

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

This interdisciplinary major is designed for students who want a basic understanding of Latin America. The program is organized so that it may be combined with a second major or a minor subject.

What is Latin American Studies?

Latin American studies covers numerous disciplines such as history, politics, art, geography, gender studies, and sociology and uses them to critically examine and analyze the experiences of Latin Americans in Latin America and elsewhere.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You're interested in gaining further understanding of Latin America and the many rich histories and cultures that it encompasses.
- You want to take part in exciting study abroad opportunities to places such as Santiago, Dominican Republic and Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- You're looking for an interdisciplinary area of study that can lead you toward multiple paths: Anthropology, art, language, and more.
- You want to be involved with a dynamic and diverse community of faculty and students through enriching courses and opportunities.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin American Studies, a minimum of 121 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	21-24
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	40

9-12 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GH courses; 3-6 credits of GS courses.

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and

0-12 credits are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
ANTH 45N	Cultural Diversity: A Global Perspective	3
HIST 178	Latin-American History to 1820	3
HIST 179	Latin-American History Since 1820	3
PLSC 456	Politics and Institutions of Latin-American Nations	3
PORT 1	Elementary Portuguese I	4
SPAN 131	Ibero-American Civilization	3
SPAN 200	Intensive Grammar and Composition	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 18 credits of the following:		18
AFAM/SPAN 132	Afro-Hispanic Civilization	
ANTH 8	Aztec, Inca, Maya	
ANTH 422	Meso-American Archaeology and Ethnography	
CMLIT 405	Inter-American Literature	
ECON 14	Principles of Economics ¹	
	or ECON 102 Introductory Microeconomic Analysis and Policy	
	or ECON 104 Introductory Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy	
ECON 333	International Economics	
ECON 433	Advanced International Trade Theory and Policy	
HIST 467	Latin America and the United States	
HIST 468	Mexico and the Caribbean Nations in the Twentieth Century	
PLSC 422		
PLSC 442	American Foreign Policy	
PORT 2	Elementary Portuguese II	
PORT 3	Intermediate Portuguese	
PORT 405	Advanced Composition and Conversation	
SPAN 300	Advanced Grammar and Composition Through Reading	
SPAN 305	Spanish for Social Services	
SPAN 410	Advanced Oral Expression and Communication	
SPAN 412	Translation	
SPAN 472	The Contemporary Spanish American Novel	
SPAN 476	Masterpieces of Spanish American Literature	

¹ Choose only one course from ECON 102, ECON 104, or ECON 14.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

World Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

World Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Critical Understanding of the Region:** Graduates will be able to explain the geography, history, and cultures of Latin America within a regional comparative context.
- **Develop Arguments:** Graduates will be able to develop arguments or intellectual positions regarding Latin America's past and present, built on evidence, in ways consistent with standards of academic integrity.
- **Evaluation of Multidisciplinary Methods and Sources:** Graduates will be able to evaluate and interpret both primary and secondary source materials, as well as varying methodological approaches, as found in the many disciplines applied to the study of Latin America.
- **Hemispheric and Diasporic Thinking:** Graduates will be able to demonstrate hemispheric (i.e., the Americas) and diasporic thinking,

by comparing North and Latin America, and by contrasting the experiences of Latin Americans both within their own nations and across the hemispheric diaspora.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

Latin American Studies, B.A. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3 Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3
Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 HIST 178 (GH) ^{*†}	3
ANTH 45N (GS) ^{*†}	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GQ) ^{*††}	3 General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3
SPAN 1 ⁺²	4 SPAN 2 ⁺²	4
LA 83	1.5	
	17.5	16

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3 SPAN 131 [*]	3
Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*2}	3 PORT 1 [*]	4
HIST 179 (GH) ^{*†}	3 General Education Course [‡]	3
General Education Course [‡]	3 General Education Course [‡]	3
SPAN 3 ⁺²	4 SPAN 100 ⁺²	3
	LA 283	1.5
	16	17.5

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3
SPAN 200 [*]	3 General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3
General Education Course [‡]	3 General Education Course [‡]	3
BA Requirement [‡]	3 Elective ³	3
Elective ³	3 Elective ³	3
	15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 Elective ³	3
PLSC 456 [*]	3 Elective ³	3
BA World Cultures ⁺¹	3 Elective ³	3
BA Requirement [‡]	3 Elective ³	3
General Education Course (GHW) [‡]	1.5 General Education Course (GHW) [‡]	1.5
	13.5	13.5

Total Credits 124

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ See adviser for approved list.

² SPAN 1, 2, 3, and 100 are not required for the Latin American Studies major. Students who place into SPAN 200 based on other criteria need to replace the skipped credits with additional electives.

³ Electives: 15 credits or more, depending on major. Students are able to focus these courses in a secondary program.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain)

requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

Advising Notes:

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- All incoming freshmen must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 cr. and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.
- Students pursuing this major at a campus might require summer attendance, study abroad, or additional semesters to complete the major coursework. In their second semester, students should contact the University Park adviser to discuss options and plan their major courses accordingly.

Latin American Studies, B.A. at Commonwealth Campuses

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3 Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3
Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 HIST 178 (GH) ^{*†}	3
ANTH 45N (GS) ^{*†}	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GQ) ^{††}	3 General Education Course (GQ) [‡]	3
SPAN 1 ⁺²	4 SPAN 2 ⁺²	4
	16	16

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3 SPAN 131 [*]	3
Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*2}	3 PORT 1 [*]	4
HIST 179 (GH) ^{*†}	3 General Education Course [†]	3
General Education Course [†]	3 General Education Course [†]	3
SPAN 3 ⁺²	4 SPAN 100 ⁺²	3
	16	16

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
LA 283	1.5 400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3
SPAN 200 [*]	3 General Education Course (GWS) [‡]	3
400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 General Education Course [†]	3
General Education Course [†]	3 Elective ³	3
BA Requirement [†]	3 Elective ³	3
Elective ³	3	
	16.5	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
400 Level Course in LATAM Related Topic ^{*1}	3 Elective ³	3
PLSC 456 [*]	3 Elective ³	3
BA World Cultures ⁺¹	3 Elective ³	3
BA Requirement [†]	3 Elective ³	3
General Education Course (GHW) [†]	1.5 General Education Course (GHW) [†]	1.5
	13.5	13.5

Total Credits 122.5

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

¹ See adviser for approved list.

² SPAN 1, 2, 3, and 100 are not required for the Latin American Studies major. Students who place into SPAN 200 based on other criteria need to replace the skipped credits with additional electives.

³ Electives: 15 credits or more, depending on major. Students are able to focus these courses in a secondary program.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

Advising Notes:

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- All incoming freshmen must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 cr. and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.
- Students pursuing this major at a campus might require summer attendance, study abroad, or additional semesters to complete the major coursework. In their second semester, students should contact

the University Park adviser to discuss options and plan their major courses accordingly.

Career Paths

The major and minor in LAS are designed to be combined with other majors and minors to create a multidisciplinary degree that will enrich the student's educational experience at Penn State and be appealing to potential graduate programs and employers. Most LAS majors go on to law school or graduate school; others find jobs with corporations that have Latin American interests or with US government agencies such as the NSA and State Department.

Careers

- Law
- Business
- NSA or State Department
- Historic Preservation
- United Nations Organizations / Non-Governmental Organizations
- Medicine
- Secondary Education Teaching

Contact

University Park

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
108 Weaver Building
University Park, PA 16802
814-865-1367
sam5519@psu.edu

<https://latinamericanstudies.la.psu.edu>