Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Department Website: http://clas.uchicago.edu

Major Program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Students who major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies gain a thorough grounding in selected aspects of Latin American societies, cultures, histories, politics, and economics through one or more of the social sciences as they deal with Latin American materials, and through competence in Spanish or Portuguese (an added intellectual asset). The BA program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies can provide an appropriate background for careers in business, journalism, government, teaching, or the nonprofit sector, or for graduate studies in one of the social sciences disciplines. Students who are more interested in the languages and/or literatures of Latin America may wish to consider the major in Romance Languages and Literatures. Students in other fields of study may also complete a minor in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Information about the minor follows the description of the major.

Application to the LACS Major

Students who plan to declare a major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies should follow the guidelines below. An informational meeting is held each autumn to describe the program and its requirements, as well as to explain and facilitate the declaration process.

1. As early as possible in their studies and in consultation with their College adviser and the LACS program adviser, students should prepare a preliminary plan of study that would meet program requirements.

2. Students must meet with the LACS program adviser no later than the Autumn Quarter of their third year to discuss their major progress and to discuss the BA Colloquium and their proposed BA thesis topic and relevant readings and resources. Students will choose a suitable faculty adviser to supervise the development of their BA essay project no later than Autumn Quarter of their fourth year.

NOTE: Students who plan to study abroad during the Winter or Spring Quarter of their third year should meet with the LACS program adviser before leaving campus.

Major Requirements

As early as possible in their studies, students should obtain a worksheet from the LACS program adviser, who will assist them with selecting the five required LACS content courses. For a list of approved courses, visit the LACS website at clas.uchicago.edu or consult with the LACS program adviser.

Depending on whether the student counts two or three Latin American civilization courses toward the general education requirement, the major requires either eleven or twelve courses. Students who use all three quarters of a Latin American civilization sequence to meet the general education requirement will complete an eleven-course major. Students who fulfill the general education requirement with two quarters of the sequence will count the third quarter of the sequence toward the major, for a total of twelve courses in the major.

Students participating in a study abroad program may petition to have courses accepted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the major.

General Education Courses

Students who are majoring in Latin American and Caribbean Studies must complete the general education requirement in civilization studies with LACS 16100-16200-16300 Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III or SOSC 19019-19020-19021 Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I-II-III. Either of these sequences provides an excellent introduction to the program.

Language Courses

Students should complete three courses in second-year Spanish or Portuguese to meet the language requirement for the major. Eligible students may petition for credit for two of the three courses.

Content Courses and Electives

To meet requirements for the major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, students must also take five courses that focus on Latin America or the Caribbean and two additional courses that cover any social science topic. Students may find listings of quarterly approved courses on the Center for Latin American Studies website at clas.uchicago.edu.

BA Colloquium

All students who major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies are required to participate in the BA Colloquium and to submit a BA essay. The BA Colloquium in Latin American Studies (LACS 29801 BA Colloquium) is a yearlong course led by the preceptor and BA adviser. Fourth-year students are required to participate in all three quarters, although they register for the colloquium only once in Autumn Quarter. The colloquium assists students in formulating approaches to the BA essay and developing their research and writing skills.
skills, while providing a forum for group discussion and critiques. Graduating students present their BA essays in a public session of the colloquium during Spring Quarter.

**BA Essay**

All students who are majoring in Latin American and Caribbean Studies are required to write a BA essay under the supervision of a faculty member. The BA essay is due Spring Quarter of the year of graduation. During the Spring Quarter of their third year, all BA majors (double majors included) will be required to participate in a thesis proposal workshop series. This series will help third-year majors develop a thesis topic, find a faculty adviser, and begin conducting thesis research prior to the start of the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. Students will be contacted in the Winter Quarter of their third year with information regarding the workshop series.

Registration for a BA essay preparation course (LACS 29900 Preparation of the BA Essay) is optional. Students who do register for LACS 29900 Preparation of the BA Essay may count this course as one of the five they must take dealing with Latin America. The grade students will receive for this course depends on the successful completion of the BA essay.

This program may accept a BA essay project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of both program chairs. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest BA proposal deadline (or by the end of their third year, if neither program publishes a deadline). A consent form, to be signed by both chairs, is available from the College advising office. It must be completed and returned to the student's College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student's year of graduation.

**Summary of Requirements: Latin American and Caribbean Studies Major**

**GENERAL EDUCATION**

One of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LACS 16100 &amp; LACS 16200</td>
<td>Introduction to Latin American Civilization I and II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSC 19019 &amp; SOSC 19020</td>
<td>Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I and II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Units 200

**MAJOR**

One of the following courses if not taken to meet the general education requirement:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LACS 16300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSC 19021</td>
</tr>
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</table>

One of the following sequences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPAN 20100-20200-20300</td>
<td>Spanish Language, History, and Culture I-II-III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORT 20100 &amp; PORT 20200 &amp; PORT 21500</td>
<td>Intermediate Portuguese and Advanced Portuguese and Curso de Aperfeiçoamento</td>
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</table>

Five courses dealing with Latin America or the Caribbean (four in the social sciences)

Total Units 300

Two courses in the social sciences

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<tr>
<td>LACS 29801</td>
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BA Essay

Total Units 500

**Minor Program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies**

The minor program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies provides students majoring in other disciplines the opportunity to become familiar with selected aspects of Latin American and Caribbean societies, cultures, histories, politics, and economics through one or more of the social sciences as they deal with Latin American and Caribbean materials.
and one or more major languages of the region. It can provide an appropriate cultural background for careers in business, journalism, government, teaching, or the nonprofit sector, or for graduate studies in the social sciences. The course of study is designed to be flexible so as to serve students in the humanities, social sciences, biological sciences, and physical sciences. The minor, which can be completed in one year, requires five to six courses depending on how the student meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.

No courses in the minor can be double counted with the student's major(s) or with other minors, nor can they be counted toward general education requirements. They must be taken for quality grades and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

**LACS Minor Requirements**

Students who elect the minor program should meet with the program adviser before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the program. The LACS program adviser's approval for the minor must be submitted to the student's College adviser, on a form obtained from the College adviser, no later than the end of the student's third year.

**General Education**

Students must complete the general education requirement in civilization studies with LACS 16100-16200-16300 Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III or SOSC 19019-19020-19021 Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I-II-III. Students who use all three quarters of a Latin American civilization sequence to meet the general education requirement will complete a five-course minor. Students who meet the general education requirement with two quarters of the civilization sequence will count the third quarter of the sequence toward the minor, for a six-course minor.

**Language**

The minor requires two courses in Spanish or Portuguese at the level of the second year or beyond. Credit may be granted by petition for one of these courses.

**Content Courses**


**Research Paper**

Students must submit a research paper treating a Latin American and Caribbean topic for one of their Latin American and Caribbean content courses. The research paper is of intermediate length (ten to fifteen pages) and written in a course with Latin American and Caribbean content. Each student is responsible for making appropriate arrangements with the course's instructor. Completion of the course research paper must be demonstrated to the program adviser in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

**Summary of Requirements: Latin American and Caribbean Studies Minor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One of the following if not taken to meet the general education requirement:</td>
<td>0-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LACS 16300</td>
<td>Introduction to Latin American Civilization III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSC 19021</td>
<td>Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the following sequences: *</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN 20100 &amp; SPAN 20200</td>
<td>Language, History, and Culture I and Language, History, and Culture II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORT 20100-20200</td>
<td>Intermediate Portuguese; Advanced Portuguese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three courses dealing with Latin America or the Caribbean</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>500-600</td>
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* Eligible students may petition for partial credit (for only one language course).

**Latin American and Caribbean Studies Courses**

The following courses are for reference only. See Class Search at registrar.uchicago.edu/classes for specific offerings. See the Center for Latin American Studies Courses webpage at clas.uchicago.edu for further information on quarterly offerings.
LACS 12200. Portuguese For Spanish Speakers. 100 Units.
This course is intended for speakers of Spanish to develop competence quickly in spoken and written Portuguese. In this intermediate-level course, students learn ways to apply their Spanish language skills to mastering Portuguese by concentrating on the similarities and differences between the two languages.
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring
Prerequisite(s): SPAN 10300 or consent of instructor
Equivalent Course(s): PORT 12200

LACS 16100-16200-16300. Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III.
Taking these courses in sequence is not required. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. This sequence is offered every year. This course introduces the history and cultures of Latin America (e.g., Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean Islands).

LACS 16100. Introduction to Latin American Civilization I. 100 Units.
Autumn Quarter examines the origins of civilizations in Latin America with a focus on the political, social, and cultural features of the major pre-Columbian civilizations of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec. The quarter concludes with an analysis of the Spanish and Portuguese conquest, and the construction of colonial societies in Latin America. The courses in this sequence may be taken in any order.
Instructor(s): A. Kolata
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 36101, LACS 34600, CRES 16101, HIST 16101, ANTH 23101, SOSC 26100

LACS 16200. Introduction to Latin American Civilization II. 100 Units.
Winter Quarter addresses the evolution of colonial societies, the wars of independence, and the emergence of Latin American nation-states in the changing international context of the nineteenth century.
Instructor(s): D. Borges
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 36102, LACS 34700, SOSC 26200, CRES 16102, HIST 16102, PPHA 39770, ANTH 23102

LACS 16300. Introduction to Latin American Civilization III. 100 Units.
Spring Quarter focuses on the twentieth century, with special emphasis on the challenges of economic, political, and social development in the region.
Instructor(s): D. Borges
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 16103, LACS 34800, PPHA 39780, HIST 16103, ANTH 23103, SOSC 26300, HIST 36103

LACS 16200. Introduction to Latin American Civilization II. 100 Units.
Winter Quarter addresses the evolution of colonial societies, the wars of independence, and the emergence of Latin American nation-states in the changing international context of the nineteenth century.
Instructor(s): D. Borges
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 36102, LACS 34700, SOSC 26200, CRES 16102, HIST 16102, PPHA 39770, ANTH 23102

LACS 16300. Introduction to Latin American Civilization III. 100 Units.
Spring Quarter focuses on the twentieth century, with special emphasis on the challenges of economic, political, and social development in the region.
Instructor(s): D. Borges
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 16103, LACS 34800, PPHA 39780, HIST 16103, ANTH 23103, SOSC 26300, HIST 36103

LACS 21100. Las regiones del español. 100 Units.
This sociolinguistic course expands understanding of the historical development of Spanish and awareness of the great sociocultural diversity within the Spanish-speaking world and its impact on the Spanish language. We emphasize the interrelationship between language and culture as well as ethno-historical transformations within the different regions of the Hispanic world. Special consideration is given to identifying lexical variations and regional expressions exemplifying diverse sociocultural aspects of the Spanish language, and to recognizing phonological differences between dialects. We also examine the impact of indigenous cultures on dialectical aspects. The course includes literary and nonliterary texts, audiovisual materials, and visits by native speakers of a variety of Spanish-speaking regions.
Terms Offered: Spring Winter
Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300 or placement
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 21100

LACS 24110. Ecocritical Perspectives in Latin American Literature and Film. 100 Units.
This course provides a survey of ecocritical studies in Latin America. Through novels, poems, and films, we will examine a range of trends and problems posed by Latin American artists concerning environmental issues, from mid-nineteenth century to contemporary literature and film. Readings also include works of ecocritical criticism and theory that have been shaping the field in the past decades.
Instructor(s): V. Saramago
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 24110, SPAN 34110, PORT 24110, LACS 34110, PORT 34110
LACS 25122. Historia Cultural: Dinamicas Identitarias y Culturales. 100 Units.
En las últimas décadas, hemos asistido a una transformación radical de los parámetros con los que estábamos acostumbrados a relacionarnos, y que, para lo que nos concierne en esta ocasión, involucran las “representaciones” y las “identidades”; a tal punto que los referentes anteriores resultan generalmente obsoletos para interpretar los actuales procesos de cambio. La compleja relación entre globalización y localismos, la reconversión de las fronteras y los grandes flujos migratorios que han llevado el mundo “subdesarrollado” al corazón de los países centrales de América y Europa, lejos de haber desplazado el paradigma de las “identidades”, parecen contribuir a reforzar su importancia: poniendo incluso en entredicho las formas actuales de ciudadanía y de consenso social. El objetivo del curso será revisar el concepto tradicional de “cultura”, la historia de los acercamientos antropológicos a las pequeñas comunidades, los cambios planteados por la Antropología “posmoderna” acerca de este concepto, así como los debates actuales que acercan la cultura a la historia (“griot cultural” e “historia de las mentalidades”) y a la economía; y que, además, involucran al concepto de “identidad”: con el fin de hacer un planteamiento metodológico para el análisis de las “identidades en movimiento” en la fase actual de la mundialización. La dinámica consistirá en varios temas y discusiones subsecuentes.
Instructor(s): Antonio García de León de Griego Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course will be taught in Spanish
Equivalent Course(s): LACS 35122, SPAN 35119, SPAN 25119

LACS 25805. Popol Vuh, Epic of the Americas. 100 Units.
One of the oldest and grandest stories of world creation in the native Americas, the Mayan Popol Vuh has been called “the Bible of America.” It tells a story of cosmological origins and continued historical change, spanning mythic, classic, colonial, and contemporary times. In this class, we’ll read this full work closely (in multiple translations, while engaging its original K’iche’ Mayan language), attending to the important way in which its structure relates myth and history, or foundations and change. In this light, we’ll examine its mirroring in Genesis, Odyssey, Beowulf, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, and Diné Bahane’ to consider how epic struggle with a simultaneity of origins and historiography. In highlighting this tension between cosmos and politics, we’ll examine contemporary adaptations of the Popol Vuh by Miguel Angel Asturias, Ernesto Cardenal, Diego Rivera, Dennis Tedlock, Humberto Ak’ab’al, Xpetra Ernandex, Patricia Amlin, Gregory Nava, and Werner Herzog. As we cast the Guatemalan Popul Vuh as a contemporary work of hemispheric American literature (with North American, Latin American, Latinx, and Indigenous literary engagement), we will take into account the intellectual contribution of Central America and the diaspora of Central Americans in the U.S. today. As a capstone, we will visit the original manuscript of the Popol Vuh held at the Newberry Library in Chicago, thinking about how this story of world creation implicates us to this day. (Poetry, Fiction)
Instructor(s): Edgar Garcia Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Note: students who cross-list from RLL will read Spanish-language texts in their original Spanish
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 25805, ENGL 25805

LACS 26416. Latin American Extractivisms. 100 Units.
This course will survey the historical antecedents and contemporary politics of Latin American extractivisms. While resource extraction in Latin America is far from new, the scale and transnational scope of current “neoextractivisms” have unearthed unprecedented rates of profit as well as social conflict. Today’s oil wells, open-pit mines, and vast fields of industrial agriculture have generated previously unthinkable transformations to local ecologies and social life, while repeating histories of indigenous land dispossession in the present. Yet parallel to neo-extractive regimes, emergent Latin American social movements have unleashed impassioned and often unexpected forms of local and transnational resistance. Readings in the course will contrast cross-regional trends of extractive economic development and governance with fine-grained accounts of how individuals, families, and communities experience and respond to land dispossession, local and transregional conflict, and the ecological and health impacts of Latin American extractivisms.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23093, PBPL 26416

LACS 26417. Toxic States: Corrupted Ecologies in Latin America and the Caribbean. 100 Units.
Concepts of purity and danger, the sacred and profane, and contamination and healing constitute central analytics of anthropological inquiry into religion, medicine, and ecology. This course brings diverse theories of corporeal corruption to bare on contemporary ethography of toxicity, particularly in order to examine the impact of political corruption on ecological matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will both historicize a growing disciplinary preoccupation with materiality, contamination, and the chemical, as well as conceptualize its empirical significance within neo-colonial/liberal states throughout the region.
Instructor(s): S. Graeter Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 32330, ANTH 23027, LACS 36417, PPHA 39922

LACS 26418. Race, Gender, and Indigeneity in Latin America and the Caribbean. 100 Units.
This entry level course will introduce students to the cultural and scientific politics of difference in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Through historical and ethnographic texts, this course will survey the biological and ideological formation of race, gender/sex, and indigeneity in the colonial period, how these intersectional concepts transformed during state formation, and how theories of human difference impact people in the region today.
Instructor(s): Graeter, Stefanie Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 26418, ANTH 23076, CRES 26418
LACS 26419. Latin American Social Movement. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the historical and contemporary significance of social movements in the Latin American and Caribbean region, including migrant and other latinx politics across the US border. Through anthropological, historical, and theoretical texts, students will gain a strong foundation on topics of social movements, collective action, unions, human rights, environmentalism, and theories of “the political.”
Instructor(s): Graeter, Stefanie Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23082, GNSE 26419, CRES 26419

LACS 26623. Anti-Corruption Politics in Latin America. 100 Units.
Calls for corporate accountability from civil society and widespread public anxieties concerning large scale corporate corruption scandals have become salient modes of articulating questions of power in contemporary Latin America & the Caribbean. This trend, while not homogeneous or new, denounces the relation between two modes of power -- state and corporate -- considered to be at the heart of the region's democracies. What is the relation between today's war against corruption and ongoing transformations of corporate and financial power? What has been the effect of anti-corruption discourse over horizons for emancipatory politics - such as Human Rights praxis? This course critically examines anti-corruption politics as constituting one of the region's most salient frameworks of accountability in the present. Crucially, we will situate it in relation to Latin America's robust trajectory of critiquing power through the analysis of corporate power as well as the mobilization of Human Rights discourse.
Instructor(s): Azuero Quijano, Alejandra Terms Offered: Spring

LACS 29101. Archive [Yellow] Fever. 100 Units.
This course examines slavery in the 18th and 19th-century Caribbean through the lens of maladies within and of the archive. The course also provides an introduction in methods of working in historical and contemporary archives. We will read fictional, archival, methodological and theoretical texts to examine fears of contagion and disease on the Middle Passage and plantations of the Caribbean, as well as scholarship on the difficulty of working in archives, especially those of slavery. The class will make two trips to special collections, one to view archival texts from the period and another to find an archival object of the student's choosing (relevant to their own research interests) that will provide the topic of their final paper. Texts in this course include the work of Saidiya Hartman, Marisa Fuentes, Jacques Derrida, Carolyn Steedman, Christina Sharpe, Simone Browne, Michel Foucault; Richard Ligon, Mary Seacole, Thomas Thistlewood, William Earle. (1650-1830, 1830-1940) This course is part of the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Research Cluster.
Instructor(s): Sarah Johnson Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): This course is limited to 15 third- and fourth-year students who have already fulfilled the Department’s Genre Fundamentals (formerly Gateway) requirement and taken at least two further English courses.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 29101, GNSE 29103, CRES 29101

LACS 29700. Reading and Research in Latin American Studies. 100 Units.
Students and instructors can arrange a Reading and Research course in Latin American Studies when the material being studied goes beyond the scope of a particular course, when students are working on material not covered in an existing course or when students would like to receive academic credit for independent research.
Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Autumn,Spring,Summer,Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of undergraduate thesis/project adviser required
Note(s): College students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for a quality grade.

LACS 27526. Race and Gender in the Making of the Modern Atlantic World(s), c. 1700-1990s. 100 Units.
This colloquium-style course proposes that the development of race, racial ideologies, and gender in the Atlantic is central to understanding the formation of the modern world. The course mobilizes race and gender as analytic categories that shaped encounters with and relations between colonized and colonizer. By adopting this approach, we will use the lens of race and gender to explore how they shaped various historical experiences: such the circulation of peoples and goods in transatlantic contexts; the formation and establishment of slavery, the slave trade, and the plantation complex; anti-Human Rights, abolitionism, and emancipation; immigration and post-slavery labor; citizenship and nationhood; reproduction; post-colonial LGBTQ rights, and twentieth-century racial politics. We will also problematize race and gender as flexible categories that historical actors formulated and implemented to establish, maintain, and contest hierarchies of political, economic, and social power. We will use a combination of primary texts, novels, and secondary sources to explore the comparative and intersecting historical experiences of African, Amerindian, Chinese, Creole, European, and Indian experiences in the Atlantic world from early encounters and exploration to twentieth-century decolonization and postcolonialism- thereby challenging traditional racial binaries that have previously informed our understanding of transatlantic empires.
Instructor(s): Lyons, Deirdre Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 29104, CRES 27526, GNSE 27526

LACS 29801. BA Colloquium. 100 Units.
This colloquium, which is led by the LACS BA Preceptor, assists students in formulating approaches to the BA essay and developing their research and writing skills, while providing a forum for group discussion and critiques. Graduating students present their BA essays in a public session of the colloquium during the spring quarter.
Instructor(s): CLAS Staff Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): For fourth year (graduating) students majoring in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.
Note(s): Required of students who are majoring in Latin American Studies. Students must participate in all three quarters but register only in autumn quarter.
LACS 29900. Preparation of the BA Essay. 100 Units.
Independent study course intended to be used by 4th year BA students who are writing the BA thesis.
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of undergraduate thesis/project adviser required
Note(s): Typically taken for a quality grade.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.