

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

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The major in Latin American Studies is designed to further understanding of the societies and cultures of Latin America as viewed from regional and global perspectives. The Latin American Studies major builds on a foundation of language and literature, history, history of art, theater studies, humanities, and the social sciences; its faculty is drawn from many departments and professional schools of the University.

The major in Latin American Studies is interdisciplinary. With two goals in mind—intellectual coherence and individual growth—the student proposes a course of study that must satisfy the requirements listed below. The proposed course of study must be approved by the director of undergraduate studies (DUS). Though all students choose courses in both the humanities and the social sciences, they are expected to concentrate on one or the other.

Students are held to the prerequisite and major requirements that were in place when they declared their major. However, with approval from the director of undergraduate studies (DUS), the following requirements, updated in the academic year 2024-2025, may be fulfilled by students who declared the major in a prior term.

PREREQUISITES

Prerequisite to declaring the major is knowledge of either Spanish or Portuguese at the L3 level. Equivalent placement determined by the placement examination also fulfills the prerequisite.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The major itself requires twelve term courses: one introductory course approved by the DUS; seven courses related to Latin America from departmental offerings; three additional electives; and the senior essay LAST 491 or senior project LAST 492. One of the twelve courses must be taught in Spanish or Portuguese at the L5 level.

The seven Latin American content courses should include courses from the following categories: two courses in the social sciences (anthropology, economics, or political science); two courses in history; two courses in Spanish American or Brazilian literatures beyond the language requirement; one course in art, architecture, film and media studies, music, or theater studies. Students wishing to count toward the major courses that do not appear in the program's course offerings, but have at least a third of syllabus' material related to the region, should consult with the DUS.

Students must enroll in three seminars or upper-level courses during their junior and senior years. Elective seminars must be approved by the DUS.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

The senior requirement is a research paper written usually in one term in LAST 491 or a senior project in LAST 492.

For the senior essay, students choose their own topics, which may derive from research done in an earlier course. The essay is planned in advance in consultation with a

qualified adviser and a second reader. In preparing the senior essay, Latin American Studies majors may undertake field research in Latin America. Students are encouraged to apply for summer travel grants through the Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies to conduct field research for their senior thesis. The Albert Bildner Travel Prize is awarded to an outstanding junior who submits an application in Spanish or Portuguese in addition to the English application essay. Information about these and other grants is available on Yale's Student Grants & Fellowships website.

For the senior project, students formulate and execute a project under the supervision of a faculty adviser in the fall or spring term. Students work on projects of their own choice. Proposals for senior projects are submitted to the adviser and the director of undergraduate studies by the end of the term preceding the last resident term. An interim project review takes place by the fifth week of the term the project is developed. Permission to complete the senior project can be withdrawn if satisfactory progress has not been made. An exhibition of selected work done in the project is expected of each student.

ADVISING

A list of courses intended as a guide to students in preparing their programs is available at the office of the DUS and on the Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies website. Qualified students may also elect pertinent courses in the Graduate School and in some of the professional schools with permission of the director of graduate studies or professional school registrar and the DUS.

STUDY ABROAD

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of study abroad opportunities during summers or through the Year or Term Abroad program. For more information, see Academic Regulations, section K, Special Academic Programs, "Year or Term Abroad."

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites Spanish or Portuguese at L3 level or higher; or equivalent score on placement exam

Number of courses 12 courses beyond prereqs (incl senior requirement)

Distribution of courses 1 intro course; 7 courses with Latin American content in specified fields as indicated; 3 addtl electives; 3 of the courses must be seminars or upper-level courses taken in junior and senior years; 1 of the courses must be taught in Spanish or Portuguese at L5 level; all approved by DUS

Senior requirement Senior essay (LAST 491) or senior project (LAST 492)