Latin American and Caribbean Studies

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

Major Program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) is an interdisciplinary program for students who want to engage critical issues in the social sciences and humanities through deep immersion in the histories, cultures, economies, politics, and natural environments of Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to gaining deep knowledge of a region closely tied to Chicago and the United States, LACS students will develop strong linguistic, research, and analytical skills; most also spend significant time studying or conducting fieldwork in a Latin American country.

The major requirements include: coursework; language proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese; experiential learning that aims to broaden students’ appreciation of Latin American and Caribbean perspectives and deepen their cultural fluency; and a fourth-year BA colloquium and capstone project that allow students to develop their capacity for independent, creative, rigorous inquiry. Students can choose every year from dozens of course listings across the disciplines and can expect individualized mentorship and advising from our dedicated faculty and staff.

The Center for Latin American Studies supplements the program’s academic offerings with dozens of public events each year, which help to build a strong Latin American Studies community. We also aim to expose students to Chicago’s role as a significantly Latin American city and to prepare them for careers in government, journalism, law, business, teaching, the nonprofit sector, or academia.

Program Requirements

Students in the Class of 2022 and beyond will follow the requirements for the Latin American and Caribbean Studies major described below. Students in the Class of 2021 will continue under the previous requirements, which may be found on the Center for Latin American Studies website (http://clas.uchicago.edu/).

LACS majors are required to take 11 courses in addition to the Latin American Civilization prerequisite, distributed as follows:

Prerequisite: Introduction to Latin American Civilization

LACS majors should all complete the Introduction to Latin American Civilization sequence as a prerequisite to the major, either on campus (LACS 16100-16200-16300 Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III) or in Oaxaca, México (SOSC 19019-19020-19021 Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I-II-III). This sequence can be taken in order to fulfill the general education requirement in civilization studies, in which case none of the three courses will count toward the LACS major. Students who take Latin American Civilization separately from the general education requirement can count one of the three courses in the sequence as a content course toward the LACS major.

LACS Courses

Five courses in at least two divisions (e.g., Social Sciences, Humanities, Biological Sciences) that focus on Latin America and/or the Caribbean. This means that at least one course must be taken outside of the primary division of study.

Electives

Two elective courses that integrate research methodology and/or experiential learning, chosen in consultation with the program adviser. These courses are not required to focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, but should provide students with new ways of learning and thinking that could be applied to their study of the region. Language acquisition courses in a second regional language (beyond the one language a student chooses to fulfill the language requirement) may be counted toward this category.

Language

The LACS language requirement can be completed in one of two ways:

- Completion of three courses at the second-year level or above in one of the two major regional languages (Spanish or Portuguese). Students with strong language preparation may petition out of one of these courses, substituting it with a content course or a course in a second Latin American or Caribbean language.

OR
• Earning the Practical Language Proficiency Certification ([link](https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/practical-language-proficiency-assessment/)), which assesses listening, reading, speaking, and writing abilities. This certification documents students’ ability to functionally use a foreign language in personal, academic, and professional settings. Students who fulfill the language requirement through the proficiency certification must substitute with three LACS courses or three courses in a second regional language. Students who complete the language requirement by enrolling in coursework may also register to take the Practical Language Proficiency Assessment in order to document their language abilities.

Students who complete the Practical Language Proficiency Certification without enrolling in language courses at the University (e.g., native speakers, students who participated in language immersion programs, etc.) are strongly encouraged to study a second regional language, such as Portuguese, Haitian Kreyol, or an indigenous language that relates to their area of interest.

BA Capstone Project and BA Colloquium

All students who are majoring in Latin American and Caribbean Studies are required to complete a capstone project under the supervision of a faculty member. The capstone project may take the form of a BA thesis, an online exhibition, a documentary film, a podcast, or another intellectual or artistic endeavor; non-traditional projects must be accompanied by a critical piece of writing explaining the student’s intellectual or artistic rationale and the process that led to the student’s creation. The project is due Friday of fourth week of the Spring Quarter.

During the Winter and Spring Quarters of their third year, all LACS majors (double majors included) are required to participate in a workshop series (three to four sessions) focused on preparation for the capstone project. Students will be provided with information on the workshop series early in the Winter Quarter of their third year. The program adviser will work individually with students who are studying abroad during either or both quarters.

Fourth-year students are required to enroll in LACS 29801 BA Colloquium. Although students register for LACS 29801 only once, in Autumn Quarter, they participate for all three quarters and grades are issued at the end of the year. The colloquium assists students in formulating approaches to the BA capstone project and developing their research, communication, and project management skills, while providing a forum for group discussion and critiques.

Students have the option of taking LACS 29900 Preparation of the BA Essay in Winter or Spring Quarter to afford additional time for research or writing; this course is taught by arrangement between a student and the student’s project adviser. Students who register for LACS 29900 may count it toward their five LACS content courses. The grade a student receives for this course depends on the successful completion of the BA capstone project.

This program may accept a BA project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of both program chairs/directors. Students should consult with the program chairs/directors 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/directors, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student’s year of graduation.

Experiential Learning

As part of or in addition to their coursework, students are required to participate in an approved study abroad program, internship, or other experiential learning project with significant links to their program of study. The LACS program adviser and Center for Latin American Studies staff will work individually with each major to ensure that the student has access to opportunities that are appropriate to the student’s background, skills, and plan of study.

Options for meeting the requirement include, but are not limited to:

- Taking Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca, enrolling in the Catholic University of Chile Exchange Program, or utilizing a Third Year International Travel Grant or Foreign Language Acquisition Grant (FLAG) in the region
- Completing a summer or academic year internship with an appropriate organization in Chicago, elsewhere in the United States, or in Latin America
- Participating in a research assistantship with a University of Chicago faculty member
- Completing an experiential learning project as part of an LACS course
- Developing an experience or project that has been approved by the LACS program adviser

Students must complete this requirement by the Spring Quarter of the year they plan to graduate.
ADVISING

Students who plan to declare a major in Latin American and Caribbean Studies should be in contact with the program adviser as early as possible to discuss their interest in the program and how to meet program requirements. Students should select their courses for the LACS major in close consultation with the program adviser. The Center for Latin American Studies publishes an online list of LACS courses (https://clas.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/courses/) every quarter.

Students should meet with the program adviser no later than the Winter Quarter of their third year to discuss their major progress and to discuss the BA Colloquium and the BA capstone project. Students who plan to study abroad during the Winter and/or Spring Quarter of their third year should meet with the program adviser before leaving campus.

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES MAJOR (11 COURSES)

PREREQUISITES

One of the following: 300

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<th>LACS 16100-16200-16300</th>
<th>Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOSC 19019-19020-19021</td>
<td>Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I-II-III</td>
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Total Units 300

MAJOR

LACS Courses: Five courses, in at least two divisions (e.g., Social Sciences, Humanities, Biological Sciences), that focus on Latin America and/or the Caribbean 500

Electives: Two elective courses that integrate research methodology and/or experiential learning ** 200

Language: Three courses in 20000-level or higher Spanish or Portuguese *** 300

LACS 29801 BA Colloquium 100

Additional Requirements: BA Capstone Project and Experiential Learning

Total Units 1100

* This sequence can be taken in order to fulfill the general education requirement in civilization studies, in which case none of the three courses will count toward the LACS major. Students who take Latin American Civilization separately from the general education requirement can count one of the three courses in the sequence as a content course toward the LACS major.

** These courses are not required to focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, but should provide students with new ways of learning and thinking that could be applied to their study of the region.

*** Students with strong language preparation may petition out of one of these courses, substituting it with a content course or a course in a second Latin American or Caribbean language. Students who fulfill the language requirement through the proficiency certification must substitute with three LACS courses or three courses in a second regional language.

GRADING

Each of the required courses for the LACS major must be taken for a quality grade.

HONORS

Students who have done exceptionally well in their coursework and on their BA capstone project are considered for honors. Candidates must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher overall and 3.25 or higher in the major.

MINOR PROGRAM IN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES

Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) is an interdisciplinary program for students who want to engage critical issues in the social sciences and humanities through study of the histories, cultures, economies, politics, and natural environments of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The minor requirements include coursework, language proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese, and the submission of a research paper from a LACS course. Students can choose every year from dozens of course listings across the disciplines.

The Center for Latin American Studies supplements the program’s academic offerings with dozens of public events each year, which help to build a strong Latin American Studies community. We also aim to expose
students to Chicago’s role as a significantly Latin American city and to prepare them for careers in government, journalism, law, business, teaching, the nonprofit sector, or academia.

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.

Program Requirements

LACS minors are required to take five courses in addition to the Latin American Civilization prerequisite, distributed as follows:

**Prerequisite: Introduction to Latin American Civilization**

LACS minors should all complete the Introduction to Latin American Civilization sequence as a prerequisite to the major, either on campus (LACS 16100-16200-16300 Introduction to Latin American Civilization I-II-III) or in Oaxaca, México (SOSC 19019-19020-19021 Latin American Civilization in Oaxaca I-II-III). This sequence can be taken in order to fulfill the general education requirement in civilization studies, in which case none of the three courses will count toward the LACS minor. Students who take Latin American Civilization separately from the general education requirement can count one of the three courses in the sequence as a content course toward the LACS minor.

**LACS Courses**

Three courses that focus on Latin America and/or the Caribbean. Students may find listings of quarterly approved courses on the Center for Latin American Studies website (https://clas.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/courses/).

**Language**

The LACS language requirement can be completed in one of two ways:

- Completion of two courses at the second-year level or above in one of the two major regional languages (Spanish or Portuguese). Students with strong language preparation may petition out of one of these courses, substituting it with a content course or a course in a second Latin American or Caribbean language.

OR

- Earning the Practical Language Proficiency Certification (https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/practical-language-proficiency-assessment/), which assesses listening, reading, speaking, and writing abilities. This certification documents students' ability to functionally use a foreign language in personal, academic, and professional settings. Students who fulfill the language requirement through the proficiency certification must substitute with two LACS courses or two courses in a second regional language. Students who complete the language requirement by enrolling in coursework may also register to take the Practical Language Proficiency Assessment in order to document their language abilities.

**Research Paper**

Students must submit a research paper treating a Latin American and/or Caribbean topic written for one of their LACS content courses. The research paper should be of intermediate length (10–15 pages). The student is responsible for making appropriate arrangements with the course instructor. Completion of the research paper must be demonstrated to the LACS program adviser.

**ADVISING**

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

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS: LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES MINOR (5 COURSES)**

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Total Units 300
MINOR
LACS Courses: Three courses that focus on Latin America and/or the Caribbean 300
Language: Two courses in 20000-level or higher Spanish or Portuguese ** 200
Additional Requirement: Submission of a research paper treating a Latin American and/or Caribbean topic for one of the LACS content courses

Total Units 500

* The Introduction to Latin American Civilization sequence can be taken in order to fulfill the general education requirement in civilization studies, in which case none of the three courses will count toward the LACS minor. Students who take Latin American Civilization separately from the general education requirement can count one of the three courses in the sequence as a content course toward the LACS minor.

** Students with strong language preparation may petition out of one of these courses, substituting it with a content course or a course in a second Latin American or Caribbean language. Students may also fulfill the language requirement by earning the Practical Language Proficiency Certification (https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/practical-language-proficiency-assessment/). Students who fulfill the language requirement through the proficiency certification must substitute with two LACS courses or two courses in a second regional language.

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES COURSES

The following courses are for reference only. See Class Search at registrar.uchicago.edu/classes (http://registrar.uchicago.edu/classes/) for specific offerings. See the Center for Latin American Studies Courses webpage at clas.uchicago.edu (https://clas.uchicago.edu/) for further information on quarterly offerings.

LACS 11008. Introduction to Latinx Literature. 100 Units.
From the activist literature of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement to contemporary fiction and poetry, this course explores the forms, aesthetics, and political engagements of U.S. Latinx literature in the 20th and 21st centuries. Theoretical readings are drawn from Chicano Studies, Latinx Studies, American Studies, Latin American Studies, Hemispheric Studies, Indigenous Studies, and Postcolonial Studies, as we explore Latinx literature in the context of current debates about globalization, neoliberalism, and U.S. foreign policy; Latinx literature’s response to technological and socio-political changes and its engagement with race, gender, sexuality, class, and labor; and its dialogues with indigenous, Latin American, North American, and European literatures. (Poetry, 1830-1940, Theory)
Instructor(s): Rachel Galvin Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 21008, CMLT 11008, ENGL 11008

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): Emilio Kourí Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 16101, SOSC 26100, LACS 34600, ANTH 23101, HIST 16101, HIST 36101

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 16102, PPHA 39770, SOSC 26200, LACS 34700, CRES 16102, HIST 36102, 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): B. Fischer Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 16103, PPHA 39780, HIST 36103, SOSC 26300, ANTH 23103, LACS 34800, CRES 16103

**LACS 19880. Inhabiting the Borderlands: Latinx Embodiment in Literature, Art, and Popular Culture. 100 Units.**

How does a Latinx cultural identity become legible? What are the conditions of its recognition? What kinds of embodied practices and performances serve to point to the particular intersections of race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and gender that can be termed "Latinx"? To approach these questions, this course will explore critical texts by Diana Taylor, Gloria Anzaldúa, Julia Alvarez, Coco Fusco, José Esteban Muñoz, and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, among others, as well as performances, artwork, and literature by La Lupe, Walter Mercado, Yalitza Aparicio, Cherrie Moraga, Judith Baca, Carmen María Machado, and more. (Theory)

Instructor(s): Carmen Merport Terms Offered: Winter  
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 19880, GNSE 19880, CRES 19880

**LACS 20046. Introduction to Caribbean Studies. 100 Units.**

Why have critics, writers, and artists described the Caribbean as "ground zero" of Western modernity? Beginning with the period before European settlement, we will study slavery and emancipation, Asian indentureship, labor and social movements, decolonization, debt and tourism, and today's digital Caribbean. We will survey literary and visual cultures, primary source documents, and thought across the English, French, Spanish, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. All readings will be available in translation. (Fiction, Theory)

Instructor(s): Kaneesha Parsard Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): PORT 20100 or consent of instructor.

**LACS 20500. Cultura do Mundo Lusófono. 100 Units.**

In this course students will explore the culture of the Lusophone world through the study of a wide variety of contemporary literary and journalistic texts from Brazil, Portugal, Angola and Mozambique, and unscripted recordings. This advanced language course targets the development of writing skills and oral proficiency in Portuguese. Students will review problematic grammatical structures, write a number of essays, and participate in multiple class debates, using authentic readings and listening segments as linguistic models on which to base their own production.

Terms Offered: Winter  
Prerequisite(s): PORT 20100 or consent of the instructor.  
Equivalent Course(s): PORT 20500

**LACS 20600. Composição e Conversação Avançada. 100 Units.**

The objective of this course is to help students acquire advanced grammatical knowledge of the Portuguese language through exposure to cultural and literary content with a focus on Brazil. Students develop skills to continue perfecting their oral and written proficiency and comprehension of authentic literary texts and recordings, while also being exposed to relevant sociocultural and political contemporary topics. Students read, analyze, and discuss authentic texts by established writers from the lusophone world; they watch and discuss videos of interviews with writers and other prominent figures to help them acquire the linguistic skills required in academic discourse. Through exposure to written and spoken authentic materials, students learn the grammatical and lexical tools necessary to understand such materials as well as produce their own written analysis, response, and commentary. In addition, they acquire knowledge on major Brazilian authors and works.

Terms Offered: Winter  
Prerequisite(s): PORT 20100 or consent of instructor.  
Equivalent Course(s): PORT 20600

**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, audio-visual 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 21619. From Lorca to Lin-Manuel Miranda: Staging Latinidad. 100 Units.**

In this course, we will delve into ten significant theater plays written in the last century by Spanish, Latin American and Latinx playwrights. We will examine how latinidad, with its multiple definitions and contradictions, emerges in these plays; and also, which questions these works pose regarding the different historic and cultural contexts in which they were written. As a discipline that aims to explore and embody social practices and identities, theater has become a place where these questions articulate themselves in a critical manner. A physical space where bodies and languages explore, sometimes through its mere unfolding on the page and the stage, unforeseen limits of class, identity, and ethnicity. Each week, we will discuss one play and
one or two significant critical essays, and the discussion will be conducted through a set of questions and crossed references. To which extent does the domestic exploration and the all-women cast of Lorca's "La casa de Bernarda Alba" resonate in Fornés' "Fefu And Her Friends"? How does the experience of immigration affect the characters of Marqués' "La carreta," and how do Chiara Alegria Hudes and Lin-Manuel Miranda echo this foundational fiction in In the Heights? How was the success of plays such as Valdez's "Zoot Suit" or Cruz's "Anna in the Tropics" received within the Latino community, and how did it affect the general reception of Latino plays?

Instructor(s): I. Fanlo
Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taught in English. Readings available in both English and Spanish. Spanish majors & minors must do the readings and/or writings in Spanish.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21619, TAPS 25219, SPAN 21619

LACS 21720. Histoire, superstitions et croyances dans le roman francophone contemporain. 100 Units.

Superstitions and traditional beliefs are an integral part of African and Caribbean cultural identities. Based on myths, legends and proverbs, they were usually passed down orally. This course explores and critically analyzes their literary representations: how do contemporary authors rethink, reframe and rewrite myths and legends that primarily stems from an oral tradition? How are these stories used as a framing device to interrogate contemporary historical events? The course emphasizes cultural and socio-political connections through some close readings and discussions. Readings include texts by Mariama Bâ, René Depestre, Véronique Lordinot, Gisèle Pineau and Véronique Tadjou.

Instructor(s): M. Kenfack
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500 or 20503. This is an introductory-level course.
Note(s): Readings and discussion in French.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 21720

LACS 22024. Literatura y cartografía: Visiones del Caribe en el Siglo de Oro español. 100 Units.

Durante el siglo XVI aparecen las primeras representaciones cartográficas y literarias del Caribe. Estas articulan el deseo de las grandes potencias europeas por codificar territorialmente esta región del mundo para conocerla y en última instancia dominarla. Así, la cuenca caribeña emerge como escenario de tensiones políticas y económicas, que se extienden hasta el día de hoy. Este curso tiene como objetivo explorar la relación de las representaciones del Caribe en la literatura y cartografía producida durante los siglos XVI y XVII con los discursos de poder asociados a los procesos de conquista y colonización implementados por el Imperio Español. El curso está dividido en cuatro unidades. Primero, examinaremos las representaciones cartográficas del Caribe producidas entre los siglos XVI y XVII. Segundo, abordaremos la descripción y delimitación del Caribe y sus habitantes en las crónicas de conquista producidas por Colón, de las Casas y Pané. Tercero, discutiremos los poemas "Discurso del capitán Francisco Draque" y "La Dragontea" para explorar el rol de la piratería en la articulación del espacio caribeño como escenario de contiendas políticas y económicas. Finalmente, nos acercaremos a otros ejemplos representativos de la literatura aurisecular que de manera indirecta aluden al Caribe como sustrato literario. Se explorarán también la cultura material de la producción cartográfica y literaria de la época, y la relación que existe entre texto e imagen.

Instructor(s): M. Rosario
Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Taught in Spanish.
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 22020

LACS 22521. ¿Qué onda, Siri? Ciencia ficción Latinoamericana. 100 Units.

Intercambio de cartas entre México y la luna, exploradores planetarios argentinos, hackers activistas en Bolivia y viajes en el tiempo para salvar el Caribe. Aunque a lo largo de su historia no haya gozado del mismo prestigio que otros géneros literarios, la ciencia ficción en América Latina tiene ejemplos que datan del siglo XVIII. Sin embargo, no es hasta los 1950s que el género empieza a ganar impulso editorial y, más tarde, académico. Ya en el siglo XXI, autores como Rita Indiana, Pola Oloixarac y Edmundo Paz Soldán han utilizado los variados elementos constitutivos del género y alcanzando incluso reconocimiento internacional. Frente a tal histórico, este curso busca contestar las siguientes preguntas: ¿De qué manera se asemeja y se difiere la ciencia ficción latinoamericana de sustrato literario. Se explorarán también la cultura material de la producción cartográfica y literaria de la época, y la relación que existe entre texto e imagen.

Instructor(s): E. Leao
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300.
Note(s): Taught in Spanish.
Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 22521

LACS 23025. Vidas Infames: Sujetos heterodoxos en el mundo hispánico (1500-1800) 100 Units.

En este curso leeremos y discutiremos las vidas de varias mujeres y hombres comunes perseguidos por la Inquisición hispánica entre 1500 y 1800, aproximadamente, tanto en Europa y el Mediterráneo como en las Américas. La mayoría de estas vidas fueron dichas por los mismos acusados frente a un tribunal eclesiástico. Estas autobiografías orales, producidas en condiciones de máxima dureza y precariedad, revelan la forma en que la vida cotidiana es moldeada e interrumpida por el poder. Leeremos las historias de hombres transgénero,
mujeres criptojudías, campesinos moriscos, renegados, profetas y monjas acusadas de sodomía, entre otras; y discutiremos temas como la relación entre poder y subjetividad, heterodoxia y cultura popular, las formas narrativas del yo o la articulación biográfica de la clase, la raza y el género en la primera modernidad. Estas ‘vidas ínfimas’, a pesar de su concreta individualidad, permiten ofrecer un amplio panorama de la historia cultural y social de España y América en la era de la Inquisición.

Instructor(s): M. Martínez Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Taught in Spanish.

Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 23025, SPAN 33025, LACS 33025

LACS 23083. A Latin American Anthropology of Violence and Conflict in Latin America. 100 Units.
This course explores the dynamics of conflict and organized violence in Latin America through a combination of Latin American fiction and documentary films and ethnographic and other relevant research. The following are some of the interrelated topics that we will cover, which draw primarily from scholars not only of Latin America, but also in Latin America: non-state armed groups, transnational criminal networks, international cooperation and humanitarian intervention, human rights abuses and activism, gendered experiences of violence and its aftermath, and the state. We will begin our work in contemporary conversations about these topics throughout the region and weave in readings from the globally dispersed foundational thinkers who have informed these conversations. Students will develop a case study of their choosing over the quarter and receive in-class instruction on forming and managing effective writing groups to facilitate their projects. Significant flexibility is also possible for those who want to incorporate their coursework into the development of a larger research project.

Instructor(s): Erin McFee Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2020

Prerequisite(s): PQ. Course materials and discussions will be in both Spanish and English; Spanish fluency required.

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 23083, LACS 32335, SPAN 23083, ANTH 23083, GLST 23083, ANTH 32335

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, LACS 34110, PORT 34110, PORT 24110

LACS 24821. Krik…Krak! Contemporary Cross-Atlantic Storytelling: Tradition, Resistance and Empowerment. 100 Units.

Africa and Afro-Caribbean people’s oral tradition can be traced back to slavery, when Black slaves turned to storytelling as a means of expression and resistance. With the advent of writing, storytelling flourished, and became associated with entertainment, cultural preservation, and education as well as identity and moral values. Through storytelling, history was conveyed, questions were answered, and lifelong lessons were taught and learned. In this seminar we will explore written storytelling traditions from Africa and Caribbean French-speaking countries through the lens of history, with a focus on contemporary writers. How have writers adapted oral stories to new historical contexts? What are the implications of these adaptations? How has storytelling been streamlined to deal with new challenges, especially political and social status quo? How does storytelling contribute to empowerment and agency? Students will engage in close readings and collaborative discussions to analyze and interpret folktales from Ivory Coast, Haiti, French Guiana, among others.

Instructor(s): M. Kenfack Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500 or 20503.

Note(s): Readings in French. Class discussions in French and English.

Equivalent Course(s): FREN 24821

LACS 25322. A History of Public Spaces in Mexico, 1520-2020. 100 Units.

Streets and plazas have been sites in which much of Mexican history has been fought, forged, and even performed. This course examines the history of public spaces in Mexico since the Spanish Conquest. By gauging the degree to which these sites were truly open to the public, it addresses questions of social exclusion, resistance, and adaptability. The course traces more than the role and evolution of built sites. It also considers the individuals and groups that helped to define these places. This allows us to read street vendors, prostitutes, students, rioters, and the “proletarian” central historical actors. Through case studies and primary sources, we will examine palpable examples of how European colonization, various forms of state building, and more recent neoliberal reforms have transformed ordinary Mexicans and their public spaces.

Instructor(s): C. Rocha Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ARCH 26322, HIST 26322, ENST 26322

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 mythical, 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 epics 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, Xperta Ernandez, Patricia Amlin, Gregory Nava, and Werner Herzog. As we cast the Guatemalan Popol 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 26322. Latin American Historiography, 19th-21st Century. 100 Units.
Review of recent trends in the history of the regions. Weekly reviews.
Instructor(s): M. Tenorio
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 26320, HIST 36320, LACS 36322

LACS 26330. Making the Maya World. 100 Units.
What do we know about the ancient Maya? Pyramids, palaces, and temples are found from Mexico to Honduras, texts in hieroglyphic script record the histories of kings and queens who ruled those cities, and painted murals, carved stone stelae, and ceramic vessels provide a glimpse of complex geopolitical dynamics and social hierarchies. Decades of archaeological research have expanded that view beyond the rulers and elites to explore the daily lives of the Maya people, networks of trade and market exchange, and agricultural and ritual practices. Present-day Maya communities attest to the dynamism and vitality of languages and traditions, often entangled in the politics of archaeological heritage and tourism. This course is a wide-ranging exploration of ancient Maya civilization and of the various ways archaeologists, anthropologists, linguists, historians, and indigenous communities have examined and manipulated the Maya past. From tropes of long-hidden mysteries rescued from the jungle to New Age appropriations of pre-Columbian rituals, from the thrill of decipherment to painstaking and technical artifact studies, we will examine how models drawn from astrology, ethnography, classical archaeology and philology, political science, and popular culture have shaped current understandings of the ancient Maya world, and also how the Maya world has, at times, resisted easy appropriation and defied expectations.
Instructor(s): Sarah Newman
Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2020
Equivalent Course(s): LACS 36330, ANTH 36330, ANTH 26330

LACS 26380. Indigenous Politics in Latin America. 100 Units.
This course examines the history of Indigenous policies and politics in Latin America from the first encounters with European empires through the 21st Century. Course readings and discussions will consider several key historical moments across the region: European encounters/colonization; the rise of liberalism and capitalist expansion in the 19th century; 20th-century integration policies; and pan-Indigenous and transnational social movements in recent decades. Students will engage with primary and secondary texts that offer interpretations and perspectives both within and across imperial and national boundaries.
Instructor(s): Diana Schwartz Francisco
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 26318, ANTH 23077

LACS 26382. Development and Environment in Latin America. 100 Units.
This course will consider the relationship between development and the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean. We will consider the social, political, and economic effects of natural resource extraction, the quest to improve places and peoples, and attendant ecological transformations, from the onset of European colonialism in the fifteenth century, to state- and private-led improvement policies in the twentieth. Some questions we will consider are: How have policies affected the sustainability of land use in the last five centuries? In what ways has the modern impetus for development, beginning in the nineteenth century and reaching its current intensity in the mid-twentieth, shifted ideas and practices of sustainability in both environmental and social terms? And, more broadly, to what extent does the notion of development help us explain the historical relationship between humans and the environment?
Instructor(s): Diana Schwartz Francisco
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 26382, ANTH 23094, HIST 36317, ENST 26382, LACS 36382, HIST 26317, GEOG 26382

LACS 26384. Art and the Archive in Greater Latin America. 100 Units.
How and why do artists engage records of the past in their work? What are the politics of both creating archives and culling from them to visually render or represent the past? Focusing on artists, art-making, and archives in Greater Latin America (including the United States), this course will consider the process of collecting and creating in artistic production from the perspectives of both theory and practice. Students in the course will work directly with archival materials in Chicago and collaborate on contemporary artistic projects that consider issues of relevance to people and places of the Western Hemisphere.
Instructor(s): Diana Schwartz-Francisco
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 26384, ARTV 20017, HIST 26319
LACS 26386. Greater Latin America. 100 Units.
What is “Latin America,” who are “Latin Americans” and what is the relationship among and between places and people of the region we call Latin America, on the one hand, and the greater Latinx diaspora in the US on the other? This course explores the history of Latin America as an idea, and the cultural, social, political, and economic connections among peoples on both sides of the southern and eastern borders of the United States. Students will engage multiple disciplinary perspectives in course readings and assignments and will explore Chicago as a crucial node in the geography of Greater Latin America. Some topics we will consider are: the origin of the concept of “Latin” America, Inter-Americanism and Pan-Americanism, transnational social movements and intellectual exchanges, migration, and racial and ethnic politics.
Instructor(s): Diana Schwartz Francisco Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 26386, HIST 26321, ANTH 23003

LACS 26388. Food Justice and Biodiversity in Latin America. 100 Units.
This course asks how the relationships between food production and consumption, economic justice, and biodiversity have changed over the last century in Latin America. As a region known both for its ecological diversity and as a producer of tropical foods regularly consumed in the United States, Latin America is also a site in which plantation style agriculture has often undermined such celebrated biodiversity. In centering the role of workers and consumers, it considers the layered relationships- ecological, social, political, economic and cultural-between the production and consumption of food from Latin America.
Instructor(s): Diana Schwartz Francisco Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Preferred: some background in Latin American history, geography and/or contemporary issues

LACS 26416. Latin American Extractivisms. 100 Units.
While resource extraction in Latin America is far from new, the scale and transnational scope of current “neoeffectivisms” 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 26510. Cities from Scratch: The History of Urban Latin America. 100 Units.
Latin America is one of the world’s most urbanized regions, and its urban heritage long predates European conquest. And yet the region’s cities are most often understood through the lens of North Atlantic visions of urbanity, many of which fit poorly with Latin America’s historical trajectory, and most of which have significantly distorted both Latin American urbanism and our understandings of it. This course takes this paradox as the starting point for an interdisciplinary exploration of the history of Latin American cities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, focusing especially on issues of social inequality, informality, urban governance, race, violence, rights to the city, and urban cultural expression. Readings will be interdisciplinary, including anthropology, sociology, history, fiction, film, photography, and primary historical texts.
Instructor(s): B. Fischer Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Some knowledge of Latin America or urban studies helpful.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 36511, ARCH 26511, LACS 36510, ENST 26511, HIST 26511

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
Equivalent Course(s): HMR T 26623, ANTH 23071, GLST 26623

LACS 26624. Extractivism in Latin America. 100 Units.
From the elusive search for El Dorado to the growing transition to renewable energy, extractivism has defined and continues to produce effects on the everyday lives, economic possibilities, and political horizons of Latin Americans in different historic and geographic settings. This course critically explores the social and material worlds built around resource extraction in Latin America. By focusing on key episodes of 20th and 21st century energy development, the course will examine how extractivism has enabled and foreclosed certain configurations of political power, especially in relation to the state, (anti-)imperialism, the left, and
indigenous social movements. We will also explore the rise of anti-extractivist struggles and critiques, with a particular emphasis on indigenous peoples' mobilization of human rights discourse. Course readings will be interdisciplinary (from anthropology and economics to history and film), drawing on cases from Venezuela, Paraguay, Brazil, Mexico, and Bolivia.

Instructor(s): Steven Schwartz Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23024

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; antislavery, 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): CRES 27526, HIST 29104, GNSE 27526

LACS 27536. The Transatlantic Slave Trade & the Making of the Black Lusophone Atlantic, 1450-1888. 100 Units.
By the abolition of Brazilian slavery in 1888, an estimated 4.3 million men, women, and children had been imported from Africa to Brazil. Yet, the narratives of slavery and freedom in the North Anglophone and Francophone Atlantic often dominate the popular imagination. This course is aimed at increasing knowledge about how slavery and the transatlantic slave trade shaped the Atlantic World through an examination of the deeply intertwined histories of Brazil and West Africa. This course offers a critical ‘genealogy of the present’ by investigating the historical roots of racial, gendered, and social inequality that persist in Brazil and Lusophone West Africa today. It will focus on the diverse social, cultural, and political linkages that were forged as a result of the transatlantic trade with particular attention to the Portuguese in West Africa; the development and growth of the slave trade to Brazil; the relationship between slavery and gender; the continuity and adaptation of African social and cultural practices; and resistance, rebellion, and freedom. We will end the course with a look at how different communities, individuals, and nations continue to grapple with the memory and legacy of slavery today.

Instructor(s): Erin McCullugh Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 27536, HIST 29009, CRES 27536, HMRT 27536

LACS 27726. Body Modifications, Sociocultural Meanings, and Beauty in Ancient Mesoamerica. 100 Units.
The course will introduce past and current anthropological discussions of embodiment and beauty and then explore culturally born body concepts from the perspective of native Mesoamerican thought and ritual practice. A methodological unit will embrace reconstructions of ancient body modifications at the intersection between (bio) archaeology, ethnohistory, semiotics, and imagery. We will also review and discuss basic visual, behavioral, and social aspects of native Mesoamerican body works, focusing on head shaping, dental modification, and skin ornaments. A number of case studies target such forms of physical embodiment among the Olmecs, Maya, and the Aztecs. Finally, we will cover the evolving roles of body modifications past the European contact in Mexico, providing food-for-thought in discussing Novohispanic domination strategies, native resilience, and transformation.

Instructor(s): Vera Tiesler Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 23024

LACS 28000. United States Latinos: Origins and Histories. 100 Units.
An examination of the diverse social, economic, political, and cultural histories of those who are now commonly identified as Latinos in the United States. Particular emphasis will be placed on the formative historical experiences of Mexican Americans and mainland Puerto Ricans, although some consideration will also be given to the histories of other Latino groups, i.e., Cubans, Central Americans, and Dominicans. Topics include cultural and geographic origins and ties; imperialism and colonization; the economics of migration and employment; legal status; work, women, and the family; racism and other forms of discrimination; the politics of national identity; language and popular culture; and the place of Latinos in US society. Equivalent Course(s): AMER 28001, CRES 28000, GNSE 28202, HIST 38000, LACS 28000, LACS 38000, CRES 38000, GNSE 38202, AMER 38001
Instructor(s): R. Gutiérrez Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): LACS 38000, AMER 28001, HIST 38000, GNSE 28202, AMER 38001, HIST 28000, CRES 28000, GNSE 38202, CRES 38000
LACS 29101. Archive [Yellow] Fever. 100 Units.
Archive [Yellow] Fever reads Black Feminist approaches to the archive of slavery in the Caribbean in order to ask questions about the scholar’s embodied relationship in the present to historical documents and artifacts produced in the context of Atlantic world slave societies. How is a scholar affected by and implicated in the production such an archive? This class explores this and other questions produced by this scholarship, with a particular focus on historical and contemporary concerns about what enslavement does to the physical body and the affective impacts of institutionalized bondage. The course also provides an introduction in methods of working in historical and contemporary archives. We will explore themes of contagion, sex, birth, and death by reading fictional, archival, methodological and theoretical texts, including the work of, Saidiya Hartman, Marisa Fuentes, Jacques Derrida, Carolyn Steedman, Jennifer L. Morgan, Jenny Sharpe, Robin Coste Lewis, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Mary Prince, Mary Seacole, Bryan Edwards, James Grainger. 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. This course is offered as part of the Migrations Research Sequence. (1650-1830, 1830-1940) This is a research and criticism seminar intended for third- and fourth-year English majors.
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): CRES 29101, ENGL 29101, GNSE 29103

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 29801. BA Colloquium. 100 Units.
This colloquium, which is led by the LACS BA Program Adviser, 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): Diana Schwartz Francisco 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.