Spanish

Director of undergraduate studies: TBD (fall 2023); Noël Valis (noel.valis@yale.edu) (spring 2024); language program director: Jorge Méndez-Seijas; span-port.yale.edu

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese provides instruction in the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian worlds. Courses in Portuguese and the requirements of the major are described under Portuguese; the names of faculty teaching Portuguese courses are included in the faculty roster.

The major in Spanish is a liberal arts major that offers a wide range of courses in the language, literatures, and cultures of the twenty Spanish-speaking countries in Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Today, Spanish is the second language of the United States, one of the three most widely spoken languages in the world, and one of the five diplomatic languages of the United Nations. The program in Spanish offers students the opportunity to acquire thorough linguistic proficiency as well as in-depth knowledge of both cultural and literary topics. The major explores literature, history, philosophy, art, and cultural studies, and provides excellent preparation for careers in law, diplomacy, medicine, business, the arts, academics, journalism, and education.

COURSE NUMBERING

Courses numbered SPAN 110–199 include beginning and intermediate language courses designed to help students develop fluency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish. Courses numbered SPAN 200–299 seek to provide students with a broad but solid introduction to the fields of Hispanic literatures and cultures while strengthening their linguistic competence. Courses numbered 300–499 allow students to perfect their linguistic and critical skills through study of a specific problem or issue, e.g., a literary genre, a type of literary or cultural representation, or a specific writer or text. Students desiring more information about either language or literature offerings should consult the director of undergraduate studies (DUS).

PREREQUISITE

Prerequisite to the major is SPAN 140, 142, or 145, or the equivalent through advanced placement or study abroad. Equivalent preparation to SPAN 140, 142, or 145 may be demonstrated by the test scores indicated below under "Language Courses and Placement Procedures."

LANGUAGE COURSES AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

Students with no previous formal or informal Spanish study ordinarily enroll in SPAN 110. Students who take SPAN 110 are strongly encouraged to continue with 120 in the following term. Students wishing to take intensive beginning Spanish may, with the instructor’s permission, enroll in SPAN 125, which covers the same material as SPAN 110 and 120, but in one term. SPAN 132 and 142 are designed for heritage speakers and are available only to them. Admission to SPAN 132 and 142 is based on results of the departmental placement examination; interested students should contact the instructor.
All students, including native speakers, who have previously studied Spanish formally or informally must take the departmental placement examination in order to enroll in a Spanish course. The only exception to this rule is made for students who have demonstrated advanced ability in the language by (1) receiving a score of 5 on either of the Spanish Advanced Placement tests; (2) receiving a score of 6 or 7 on the Advanced-Level International Baccalaureate examination; or (3) attaining a proficiency level of C1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. These students may enroll directly in any L5 course.

Information about the departmental placement examination and about preregistration procedures for Spanish L1–L4 language courses is available on the department website.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Beyond the prerequisite, ten term courses numbered SPAN 200 or higher are required, five of which must be numbered SPAN 300 or higher. SPAN 491, The Senior Essay, counts as one of the ten required courses. A maximum of one course may be numbered SPAN 200–230. First-year seminars taught in Spanish count toward the major in the SPAN 231–299 range. A maximum of one course taught in English may be counted toward the major requirements.

Intensive major Students in the intensive major fulfill the requirements for the standard major, and take an additional two courses numbered SPAN 300 or higher.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

Seniors write the senior essay in SPAN 491 in the spring of their senior year under the individual direction of a faculty adviser. Students expecting to complete their degree requirements in December write the senior essay in SPAN 491 in the fall of their senior year. Seniors in SPAN 491 are expected to submit their completed essay to the DUS by 4 p.m. on December 8 in the fall term, or by 4 p.m. on April 18 in the spring term. If the essay is submitted late without an excuse from the student’s residential college dean, the penalty is one letter grade, though no essay that would otherwise pass will be failed because it is late.

ADVISING

Two majors Students electing Spanish as one of two majors should consult the DUS about a specialized course of study.

Courses in the Graduate School Juniors and seniors majoring in Spanish may, with permission of the instructor and the director of graduate studies, enroll in graduate literature courses in Spanish. A list of pertinent graduate courses is available at the office of the DUS.

STUDY ABROAD

Students at the intermediate level of language study are encouraged to apply to the eight-week summer language courses offered by Yale Summer Session in New Haven and Bilbao, Spain, or in Quito, Ecuador. Advanced students may apply for the five-week Yale Summer Session courses offered in Valencia, Spain, and in Quito, Ecuador. More information about these programs is available on the Yale Summer Session website. For information about the Year or Term Abroad program, see Academic Regulations, section K, Special Academic Programs. Students who wish to count
courses taken abroad toward the major should consult with the DUS before going abroad.

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**Prerequisite** 1 course from SPAN 140, 142, 145, or equivalent

**Number of courses** 10 term courses (including senior requirement)

**Distribution of courses** 10 term courses numbered SPAN 200 or higher, 5 of which are numbered SPAN 300 or higher; max of one course numbered SPAN 200–230; max of one SPAN course taught in English

**Senior requirement** Senior essay (SPAN 491)

**Intensive major** 2 addtl courses numbered SPAN 300 or higher, totaling 12 term courses

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese provides instruction in the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian worlds. Courses are devoted to the language and literatures of Spain and Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America, and to the Portuguese language and its literatures and cultures from Portugal, Brazil, Africa, and other Portuguese-speaking areas. For information about the major and language placement in Portuguese, see Portuguese.

The major in Spanish is a liberal arts major that offers a wide range of courses in the language, literatures, and cultures of the twenty Spanish-speaking countries in Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Today Spanish is the second language of the United States, one of the three most widely spoken languages in the world, and one of the five diplomatic languages of the United Nations. The program in Spanish provides students with the opportunity to acquire thorough linguistic proficiency as well as in-depth knowledge of cultural and literary topics. The Spanish major opens up a world of literature, history, philosophy, art, and culture, and offers excellent preparation for careers in law, diplomacy, medicine, business, the arts, academics, journalism, and education.

First-year students who are interested in the Spanish major and have met the prerequisite (SPAN 140, 142, 145, or equivalent) are encouraged to consider taking SPAN 060, SPAN 246, SPAN 247, or any of the literature survey courses at the 200 level, such as SPAN 261, SPAN 262, SPAN 266, or SPAN 267. Students may also select Spanish as one of two majors and, in that case, should consult with the director of undergraduate studies (DUS) about a specialized course of study.

Yale Summer Session (YSS) offers a summer study abroad program at the intermediate level (combined L3/L4) in Bilbao, Spain, and in Quito, Ecuador. In addition, YSS offers five-week summer courses at the L5 level in Valencia, Spain, and in Quito, Ecuador.

**PLACEMENT**

The departmental placement examination in Spanish is offered online. The exam places students at the proper level of study, allowing them to get the most out of their academic experience in Spanish courses. Additional information is available on the department website.
First-year students who have achieved a score of 5 on the Advanced Placement test in Spanish or 6 or 7 on the International Baccalaureate examination or have attained a proficiency level of C1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages are not required to take the departmental placement examination. They may enroll directly in courses designated L5 in Yale Course Search (YCS).

All other students, including native speakers, who have previously studied Spanish formally or informally must take the departmental placement examination in order to enroll in a Spanish course. Students who score L5 on the departmental placement examination may enroll in courses designated L5 in Yale Course Search (YCS). All other students begin with a course at the level indicated by the placement examination.

CERTIFICATE OF ADVANCED LANGUAGE STUDY

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese offers a Certificate of Advanced Language Study in Spanish. A certificate adviser, typically the director of undergraduate studies (DUS), advises students on the certification process and certifies to the University Registrar’s Office that students have completed the stated requirements before the end of eight terms of study. The Certificate of Advanced Language Study, once certified, is listed on the student’s transcript.

REQUIREMENTS

Students seeking to earn the certificate are required to take four courses, all beyond the L4 level in their chosen language, at least two of which must be Yale courses designated as L5, and at least one of which must be a Yale 300-level advanced undergraduate lecture or seminar. All Yale Spanish courses at the 200- or 300-level, which carry an L5 designation, count toward the requirement. First-Year Seminars taught in Spanish count as courses in the SPAN 231–299 range. All courses must be taken for a letter grade, and students must achieve a grade of B or above. With the approval of the certificate adviser, one advanced non-L5 course conducted in the target language, such as an independent study course, a graduate seminar, or an advanced seminar may count toward certification requirements.

The certificate adviser may approve the substitution of one credit earned as part of a Yale or Yale-designated study abroad program and taught in the target language to count toward the certificate requirements. If the adviser approves courses taken outside of Yale for inclusion in the certificate requirements, students must take the necessary steps to ensure that those courses appear on their transcripts.

Credit/D/Fail No courses taken Credit/D/Fail may be counted toward the requirements of the certificate.

Students are encouraged to complete and submit the Declaration of Candidacy for a Certificate Form found on the University Registrar’s website. Once completed, the form sends notification emails to the certificate adviser(s) and to the Yale University Registrar’s Office so that the student’s Degree Audit can be updated to include the Certificate of Advanced Language Study.

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE

Professors Aníbal González-Pérez, K. David Jackson, Nicholas R. Jones, Noël Valis, Jesús R. Velasco (Chair), Lisa Voigt
Senior Lectors II  Sybil Alexandrov, Jorge Méndez-Seijas, Margherita Tortora

Senior Lectors I  María Pilar Asensio-Manrique, Mercedes Carreras, Sebastián Díaz, María de la Paz García, Ximena González Parada, María José Gutiérrez Barajas, María Jordán, Rosamaría León, Luna Nájera, Juliana Ramos-Ruano, Lissette Reymundi, Lourdes Sabé-Colom, Terry Seymour, Giseli Tordin, María M. Vázquez

Lectors  Carolina Baffi, Igor de Souza, Sarah Glenski, Ian Russell, Noelia Sánchez-Walker

Senior Lecturer II  Alex Gil

See visual roadmap of the requirements.

View Courses

Courses

* SPAN 110a or b, Elementary Spanish I  Staff
For students who wish to begin study of the Spanish language. Development of basic skills in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing through a functional approach to the teaching of Spanish grammar. Includes an introduction to the cultures (traditions, art, literature, music) of the Spanish-speaking world. Audiovisual materials are incorporated into class sessions. Conducted in Spanish. To be followed immediately by SPAN 120.  L1  1½ Course cr

SPAN 120a or b, Elementary Spanish II  Staff
Further development of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Class sessions incorporate short authentic texts in Spanish, audiovisual materials, and film. Cultural topics of the Spanish-speaking world (traditions, art, literature, music) are included. Conducted in Spanish. After SPAN 110 or in accordance with placement results. Admits to SPAN 130 or 145.  L2  1½ Course cr

SPAN 130a or b, Intermediate Spanish I  Staff
Development of language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through communicative activities rather than a sequence of linguistic units. Authentic Spanish language texts, films, and videos serve as the basis for the functional study of grammar and the acquisition of a broader vocabulary. Cultural topics are presented throughout the term. Prerequisites: Conducted in Spanish. Admits to SPAN 140.  L3  1½ Course cr

SPAN 140a or b, Intermediate Spanish II  Staff
Continuation of SPAN 130. Development of increased proficiency in the four language skills. Greater precision in grammar usage, vocabulary enrichment, and expanded cultural awareness are achieved through communicative activities based on authentic Spanish-language texts, including a short novel. Conducted in Spanish. Admits to L5 courses.  L4  1½ Course cr

* SPAN 142b, Spanish for Heritage Speakers II  Sybil Alexandrov
Continuation of SPAN 132. Examination of complex grammar structures; consideration of problems particular to heritage speakers through the reading of both literary and journalistic texts. Practice in all communicative skills (comprehension, speaking, reading, writing). After SPAN 132 or in accordance with placement results.  L4  RP
* **SPAN 223a / LAST 223a, Spanish in Film: An Introduction to the New Latin American Cinema**  Margherita Tortora

Development of proficiency in Spanish through analysis of critically acclaimed Latin American films. Includes basic vocabulary of film criticism in Spanish as well as discussion and language exercises. Enrollment limited to 18.  L5

* **SPAN 227a / LAST 227a, Creative Writing**  Maria Jordan

An introduction to the craft and practice of creative writing (fiction, poetry, and essays). Focus on the development of writing skills and awareness of a variety of genres and techniques through reading of exemplary works and critical assessment of student work. Emphasis on the ability to write about abstract ideas, sentiments, dreams, and the imaginary world. Enrollment limited to 18. A maximum of one course in the 200–230 range may count as an elective toward the Spanish major.  L5

**SPAN 244b / LAST 244b, Writing in Spanish**  Margherita Tortora

Intensive instruction and practice in writing as a means of developing critical thinking. Recommended for students considering courses in literature. Analysis of fiction and nonfiction forms, techniques, and styles. Classes conducted in a workshop format.  L5

* **SPAN 266a / LAST 266a, Studies in Latin American Literature I**  Lisa Voigt

Cultural encounters in the New World as interpreted by authors of native American (Aztec and Inca) cultural traditions, the Spanish conquistadors and friars who encountered them and their heirs, and the Mexican creole nun (the now-world-famous Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz) who gave voice to some of their traditions as she created a space for her own writing in the literary world. Their resonance and legacy today.  L5, HU

**SPAN 267b / LAST 267b / LITR 258b, Studies in Latin American Literature II**  Lisa Voigt

An introduction to Latin American literature from the nineteenth century to the present. Works by Borges, García Márquez, Paz, Neruda, Cortázar, and others.  L5, HU

* **SPAN 350a / LAST 351a, Borges: Literature and Power**  Anibal González-Pérez

An introduction to the work of Jorge Luis Borges, focusing on the relation between literature and power as portrayed in selected stories, essays, and poems. Topics include Borges and postmodernity; writing and ethics; and Borges’s politics. Works include Ficciones, Otras inquisiciones, El aleph, El hacedor, El informe de Brodie, and Obra poética. Open to students who have placed into L5 courses or who have successfully completed an L4 course in Spanish. Counts toward the Spanish major.  L5, HU

* **SPAN 371b / LAST 371b, Science and Fiction in Spanish American Narrative**  Anibal González-Pérez

A study of the speculative incorporation of scientific ideas and themes in contemporary Spanish American fiction from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Peru. Readings and discussions of early and mid-20th-century precursors, such as Jorge Luis Borges, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Leopoldo Lugones, Pablo Palacio, and Clemente Palma; of late-20th to early 21st-century examples of “technowriting” in Samantha Schweblin, Jorge Volpi, and Alejandro Zambra, and of utopias, dystopias and possible futures in Jorge Adolph, Jorge Baradit, Hugo Correa, Angélica Gorodischer, Francisco Ortega, Yoss, Yuri Herrera, and Carlos Yushimito. Related themes include: post-humanism, ecofiction, and sociopolitical satire. Course is taught in Spanish. Prerequisite: L4 Spanish or higher.  L5, HU
This course dedicates an entire semester to a close reading of the two parts of Miguel de Cervantes's novel *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. Announcing itself as a “true history,” yet, whose fictional devices clearly shine through, *Don Quixote* occupies the privileged space of first modern novel where, within its literary fabric(ations), a theory of the novel is devised. Our readings of *Don Quixote* examine how the classic novel inserts, parodies, and transforms all previous literary and non-literary discourses to ingeniously invent a new narrative form. To contextualize Cervantes and his literary-historic tradition, this seminar also explores questions of erotic and literary desire, the role of madness and mental health, empire and the circulation of material culture and material wealth, the Edenic narrative and ecologies of the natural world, censorship and the Inquisition, the status of representation and performance, translation, as well as the constructions of class, gender, race, and nation. We also study the legacy of *Don Quixote* and its quixotic narratives through contemporary art, essays, films, novels, science fiction, and television. This course is taught in Spanish.

* SPAN 478a, Directed Readings and/or Individual Research  
Staff
Individual study under faculty supervision. The student must submit a bibliography and a written plan of study approved by the faculty adviser to the director of undergraduate studies. No reading or research course credit is granted without prior approval from the director of undergraduate studies. The student must meet with the instructor at least one hour a week. A final examination or essay is required.

* SPAN 491a, The Senior Essay  
Staff
A research project completed under faculty supervision and resulting in a paper of considerable length, in Spanish.