Latin American Studies

The Program in Latin American Studies (PLAS) at Johns Hopkins University seeks to build interdisciplinary understanding among faculty and students of the histories, cultures, societies, and politics of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

PLAS courses enhance the Hopkins curriculum by offering students an opportunity to explore the rich political, aesthetic, intellectual, and scientific traditions of Latin America, and by encouraging critical perspectives on Latin America's history and role in the modern world. Workshops by PLAS-affiliated faculty, graduate students, and visiting scholars complement the curriculum with discussions of current events and ongoing research projects.

PLAS offers an undergraduate major and minor in Latin American studies. The program encourages undergraduate students to take an active interest in Latin America; in their course work and extracurricular life, and by engaging their other disciplinary and area interests through summer research and study abroad programs in Latin America. The program also supports graduate students whose research focuses on Latin America.

PLAS contributes to the professional training of graduate students through interdisciplinary discussions of ongoing research projects, pre-dissertation summer research travel grants, and student initiated exhibitions, conferences, and special events.

Major/Minor in Latin American Studies

The Program in Latin American Studies aims to provide undergraduate students with a broad understanding of the complexity of Latin American social, political, and cultural problems. As a result of completing the major (or minor) students will have a deeper understanding of Latin American politics, economy, and culture, as well as of the intricate relationship between the region and the U.S.

The Program in Latin American Studies at The Johns Hopkins University offers a variety of courses across the disciplines and promotes research partnerships between students and faculty.

1. The program offers both a major and a minor. To complete either option, students are required to take either elementary Spanish or Portuguese. Language requirements can be waived for those who demonstrate suitable knowledge of either Spanish or Portuguese, of an Amerindian language such as Quechua or Guarani.
2. A general introductory course in Latin American studies is required to start either the major or the minor.
3. Though students may choose to emphasize a particular area of specialization within Latin American studies (such as politics, health, literature, etc.), the program requires a distribution of courses in a variety of areas, at different levels.

Students may declare a major in Latin American studies during the second semester of the sophomore year. Students may major in this program in conjunction with other departments. No more than two independent studies are acceptable toward the major or minor in the program.

Requirements for the Major

The requirements for a major in Latin American Studies are as follows:

- Four lower-level courses (100- and 200-level courses) dealing with Latin America, one of which must be the general introductory course to Latin America.
- Five upper-level courses (300-level courses and above) focused on Latin America.
- Three electives courses relevant or with reference to Latin America.
- Language proficiency (i.e., reading fluidity and basic conversational skills) through the intermediate level in either Spanish or Portuguese will be required.
- Language requirements can be waived for those who demonstrate a suitable proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese.
- To be eligible for honors, a 3.3 GPA in the major's courses as well as a senior thesis will be required.
- No grade below C- will be accepted for the major requirement.

Requirements for the Minor

The requirements for a minor in Latin American Studies are as follows:

- Four upper-level courses (300 or above) focused on Latin America. Intersession courses may not be used to fulfill this requirement.
- Two additional courses at any level dealing with Latin America.
- Language proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese.
- No grade below C- will be accepted for the minor requirement.

For current course information and registration go to https://isis.jhu.edu/classes/

Latin American Studies

AS.361.124. Latin American Film: Mini-Course. 1 Credit.
This course provides a brief, four-week, one-credit introduction to the cultural, political and aesthetic domains of Latin American cinema through thematically focused discussions of four feature-length films.
Instructor(s): E. Cervone
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.361.130. Introduction to Latin American Studies. 3 Credits.
Within a chronological frame that starts with early American-Indian civilizations and moves on to issues in contemporary culture and politics, the course introduces students to an interdisciplinary understanding of Latin American History and Culture. The course draws from historical geography, anthropology, history, politics, art, film, and literature.
Instructor(s): S. Castro-Klaren
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive.

AS.361.215. Ni de aqui, ni de alla: An Introduction to Latino Culture in the U.S.. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.361.502. Independent Study. 0 - 3 Credit.
Instructor(s): D. Poole; E. Cervone; E. Gonzalez; S. Castro-Klaren.

AS.361.550. Internship. 1 Credit.
Instructor(s): D. Poole
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.
Cross-Listed Course Offerings

Africana Studies

AS.362.495. Afrormexican History. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

Anthropology

AS.070.285. Understanding Aid: Anthropological Perspectives for Technology-Based Interventions. 3 Credits.
This course combines anthropological perspectives with the discussion and examination of technology-based interventions in the field of development and aid policies, with particular focus on activities related to water resources, sanitation, and hygiene. Readings and discussions analyze some of the theoretical, historically rooted, and practical issues that challenge those who hope to provide effective aid. A key aim of this course is to provide students with better understanding of cultural, social, environmental and economic issues relevant to technical intervention in developing countries.
Instructor(s): E. Cervone; W. Ball
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.070.299. Visual Economies in the Americas. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences Writing Intensive.

AS.070.378. Property-Politics Lat Am. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.070.396. On the Question of Drugs. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

German and Romance Languages & Literatures

AS.211.380. Modern Latin American Culture. 3 Credits.
Taught in Spanish. This course will explore the fundamental aspects of Latin-American culture from the formation of independent states through the present—in light of the social, political, and economic histories of the region. The course will offer a general survey of history of Latin-America, and will discuss texts, movies, songs, pictures, and paintings, in relation to their social, political, and cultural contexts. May not be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory.
Instructor(s): S. Castro-Klaren; Staff
Area: Humanities.

AS.211.394. Brazilian Cult & Civ. 3 Credits.
This course is intended as an introduction to the culture and civilization of Brazil. It is designed to provide students with basic information about Brazilian history, art, literature, popular culture, theater, cinema, and music. The course will focus on how indigenous Asian, African, and European cultural influences have interacted to create the new and unique civilization that is Brazil today. The course is taught in English, but ONE extra credit will be given to students who wish to do the course work in Portuguese. Those wishing to do the course work in English for 3 credits should register for section 01. Those wishing to earn 4 credits by doing the course work in Portuguese should register for section 02. The sections will be taught simultaneously. Section 01: 3 credits Section 02: 4 credits (instructor’s permission required)
Instructor(s): M. Bensabat Ott
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.215.340. Narrating Self and Nation in Modern Latin American Literature. 3 Credits.
The course will focus on a critical reading of major modern Latin American writers. We will read entire books as well as selections from major works from the following authors: J.F. Sarmiento, Euclides da Cunha, Machado de Assis, Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Nerua, Octavio Paz, J.M. Arguedas, Carlos Fuentes, Clarise Lispector, Diamela Eltit and Bolano. The course will view 5 Recent Latin American films also.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.215.342. Latin Am: Formative Yrs. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities.

AS.215.456. Gauchos, Negros, Gitanos. 3 Credits.
Study of the music and literature inspired by three groups of great liminal influence in the cultural and political affairs of their respective nations. Gauchos (Argentina), Afro Hispanics (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo), Gitanos (Spain). Attention given to popular and learned myths and stereotypes and the history of efforts to establish self-identity. Conducted in Spanish. Recommended Course Background: AS.210.326
Instructor(s): E. Gonzalez
Area: Humanities.

AS.215.458. Cuba and its Culture Since the Revolution. 3 Credits.
We will study the visual and textual arts, cinema, political culture, and blogosphere; reaching back to the first phases in the building of the revolutionary state apparatus and its sovereign mandate. Taught in Spanish.
Instructor(s): E. Gonzalez
Area: Humanities.

AS.215.460. Modern Mexico and the Culture of Death. 3 Credits.
We will examine the cultural resonance of death in Mexico’s colonial and postcolonial history and the impact of the 1910 revolution in the nation’s popular and elite self-image. Emphasis placed on the visual arts, literature, music, and the view of Mexico created by foreign writers and artists.
Area: Humanities.

AS.215.487. Islam in America. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities.


History

AS.100.438. Modern Mexico and the Mexican Revolution. 3 Credits.
An examination of the political, social, and economic factors between 1810 and 2010 that produced incessant civil war in Mexico during the 19th century and a revolution in the early 20th century. Cross listed with PLAS
Instructor(s): F. Knight
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences Writing Intensive.

AS.100.439. Cuban Revolution and the Contemporary Caribbean. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): F. Knight
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences Writing Intensive.
AS.100.440. **The Revolutionary Experience in Latin America. 3 Credits.**
Comparative examinations of revolutionary political changes in Haiti, Mexico, Bolivia, and Cuba. Cross-listed with Latin American Studies
Instructor(s): F. Knight
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive.

AS.100.441. **Society, Politics, and Economics in Latin America. 3 Credits.**
This course traces the complex relationship between politics, economics, and social changes in Latin America and the Caribbean since World War II.
Instructor(s): F. Knight
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

History of Art

AS.010.105. **Art of the Ancient Americas. 3 Credits.**
Surveys the art of Olmec, West Mexico, Teotihuacan, Maya, and Aztec.
Instructor(s): L. DeLeonardis
Area: Humanities.

AS.010.320. **Art of Colonial Peru. 3 Credits.**
In this course we consider the painting, sculpture, and architecture of viceregal Peru (ca. 1520-1825) within the dynamic historical context of colonial society. Documentary sources inform our study by providing both institutional and personal accounts of events, histories, philosophies, and rebellion. We examine the role of religious orders, artisan guilds and cofradía, and consider the social and political implications of art patronage.
Instructor(s): L. DeLeonardis
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.010.334. **Problems in Ancient American Art. 3 Credits.**
Selected topics which may include collecting the pre-Columbian past and connoisseurship, the formation of national museums, post-Columbian appropriations. Collections study in museums. May also be used toward credit for the Archaeology major. Cross-listed with PLAS and Program in Museum and Society
Instructor(s): L. DeLeonardis
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.010.365. **Art of the Ancient Andes. 3 Credits.**
Course surveys the visual arts of Andean South America and includes discussion of royal Inka tunics, Nasca death imagery and the gold sculptural traditions of Colombia.
Instructor(s): L. DeLeonardis
Area: Humanities.

History of Science

AS.140.390. **Science and Technology in Latin America. 3 Credits.**
The course surveys various national contexts to illustrate major themes in western science and technology in Hispanic America (1492 to the present). Cross-listed with Program in Latin American Studies
Instructor(s): M. Portuondo
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Political Science

AS.190.331. **Comparative Racial Politics. 3 Credits.**
Students will learn to utilize qualitative, interpretive methods of comparative politics to examine dynamics of racial and/or ethnic politics in the nation-states of Cuba, Brazil, Britain and France, Germany, and the United States. Readings will emphasize the role of the state, political economy, national culture, racist ideologies and anti-racist politics in the formation, maintenance and transformation of conditions of race-based inequalities. Students will also become familiar with theories and concepts of race and ethnicity, and the histories of social movements in the aforementioned societies founded, in part, on racial and/or ethnic identification as a response to inequality. Formerly titled: Race and Racism in Comparative Perspective.
Instructor(s): M. Hanchard
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.190.392. **Introduction to Latin American Politics. 3 Credits.**
Instructor(s): M. Keck
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.190.411. **Environment and Development in the Third World. 3 Credits.**
A research seminar examining the politics of environmental issues in developing countries, with special focus on Latin America.
Instructor(s): M. Keck
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive.

AS.190.419. **Identity and Nations in Latin American Politics. 3 Credits.**
This seminar class explores formation and political mobilization of identities - group, ethnic, gendered, national, cosmopolitan - in Latin America. Although some of the reading will be broadly comparative, the spring 2013 version of the class will focus especially on Brazil.
Requirements will include short response papers and a term paper.
Portuguese or Spanish desirable but not required. Enrolled students must be juniors or seniors and must have taken at least one prior course in comparative politics.
Instructor(s): M. Keck
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive.

Sociology

AS.230.203. **Intro Latin American Societies. 3 Credits.**
This course is designed as an introduction to latin america’s societies for beginners. The course is organized thematically, providing a survey of latin america through its historical, economic, social, political and cultural dimensions. We will analyze the pre-columbian civilizations and the legacy of colonialism to understand the origins of the multiethnic societies founded, in part, on racial and/or ethnic identification as a response to inequality. We will also consider the social and political implications of art patronage.
Instructor(s): L. DeLeonardis
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.230.307. **Sociology of Latin America. 3 Credits.**
Instructor(s): M. Keck
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences.

For current faculty and contact information go to http://anthropology.jhu.edu/plas/people.html
Faculty

Director
Mary M. Bensabat-Ott
Director, Portuguese Language Program, Senior Lecturer (German and Romance Languages and Literatures): Portuguese language; Brazilian literature and culture.

Associate Director
Emma Cervone
Associate Director, Assistant Professor (Anthropology): social movements, Andes, Ecuador; indigenous movements, race and gender in Latin America; development and applied anthropology.

Professors
Sara Castro-Klarén
(German and Romance Languages and Literatures): Latin American literature, colonial studies, discourse analysis, contemporary novel.

Lisa DeLeonardis
Austen-Stokes Professor (History of Art): Art and archaeology of the ancient Americas.

William Egginton
(German and Romance Languages and Literatures): Spanish and Latin American literatures; literary theory; and the relation between literature and philosophy.

Eduardo González
Latin American Literature and Cinema. (German and Romance Languages and Literatures): Spain, Latin America and Caribbean literature and cinema.

James D. Goodyear
Associate Director of Public Health Studies Program, Professor (History of Science, Medicine and Technology): history of medicine, Latin American history, Brazil.

Michael Hanchard
(Political Science): comparative politics, Latin American politics, and comparative racial politics.

Ben Vinson III
(History): Latin American history with a particular interest in race relations, especially the experience of African Diaspora.

Richard L. Kagan
(History): Spain, Iberian expansion, and the Spanish Empire in the New World, especially iconography and cities.

Margaret E. Keck
(Political Science): comparative politics, Latin American politics, and the environment.

Franklin Knight
(History): Latin American and Caribbean social and economic history, comparative history, comparative slave systems.

Deborah Poole
(Anthropology): visuality and representation in Latin America, Peru, and Mexico; race and ethnicity; violence, liberalism, and the state; law and judicial reform.

Beverly J. Silver
(Sociology): historical sociology, labor and social movements, political sociology, international development.

Lea Ybarra
(German and Romance Languages and Literatures): Chicano and Latino studies.

Assistant Professors
Clara Han
(Anthropology): Medical Anthropology, Health and the Economy, Public Health, Social Studies of Medicine and Technology, Inequality, Latin America, Chile.

Juan Obarrío
(Anthropology): Law, temporality and the political, state and economy, memory and subjectivity, magic, value and violence, Southern Africa, Latin America.

Maria Portuondo
(History of Science): science and exploration, science and technology in Latin America, early modern Spanish and Latin American Cosmography and geography.

Lecturer
Magda von der Heydt-Coca
(Sociology): contemporary sociology, Andean region.