Academic Programs

The main goal of the Latin American Studies program is to provide Villanova students with an innovative interdisciplinary curriculum that will allow them to explore and study Latin America in depth. Offering a balanced and creative combination of language courses, comparative global courses, experiential learning, methodological and writing courses, and a great variety of electives offered through the programs of sociology, political sciences, history, geography, religion, philosophy, and languages, the major and minor in Latin American Studies are designed to teach students complementary disciplinary approaches to understand the diversity, uniqueness, and complexity of Latin America.

The Latin American Studies program have been conceptualized to respond to national and international demands for global citizens who are aware of cultural differences, know how to respond to the challenges of more diverse populations, and who value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, show competency in different languages and demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, cultural competence, and ability to interact with different groups of people. In this way, the Program is consistent with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ mission. This program provides students with a unique and academically high-quality opportunity to develop and enhance critical-thinking skills and cultural competencies, preparing them for a successful transition into the workplace.

Latin American Studies Minor Requirements

Six courses for a minimum of 18 credits
a. four courses with the LAS attribute (12 credits minimum)
   b. two Spanish courses above 1122 (6 credits)

Latin American Studies Major Requirements

Twelve courses for a minimum of 34 credits
• GIS 2000: Introduction to Global Interdisciplinary Studies
• 2 GIS team-taught 3-credit courses from GIS 4000 through GIS 6499 one of which counts as the Junior Research Seminar for the major
   • GIS 5000: Special Topics (1-credit)
   • GIS 6500: Senior Capstone 1: Research
   • GIS 6600: Senior Capstone 2: Thesis
Six courses for a minimum of 18 credits, of which the following must be included:
   a. four courses with the LAS attribute (12 credits minimum)
   b. two Spanish courses above 1122 (6 credits)
   c. courses taken as part of a study abroad program may be counted
   d. one internship course may be counted.

Director: Dr. Cristina Soriano
Latin American Studies Fall 2020 Course Descriptions

PSC 2360 - 001 Latin American Politics
MWF from 9:30 AM to 10:20 AM
Dr. Lowell Gustafson

Topics in this course will include political legacies of pre-Columbian and colonial periods, political and social revolutions of the national period, political economies of nationalism and liberalism, authoritarian rule; democratic transition and consolidation, the Pink Tide and resurgence of the political right; identity politics (race/ethnicity, inclusion and exclusion), Latin America and international relations: immigration, trade, energy, and security policies.

Additional Attributes: Core Social Science, Diversity Requirement 3

SPA 3412: TOP: Environmental Literature in Colonial Latin America
TR from 2:30 PM to 3:45 PM
Dr. Miguel Ibáñez Aristondo

This course examines major themes of colonial literature in the Hispanic Americas and discusses the impact of post-colonial theories and global approaches in today’s cultural and intellectual debates. By looking at letters, travel writing, art works, poems, and essays, the course engages thus with topics dealing with discovery, indigenous studies, mestizajes and the globalization of culture. By focusing on entangled cultural fabrications, we will move beyond binary perspectives and give special emphasis to the multiple voices that shaped the cultural dynamics of colonial Latin America.

Additional attributes: Diversity 3
THL 4490-002: Stewardship of Creation: Sustainability and Environmental Justice
T TH from 8:30 AM to 9:45 AM
Reverend Arthur Purcaro

This course presents Catholic Social Teaching on the environment, centering on Pope Francis’ Encyclical *Laudato Si*, “On Care for our Common Home”. We will treat the Sustainable Development Goals identified by the community of nations and how achieving them depends highly on an ethos of sustainable living. We will consider the particularly Augustinian contribution to this topic. The course follows the methodology employed in the Encyclical: See-Judge-Act; and encourages involvement in sustainability activity by students.

Additional Attributes: Core Theology, Peace & Justice; This course is recognized for a minor in sustainability

SPA 3412-001: Human Rights in Latin American Literature, Culture & Film
MW from 3:00 PM to 4:15 PM
Dr. Tomás Hidalgo Nava

This course, taught in Spanish, focuses on the intersection between human rights advocacy and the various cultural forms that attempt to participate in human rights discourse. We will study novels, movies, photography, testimonials, poetry, plays, paintings, comics, etc. that reflect on the atrocities of human rights violations in Latin America from colonial times to our days. In this course, we will try to answer some key questions: What does literature and other cultural productions have to say about different human rights violations in Latin America? How do these “texts” educate and generate awareness on the need to protect and defend human rights? How could telling the different stories about injustice, discrimination, persecution, and other atrocities might help to denounce these violations, create more conscience, hope, and restore both memory and social fabric?

Additional Attributes: Peace & Justice
SPA 3944: Latinx Literature and Performance Art  
TR from 4:00 PM to 5:15 PM  
Dr. Laura Sánchez

This course will expose students to performance studies and literary criticism. Overall, the seminar offers a historical and critical grounding for Chicano/Latino writing in the US by surveying Latinx literature and performance from the nineteenth century to the present. Taught in Spanish.

Additional Attributes: Peace & Justice

HIS 1165-004: Global Africa IV: Africa and the Shaping of the Modern World  
TR from 8:30 AM to 9:45 AM  
Dr. Maghan Keita

In spite of the most ardent attempts, conventional histories/historiographies have not been able to erase Africa and its peoples from the global narrative. Global Africa IV is an analysis of the contributions of diasporic Africa, globally, to the construction of the modern world and its ideas.

Additional Attributes: Africana Studies
SPA 2993 – 001: Community Interpretation Internship  
TR from 4:00 PM to 5:15 PM  
Dr. Raul Diego Rivera Hernandez

Community interpreting is a vital service for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who face language barriers accessing important services such as education, health, social security, housing, and legal representation. This internship is designed for undergraduate students with advanced proficiency in Spanish who seek to apply their linguistic and cultural competencies in a real-world setting. Students attend a seminar course while working as interpreters in the Law School Clinic, which serves low-income clients throughout Pennsylvania. The course prepares students to be verbal interpreters and translators, from English to Spanish or vice versa, by introducing them to the basic strategies for written translation and oral interpretation. This includes an introduction to consecutive interpretation, general and legal translation, and specific linguistic areas relevant to the needs of the Law School Clinic clients. This community-based learning course allows the student intern to use his/her Spanish abilities while helping Villanova law students represent clients. In order to satisfy the internship requirement, students need to complete **130 hours of service at the Law School Clinic and the 2993 course requirements.** Internships are graded S/U.

**Prerequisites:**  
SPA 1132

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SPA 3412 – 002 Top: Central American Migrant Stories  
TR from 8:30 AM to 9:45 AM  
Dr. Raul Diego Rivera Hernandez

This course discusses the representation of undocumented Central American migrants in transit through Mexico in a series of contemporary novels, chronicles, films, and documentaries of the Guatemala-Mexico Border and the U.S.-Mexico Border. Through these cultural productions, we will analyze the consequences of the lack of protections -suspension of their human rights due to their migratory status- and the racialization of their identities when they cross the Southern border in Mexico.
In this course students will examine the lived experiences of undocumented immigrants in the United States. Through the genres of memoir, fiction, poetry, and critical essays, we will pay attention to the diversity of experiences as represented by those who were, or who remain without legal documentation. Some of the questions we will discuss include: Who is permitted to enter the United States and who is forced to leave? What brings immigrants to the U.S.? What rights do immigrants have? What can we learn about citizenship, human rights, and belonging from the perspectives of undocumented immigrants? We will examine concepts and designations of political status such as, “refugee,” “citizen,” “noncitizen,” “illegal,” and the historical production of categories. Readings will include *Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen* by Jose Antonio Vargaz (2018), *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande (2013), and *Diary of an Undocumented Immigrant* by Ramon Tianguis Perez (1991). Other readings include writings by Mae Ngai, Hannah Arendt, Roberto Gonzales, Jose Olivarez, Javier Zamora, Shalim Hussain, Tenzin Tsundue, Jose Angel N, Mitsuye Yamada and so on.
This course explores the representation of the culture and history of the Caribbean in the literary and performance traditions of creative writers from the region. By focusing on these writers, the course delves into the myriad of cultural, economic, racial, and political forces that are constantly at play in the development of modern West Indian societies. We will approach the subject from two interrelated dimensions: the aesthetic and the political. The former includes discourses that define or express the hallmarks of Caribbean artistry and creativity, including representations of folklore and carnival; the latter identifies the critical ideas of autonomy and identity in the Caribbean space. These ideas, as we shall see, are also located in the historical, the peculiar narratives of Caribbean formations, going back from the era of indigenous peoples to today’s multi-ethnic and multicultural Caribbean.

In addition, the course will examine the notion of Diaspora identity, paying attention to African, Asian, and European Diaspora formations and their manifestations in West Indian cultural production. We will also examine ideas of Whiteness or Europeanism in Caribbean socio-cultural consciousness.

Possible texts: *The Dragon Can’t Dance* (Earl Lovelace); *The Last of the African Kings* (Maryse Conde); *The Marvellous Equations of the Dread: A Novel in Bass Riddim* (Marcia Douglas); *The Housing Lark* (Sam Selvon); *She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks* (M. Nourbese Philip); *The Harder They Come* (movie).

**Additional Attributes: Africana Studies, Diversity Requirement 3, Cultural Studies**