

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STUDIES (CONCENTRATION)

Program Guidelines & Mission

The concentration in Latin American and Caribbean Studies is designed to promote a multidisciplinary approach to social, historical, political and linguistic issues in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is founded on the basic pillars of a Liberal Arts education such as understanding the person as a whole, promoting critical thinking and expanding cultural horizons. Its mission is to provide students a strong historical, social and cultural foundation for the understanding of specific components of differing Latin American and Caribbean cultures. Through this approach, we strive to foster critical awareness of the heterogeneity that characterizes the region as well as a critical understanding of the complexities of its relationship with the United States. The curriculum of the Latin American and Caribbean studies concentration expresses our commitment to developing the person as a whole by allowing students to explore, analyze, discuss, read and write about a variety of themes directly related to Latin America, from different theoretical frameworks. This in turn encourages students to reflect upon their own cultural background.

Faculty

Director: Melissa Huerta (Fall Semester 2024); Mónica Ayala-Martínez (Spring Semester 2025)

Mónica Ayala-Martínez (Spanish and Portuguese), Isis Campos (Women's and Gender Studies), Julia Fernández (Art History and Visual Culture), Melissa Huerta (Spanish), Francisco López-Martín (Spanish), Shiri Noy (Anthropology/Sociology), Frank Proctor (History), Charles St-Georges (Spanish), Luis Villanueva (Economics), Micaela Vivero (Visual Arts)

Academic Administrative Assistant

Liz Barringer-Smith

View faculty profiles and contact information (<https://denison.edu/academics/latin-american-caribbean-studies/contacts/>)

LACS Concentration

Core Requirements

Students in the concentration are required to take (or demonstrate that they have taken the equivalent of) the following courses:

- Two modern language courses (or the equivalent), beyond the general education requirements in a language spoken in the Latin American and Caribbean area (Portuguese, Dutch, French, Spanish, or an indigenous language). The two courses may be the two first semesters in one of these languages, if the student has already fulfilled the GE requirement in a language that is not spoken in the area - 8 credits;
- LACS 101 - Introduction to Latin American Caribbean Studies (taught in English). It will count as an I, P or R GE course. 4 credits.
- Senior Research, one semester of senior research. Senior Research guidelines can be accessed here (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-tmX4064VkiYgYKE6cseUsiWHXFW1LQAX7z5u-wC9Qc/edit/?usp=sharing>) and are also located on myDenison - 4 credits.

Electives

Latin American and Caribbean Studies students will also take three elective courses from different departments. These courses are cross-listed by different programs. Examples of courses offered in the past:

Code	Title
History	
HIST 140	Studies in Latin American History
HIST 141	Colonial Latin America
HIST 142	Modern Latin America
HIST 230	Advanced Studies in African History
HIST 240	Advanced Studies in Latin American History
HIST 243	Sex and Sexuality in Latin America
HIST 244	Race and Ethnicity in Latin America
HIST 365	Comparative Slavery in the Americas
Fine Arts/Language and Culture	
AHVC 141	Latin American Art and Visual Culture
AHVC 226	Mexican Art Across Borders
ARTS 141	Introduction to Sculpture
MUS 235	Music of Latin America
SPAN 325	Survey of Latin American Literature
SPAN 425	Seminar in Latin American Literature
Society and Culture	
ANSO 218	Sociology of International Development
ANSO 339	Culture, Identity and Politics in Caribbean Society
SPAN 330	Cultures of Spain
SPAN 435	Seminar in Latin American Culture

Additional Points of Interest

The same course cannot be used to fulfill more than one of the above requirements. Students are encouraged to consult with the Director of Latin American and Caribbean Studies in making their choices. Students are also encouraged to pursue study abroad programs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Courses

LACS 101 - Introduction to Latin American Caribbean Studies (4 Credit Hours)

A comprehensive introduction to the nature of the problem of the Latin American society. A general study of the geography, the historical background, the social, economic, and political contemporary developments as well as the influence of religion and ideology on the Latin American and Caribbean countries.

LACS 124 - Racial Politics in Latin America (4 Credit Hours)

This course will examine the role of race and politics in Latin America by examining concepts such as *mestizaje* or racial mixture and how that shapes relationships of power and development in these societies. We will also examine the role of whiteness and blackness and how such concepts are used to ensure hierarchies of privilege and disadvantage. What role does a racialized hierarchy play throughout Latin America when considering who are the haves and have nots and which roles are racialized groups such as indigenous and Afro-descendants in Latin America allowed to play in national development? We will first learn about theories of race, politics, and history in select countries. Second, we will apply the theories we have learned to focus on Latin American countries such as Colombia, Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, and Argentina.

LACS 141 - Latin American Art/Visual Culture (4 Credit Hours)

This introductory course examines the diverse arts and visual culture of Latin American countries, from Colonial times through the present, via a social art historical perspective. As we move through the history of Latin American art, we will center underrepresented narratives to explore key issues such as history making, uneven development, nation building, decolonization, and transnationalism. Students in the course will learn about the social, political, and historical contexts of Latin American art and become familiar with key theoretical concepts regarding representation and aesthetic practice. Objects and practices of study will include codices, casta paintings, printmaking, muralism, public art, and performance. This course will be broken into four thematic unit sections: (1) Indigenous Ideologies, European Conquest, and Contested Visions; (2) Struggles for Independence and Redefining National Art; (3) Revolutions and Avant-Garde Art; and (4) Contemporary Social Movements and Socially Engaged Art.

LACS 199 - Introductory Topics in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

LACS 200 - Special Topics in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (4 Credit Hours)

Studies in Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

LACS 211 - Colonial Latin America (4 Credit Hours)

A survey course on Latin America from Conquest through Independence. Topics include exploration of: 1) how Spain and Portugal conquered and colonized the Americas, 2) how they managed to maintain control over those colonies, 3) how the colonized (Indians, Africans, and mixed races) responded to the imposition of colonial rule, 4) the role of women and gender in colonial settings, and 5) the implications of colonialism for the study of modern Latin America.

Crosslisting: HIST 141.

LACS 212 - The Atlantic World (4 Credit Hours)

Drawing together the histories of Europe, Africa, and the Americas, this course explores the origins, development, and meanings of the new Atlantic World created after 1492. Topics may include imperial expansion and colonization, European-Amerindian relations, European-African relations, slavery and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the growth of mercantile capitalism and the establishment of an Atlantic economy, the maturation of Euro-American colonial societies and their struggles for national independence, and the abolition of slavery.

Crosslisting: HIST 161.

LACS 213 - Women Artists in the Movement (4 Credit Hours)

The course will analyze artworks by Latina and Latin American women artists that address power inequalities within the intersections of class, gender, and race. There will be a focus on the often-overlooked role of Latina and Latin American women artists in political, social, and cultural movements. Students will be expected to think critically about feminist theories, particularly intersectional feminism, while visually and socially analyzing various works of art made by Latina and Latin American women in both Latin America and the U.S.

LACS 220 - Introduction to Hispanic Literature (4 Credit Hours)

Reading and discussion of literary works from the Spanish-speaking world. Emphasis will be on utilizing language skills in the study and analysis of literature from Latin America, Spain and the United States. Conducted in Spanish.

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 215.

LACS 226 - Mexican Art Across Borders (4 Credit Hours)

This course examines the transnational history and exchanges of modern and contemporary Mexican and Mexican-American artists in the United States. Students will be introduced to critical events that have shaped the history and culture of Greater Mexico (such as the Mexican-American War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848) before delving into the relationship between art and social movements, focusing on the post-revolutionary moment in Mexico (1910-1940) and the Chicano Civil Rights Movement (El Movimiento) in the United States (1960s-1990s). The class engages students in an in-depth analysis of works of art in diverse media and relates these to the social and historical conditions of their production. It challenges canonical accounts of Mexican modernism by broadening the traditional field of inquiry to consider mediums and artists traditionally regarded as "minor" and by offering a transnational approach to the art of Mexican-Americans in the United States.

LACS 230 - Introduction to Hispanic Culture (4 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the study of Hispanic cultures, both Peninsular and Latin American; this course presents the basic context of the customs, beliefs and values of the Hispanic peoples and seeks to provide a basis for more advanced study. Conducted in Spanish.

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 215 or consent.

LACS 281 - Latinx Women Rewriting the US (4 Credit Hours)

20th Century Literature "Latinx Women Rewriting the U.S." This course is designed as an introduction to the writings of Latinx/as with an emphasis on women's positionality within the United States and their rewriting of history. We will explore literature through the tensions of assimilation and cultural preservation. Participants of this course will examine texts that handle the concept of 'home' from different perspectives. Topics to be discussed include identity politics and its negotiation in the diaspora in terms of language, race, gender, sexuality, class, and religion. We will survey issues such as the construction of "ethnic" and "national" identities, including hybrid or multiple identities. Through this approach, participants will become familiar with a different enclave's historical "push" and "pull" factors as well as their identity negotiation strategies. This is a special topics course. Crosslisted WGST 281 and ENGL 250.

LACS 283 - Salsa (4 Credit Hours)

Special topics course crosslisted with DANC 274 (pending new number)

LACS 299 - Intermediate Topics in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

LACS 300 - Special Topics in Latin American & Caribbean Studies (4 Credit Hours)**LACS 310 - History of Radical Printmaking (4 Credit Hours)**

The course analyzes the creation, history, and continual legacy of radical printmaking via transnational and multiracial social movements. Therefore, the course takes a global art historical approach to the materials, analyzing the influence of transnational art and political networks. The course is influenced by postcolonial theory, transnationalism, and critical race theory. Through visual, textual, and social analysis via close readings, critical discussions, and a comprehensive research project, students will find connections, networks, and contact zones between distinct graphic art movements. Throughout the course, we will explore specific networks created among Mexican, Black, and Chicanx printmakers, but students will be encouraged to find similar transnational and multiracial solidarity movements among other printmakers.

LACS 313 - Spanish in the United States (4 Credit Hours)

Have you ever heard a Spanish speaker in the United States say *escuela alta*, *rufo*, *llamar para atrás* or *queix*? Or have you heard someone switch from English to Spanish in the same sentence? What is Spanglish? Do you have a friend who doesn't know Spanish even though his parents speak it? Is Spanish a foreign language in the US? Have you ever heard someone say that we shouldn't speak Spanish here? The United States has a Hispanic population that is larger than most Latin American countries. But, unlike other Spanish-speaking countries, Spanish is a minority language in the US. In this class, we study various social and linguistic phenomena that arise from this situation. Among other topics, we analyze the history of Spanish in the US, the racialization of Spanish, language policy, Spanish in education, Spanglish, and Latinx identity.

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 215 or permission of the instructor.

LACS 325 - Survey of Latin American Literature (4 Credit Hours)

Students will analyze texts from Pre-Columbian times to the present within their historical, sociocultural and artistic contexts. This course offers an overview of main literary periods, authors and genres. Students will examine a variety of texts and the outstanding characteristics of their authors. Students will engage in critical analysis of texts through research essays, creative projects and oral presentations, at the ACTFL intermediate-high level. Conducted in Spanish.

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 215 or consent of instructor or department chair; no course prerequisites if taught in English; when taught in English, no first-year students.

Crosslisting: SPAN 325.

LACS 380 - Immigrants, Afros and Indios: Multiple Marginalities at the Intersection of Race and Class in Latin (1-4 Credit Hours)

In this course, we will critically analyze topics such as nation, immigration, race, and class as construed in the Latin American context. We will do it using different cultural productions such as works in the fine arts, cinema, music, dance, cartoons, and literary texts. We will also keep present references to the historical, political, and social background in which those productions have appeared. Students will engage with those productions through a variety of forms: doing research, writing essays, doing oral presentations, making creative works, and engaging in in-depth discussions. They will also compare and contrast, evaluate, summarize, and synthesize as they study and analyze those themes. They will further develop their reading, writing, listening, and conversational skills in Spanish at the intermediate-high/advanced-low level as described by the ACTFL standards. The course is conducted in Spanish. Prerequisite 215 or placement or permission of the instructor. This is a special topics course.

LACS 381 - Women's Health in Latine/Chicanx Cultural Production (1-4 Credit Hours)

In this course, we will critically analyze topics such as nation, immigration, race, and class as construed in the Latin American context. We will do it using different cultural productions such as works in the fine arts, cinema, music, dance, cartoons, and literary texts. We will also keep present references to the historical, political, and social background in which those productions have appeared. Students will engage with those productions through a variety of forms: doing research, writing essays, doing oral presentations, making creative works, and engaging in in-depth discussions. They will also compare and contrast, evaluate, summarize, and synthesize as they study and analyze those themes. They will further develop their reading, writing, listening, and conversational skills in Spanish at the intermediate-high/advanced-low level as described by the ACTFL standards. The course is conducted in Spanish. Prerequisite 215 or placement or permission of the instructor. This is a special topics course.

LACS 384 - International Labor Migration in a Globalized Economy (4 Credit Hours)

This course revolves around two questions; How can we explain the main international migration flows in the past 50 years? And what are the political, economic, and socio-cultural consequences of the recent international migrations on receiving and sending countries? To provide well-informed answers to these questions, this course is divided into three parts. The first part provides the basic concepts and theories to study international labor migration issues. The second part takes a historical and international approach and studies some major international labor migration flows since the late 19th century. The third part discusses the political, economic, and socio-cultural consequences of the recent international migrations on receiving and sending countries. This study will also include an examination of some of the related public policy issues and controversies. The course incorporates institutional and historical contexts, socio-political dimensions, and power relations in examinations of the complexities of international labor migration. During the course, students will work in teams and use various data sources to study some recent migration issues and provide well-informed answers to research questions assigned to each team. The results of this teamwork will be shared with the class in a presentation at the end of the semester.

Prerequisite(s): ECON 301.

LACS 414 - International Labor Migration in a Globalized Economy (4 Credit Hours)

This course revolves around two questions; How can we explain the main international migration flows in the past 50 years? And what are the political, economic and socio-cultural consequences of the recent international migrations on receiving and sending countries? To provide well informed answers to these questions, this course is divided in three parts. The first part provides the basic concepts and theories to study international labor migration issues. The second part takes a historical and international approach and studies some major international labor migration flows since the late 19th century. The third part discusses the political, economic and socio-cultural consequences of the recent international migrations on receiving and sending countries. This study will also include examination of some of the related public policy issues and controversies. The course incorporates institutional and historical contexts, socio-political dimensions and power relations in examinations of complexities of international labor migration. During the course students will work in teams and use various data sources to study some recent migration issues and provide well-informed answers to research questions assigned to each team. The results of this team work will be shared with the class in a presentation at the end of the semester.

Prerequisite(s): ECON 301.

LACS 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

LACS 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)