literary aesthetic achievements and explore their cultural-historical contexts. In Spanish.

SPAN 790b, Methodologies of Modern Language Teaching  Ame Cividanes
Preparation for a teaching career through readings, lectures, classroom discussions, and presentations on current issues in foreign/second language acquisition theory and teaching methodology. Classroom techniques at all levels. In Spanish.

SPAN 812a, The Polemics of Possession in Early Spanish American Narrative  Rolena Adorno
Fundamental writings on the Spanish Indies from Columbus’s “Letter of Discovery” of 1493 to the writings by authors of indigenous American heritage in the first quarter of the seventeenth century: their observations of New World realities, their debates about the meanings and rights of Spanish sovereignty, and their literary relationships to one another. The concept of “the polemics of possession”—their varied claims to territorial, political, cultural, and/or literary authority—orients the readings of the seminar. Prose texts by Cristóbal Colón, Hernán Cortés, Bartolomé de las Casas, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, Hernán Pérez de Oliva, Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala are complemented by Alonso de Ercilla’s enduring narrative epic poem. In Spanish.

SPAN 904a / CPLT 965a, Latin American Thought  Moira Fradinger
This seminar introduces students to two centuries of Latin American political thought in the form of social and literary essays produced since the times of independence. It studies how Latin American writers have thought of their identity and how they have theorized the political/cultural heritage of the colony. The seminar starts with the Haitian constitution and contemporary Haitian authors who assess the legacy of the Haitian revolution. It ends with writings on current indigenous movements across the region. The first unit engages nineteenth-century debates over “American identity” that were foundational to the newly constituted nation-states (authors include Bolívar, Lastarria, Alamán, Martí, Sarmiento, Echeverría, Montalvo). The second explores twentieth-century debates over cultural independence, the movement of “indigenismo,” mestizaje, transculturation and heterogeneity, the Caribbean movement of
“negritude,” the metaphor of “cannibalism” to account for the cultural politics of the region, concepts such as “internal colonialism” and “motley society,” and the polemics over the region’s capitalist modernity and postmodernity (authors include Rodó, da Cunha, Ortiz, Moreno Fraginals, Lezama Lima, Vasconcelos, Reyes, de Andrade, González Prada, Mariátegui, Antenor Orrego, Zapata, J.L. Borges, J.M. Arguedas, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, Caio Prado Júnior, Jean Price-Mars, Jacques Roumain, Aimé Césaire, George Lamming, C.L.R. James, Fanon, Léon Damas, Paulo Freire, Angel Rama, Retamar, Edmundo O’Gorman, Antonio Candido, Darcy Ribeiro). The third explores recent debates over indigenous cosmologies, coloniality, and other ways of knowing (authors include Pablo González Casanova, León-Portilla, R. Kusch, René Zavaleta Mercado, A. Quijano, Bolívar Echeverría, Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, Viveiros de Castro). There is an extra session on the tradition of Latin American feminist thought depending on the interests of the group. Weekly sessions are conducted in Spanish, and most of the readings are Spanish, French, and Portuguese materials (with a few Anglo-Caribbean sources). Students will be provided with English translations if they prefer and will be allowed to write their papers in English.

SPAN 912a / CPLT 942a, The Borges Effect  Roberto González Echevarría

Since the publication of Ficciones in 1944 and especially since achieving worldwide acclaim after receiving ex-aequo with Samuel Beckett the Formentor Group’s Prix International in 1961, Jorge Luis Borges has become one of the most influential modern writers. He is a recognizable and often acknowledged presence in the work of novelists and short-story writers, as well as in that of philosophers and literary theorists. A Borges “effect” can be perceived in John Barth, Julio Cortázar, Gabriel García Márquez, Italo Calvino, and Umberto Eco, and in Maurice Blanchot, Michel Foucault, Gérard Genette, and Jacques Derrida, among others. That effect is also projected retrospectively in Borges’s particular way of reading classics like Homer, Dante, and Cervantes. An elegant, playfully ironic skepticism, together with a fondness for aporias, enigmas, puzzles, and labyrinths as well as for minor genres such as the detective story, are the most recognizable components of Borges’s style and thought. Taken together these components suggest theories about writing and reading. We read closely Borges’s most influential stories, such as “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius,” “Pierre Menard, Author of the Quijote,” and “The Garden of Forking Paths,” as well as his essays on Homer, Dante, and Cervantes. We then follow his track in the writers mentioned. Class discussions in English; readings in English or the French, Spanish, or Italian originals.

SPAN 978a, Religion and the Novel in Contemporary Spanish American Narrative  Aníbal González Pérez

This seminar examines the many ways in which religious discourse has been appropriated in the twentieth-century Spanish American novel, often with the aim of turning novels into “sacred texts.” We also consider the meaning of the “literary theology” that Spanish American literature has generated by creatively adapting into its makeup a variety of religious concepts, such as “the holy,” the notion of an afterlife, reincarnation, salvation, canonization, and the various theories about the nature of God. Primary readings include works ranging from Federico Gamboa’s Santa (1901), María Luisa Bombal’s La amortajada (1938), and selected essays and stories by Jorge Luis Borges in Discusión (1932) and El Aleph (1949), to Gabriel García Márquez’s Cien años de soledad (1967), Severo Sarduy’s Maitreya (1978), Mario Vargas Llosa’s La guerra del fin del mundo (1981), and Tomás Eloy Martínez’s Santa Evita (1995). Secondary texts include Longinus, Rudolf Otto, and James Thrower. In Spanish.

SPAN 991a, Tutorial  Staff

By arrangement with faculty.

SPAN 999a, Tutorial  Staff