THE MAJOR IN SPANISH

Students who major in Spanish can expect to acquire linguistic fluency along with in-depth knowledge of the cultures of Spain and Latin America. Through the study of the major writers and historical events of the Spanish-speaking world, our program offers training in literary analysis and linguistic expression, as well as a deep appreciation of Hispanic civilizations.

The major consists of nine courses above the 102 level. In exceptional circumstances, the Department may decide to accept RLSP 101-102 for the Spanish major. One of the nine courses must be the 400-level senior seminar taken during the student’s final year at the College; another must be a course that substantially focuses on literature or cultural texts produced before 1800. Students entering at the 200-level may, with the permission of the Department, choose as part of their major program one course not conducted in Spanish but offered by faculty in Romance Languages or another Department or Program, such as Latino/a Studies, Comparative Literature, History, etc., provided that the subject matter relate to and broaden their study of Spanish. Students entering at a very advanced level may, in some cases and with the permission of the Department, include two such courses in their major program. Working with a member of the Spanish faculty, the student will formulate a curricular plan that will ensure balance and coherence in courses taken prior to declaring a major in Spanish. This is especially imperative for students who are planning to spend a part or all of their junior year in Latin America or Spain.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN SPANISH

Students majoring in Spanish may apply to be admitted to the Honors Program in Spanish upon demonstrating the following: (1) fluency of spoken and written language; (2) potential for successful independent research, as demonstrated by strong performance in advanced-level coursework; (3) interest and motivation; and (4) overall quality and feasibility of the proposal. Two routes are available to those who wish to apply for the degree with honors.

The first of these involves the writing of a senior thesis.

By May 15th of their junior year, candidates will have found a thesis advisor, and given the Department a three- to five-page proposal and a preliminary bibliography. (In some cases, and upon consultation with the Department, candidates will have the option to choose a second reader in addition to their primary advisor; for example, when the thesis is interdisciplinary enough in nature that it requires the expertise of an additional reader).

This proposal will be discussed by the Department; by June 1st, the candidate will be informed whether they can proceed with the thesis, and if so, what changes need to be made to the focus and scope of the project. The summer before the senior year will be spent compiling a more detailed
Students come to study Spanish at Williams with a wide range of backgrounds and prior experiences. Some will have studied Spanish for many years in high school and earlier. Others will have grown up speaking Spanish with family and friends but had little opportunity to study the language at school. Others have lived in Spanish-speaking countries or otherwise studied in immersive contexts. And for others, Spanish is a brand-new language that they are eager to begin learning.

Whatever your previous experience with Spanish, ¡Bienvenida! ¡Bienvenido! We are glad to have you with us. In order to figure out the most appropriate point of entry, we ask that all students who wish to begin their study of Spanish in the new academic year take the department's placement exam when it is offered during First Days. The only students who don't need to take the placement exam are those who qualify as "true beginners," those with no previous experience of Spanish and for whom 101-102 is obviously the right choice. Everyone else should take the placement test. After you do, the Registrar's Office will notify you of the level and/or course the Spanish faculty have recommended for you. You should feel free to reach out to those with no previous experience of Spanish and for whom 101-102 is obviously the right choice. Everyone else should take the placement test. After you do, the Registrar's Office will notify you of the level and/or course the Spanish faculty have recommended for you. You should feel free to reach out to the department chair, your recommended instructor, or any other faculty member if you have questions or concerns about your placement.

STUDY ABROAD

Spanish majors, as well as non-majors interested in further exposure to the language and the culture, are strongly encouraged to study in Spain or Latin America for either a semester or a full year. We recommend that you start planning for study abroad as early as possible, and that you speak to our faculty early on to go over the many possible destinations and programs available to you. In recent years, Williams students have studied in such varied and far-flung locations as Buenos Aires, Havana, Lima, Barcelona, and Madrid. Those who are interested in Madrid may wish to consider the Hamilton College program, with which we maintain consortial ties. Credit for up to four courses can be granted at the discretion of the Department for study overseas. Those four courses count towards the certificate or the major in Spanish. Students interested in study abroad should consult with a member of the department at their earliest convenience.

FAQ

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.
Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?
Yes, in some cases, provisional approval can be granted (students should be sure to contact the department for details).

What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?
Course title and description, and complete syllabus, including readings/assignments. If it is a program we are familiar with, the course title and description are enough. If it is a new program/new type of course we need all the available materials (syllabus, assignments, etc.).

Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?
Yes. Four maximum.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?
Yes. They have to be courses that focus on language, culture, history, or politics of the target language/culture.

Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?
Yes. Our Senior Seminars are required for the major.

Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)
No.

Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn’t:
This hardly ever happens but could happen if a student doesn't seek out pre-approval from a faculty member.

RLSP 101 (F) Elementary Spanish
This course focuses on grammar, elementary composition, practice in conversation, and reading of easy modern prose. It is taught by the intensive oral method.

Class Format: class meets five hours a week and students will complete workbook and lab exercises weekly

Requirements/Evaluation: participation, regular homework exercises, quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam

Prerequisites: This course is for students who have no previous background in Spanish.

Enrollment Limit: 20

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: students registered for RLSP 101-102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during Winter Study; credit granted only if both semesters (RLSP 101 and 102) are taken

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01  M-F 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Leyla Rouhi

RLSP 102 (S) Elementary Spanish
This course focuses on grammar, elementary composition, practice in conversation, and reading of easy modern prose. It is taught by the intensive oral method.

Class Format: the class meets five hours a week; students will complete workbook and lab exercises weekly

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on daily preparation and participation, regular homework assignments, and frequent tests

Prerequisites: RLSP 101; this course is for students who have studied less than two years of Spanish in secondary school

Enrollment Limit: 20
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: students registered for RLSP 101-102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit granted only if both semesters (RLSP 101 and 102) are taken

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01    M-F 10:00 am - 10:50 am    Janneke van de Stadt

RLSP 103  (F) Intensive Intermediate Spanish
This course is a continuation of Spanish 101-102. It is designed to help students improve their proficiency in each of the major skill-groups (listening, speaking, reading and writing) while providing an introduction to the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Classroom activities and homework are designed to increase vocabulary and improve your ability to handle daily life in a Spanish-speaking country, to express your views on complex subjects such as art and politics, and to increase your knowledge of the cultural traditions of Latin America and Spain. Film screenings and readings in Hispanic literature, culture and politics will provide material for in-class discussion and some writing assignments. This course provides the linguistic and cultural training that is necessary to engage the diverse Spanish-speaking communities of Latin America, Spain and the US; it will help to prepare students for further literary and cultural studies as well as provide skills that are increasingly essential in fields such as medicine, law, and education. Conducted in Spanish.

Class Format: class meets four hours a week; students in Professor French's conference section will meet with the TA in smaller groups at a time to be scheduled at the start of the semester

Requirements/Evaluation: regular attendance and active in-class participation, workbook exercises and weekly compositions, quizzes, midterm and final exams

Prerequisites: RLSP 101-102 or by Spanish placement exam

Enrollment Limit: 20

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

LEC Section: 01    MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am    Jennifer L. French
CON Section: 02    TBA    Jennifer L. French
LEC Section: 03    MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm    Gene H. Bell-Villada
CON Section: 04    W 2:10 pm - 3:00 pm    Gene H. Bell-Villada

RLSP 104  (S) Upper Intermediate Spanish
This course is a continuation of Spanish 103. It focuses on the review of grammar as well as on refining writing and speaking skills. A variety of written and audiovisual journalistic media will enable students to deepen their understanding of Hispanic cultures.

Class Format: class meets four hours a week

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly 1- to 2-page compositions, regularity of class participation, oral reports, frequent quizzes, a midterm and a final exam

Prerequisites: RLSP 103 or by Spanish placement exam

Enrollment Limit: 22

Expected Class Size: 22

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020
RLSP 105  (F)  Advanced Grammar, Composition, Conversation

In this course students will refine their knowledge of Spanish grammar and vocabulary towards further fluency in speaking and writing. The focus of the class is grammar through active engagement with relevant cultural, literary, and political materials centered for the most part on Spain. Students will produce regular grammar and composition exercises as well as oral reports.

Class Format: students are required to participate in the TA sessions once a week in addition to three class sessions

Requirements/Evaluation: regular grammar and composition assignments, a mid-term, a final exam, occasional quizzes, oral reports; active participation and regular attendance required

Prerequisites: RLSP 104, or results of the Williams College Placement Test, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 22

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students, potential majors

Expected Class Size: 22

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

SEM Section: 01   MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm    Leyla Rouhi

CON Section: 02   TBA        Leyla Rouhi

RLSP 107  (F)  Advanced Grammar and Conversation

This course focuses on the development of Spanish linguistic accuracy and oral communication skills. To acquire oral fluency, students will have several opportunities to give presentations in class. They will further guide discussions around topics reviewed in the course. Finally, oral fluency will be developed through daily discussions and conversations with native speakers. Students will perform regular exercises to improve syntax skills, using authentic and meaningful texts. In addition, they will practice their writing by developing different discursive genres.

Requirements/Evaluation: homework, class participation, oral presentations, a midterm and final exam, and a series of communicative projects

Prerequisites: RLSP 104, placement exam results, permission of instructor or Department Chair

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors and certificate students, current and potential

Expected Class Size: 19

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

SEM Section: 01   MWF 8:30 am - 9:45 am    Carolina Melgarejo-Torres

RLSP 200  (S)  Advanced Grammar and Composition through Literature

This course is designed for advanced students who wish to further polish and refine their grammatical, lexical, and writing skills in Spanish. The course may be taken immediately after 105, by placement exam results, or even after students have begun to sample the Department's literature and culture offerings at the 200- and 300-level. Classic works of short fiction by celebrated Latin American authors such as Gabriel García Márquez and Julio Cortázar will be discussed; selected Latin American films will be viewed as well. For written and oral assignments: weekly essays, in-class presentations, and language-laboratory activities. Conducted in Spanish.

Class Format: discussion
RLSP 201  (F)  The Spanish Labyrinth
Do Spaniards really dance flamenco and have dinner at 10:00 pm? Does everyone in Barcelona speak Catalan? How can you learn to separate the stereotypical images of Spain from reality? How can we talk about one "Spain", when the country a complex composite of ancient and diverse cultural remnants mixed with recent influxes of immigrants and separatist movements? How has the vulnerable peninsula survived centuries of violent upheavals and divisiveness; dramatic economic rises and collapses? In this course we will approach Spain by studying examples of its literary and artistic production, from periods of brilliant cultural exchange, and times of censorship and repression. Some topics of focus will be the Inquisition, the Civil War, and contemporary Spain's obsession with its own recent past. Secondary texts will also be provided for historical and socio-political background and reference. Conducted in Spanish.

Requirements/Evaluation:  active participation in class discussions, oral presentations, short writing assignments, and a final essay
Prerequisites:  RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit:  18
Enrollment Preferences:  Spanish majors and certificate candidates
Expected Class Size:  18
Grading:  no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option
Distributions:  (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 202  (S)  Introduction to the Analysis of Literature in Spanish  (WS)
This course is intended for students who are considering a major in Spanish, including those who have recently completed RLSP 105, 107, or 200. Using a textbook, Aproximaciones al estudio de la literatura hispánica, we will study the fundamentals of genre analysis while reading selected works of prose, poetry and drama from Latin America and Spain. Conducted in Spanish. This course is writing intensive because the techniques of planning, writing, and revising essays will all be extensively discussed and put into practice.

Class Format: mixture of lecture, discussion, and writing workshop
Requirements/Evaluation:  assignments will include three 5-page essays, a number of shorter papers, and occasional discussion-leading as well as consistent preparation and class participation
Prerequisites:  RLSP 105, 107, 200, 209, or placement exam results indicating readiness for a 200-level course
Enrollment Limit:  19
Enrollment Preferences:  first- and second-year students who are considering the major in Spanish
Expected Class Size:  12
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,  yes fifth course option
Distributions:  (D1)  (WS)

Writing Skills Notes:  Our commitment to the formal analysis of literature in Spanish lends itself to a sustained and focused attention to student writing. As we learn to analyze works of literature, we will bring our attention to questions of rhetoric, style and structure to bear on our own writing also. Papers will be "work-shopped" throughout the semester; students will also practice peer-editing in pairs. Students will also receive extensive feedback from the professor with the goal of strategic revision.

Spring 2020
RLSP 203 (F) From Modernismo to El Boom de la Novela
A survey of some of the leading imaginative writers of Ibero America. Readings will begin with the modernista poets and go on to include fiction of Mexico by Rulfo, a wide sampling of verse by Pablo Neruda, and narratives of the "Boom" period by authors such as Borges, Cortázar, Lispector, and García Márquez. Conducted in Spanish.
Prerequisites: RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Expected Class Size: 19
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: GBST Latin American Studies Electives

Fall 2019
SEM Section: 01  MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Gene H. Bell-Villada

RLSP 205 (F) The Latin-American Novel in Translation (DPE)
Cross-listings: RLSP 205 COMP 205
Primary Cross-listing
A course specifically designed to enable students who have no knowledge of Spanish to read and discover those Latin-American authors who, in the twentieth century, have attracted world-wide attention. Among the texts to be discussed: Borges, Labyrinths; Cortázar, Blow-up and Hopscotch; Lispector, the Hour of the Star lesser works by Fuentes and Puig; and by Nobel Prize-winner Gabriel García Márquez, One Hundred Years of Solitude. Conducted in English
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, two brief papers, a midterm, and a final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 22
Expected Class Size: 22
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Unit Notes: does not carry credit for the Spanish major or the certificate
Distributions: (D1) (DPE)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
RLSP 205 (D1) COMP 205 (D1)
Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course offers students an opportunity to read some major works of fiction that have challenged the canon of European and American literature. Through the readings, class members will understand that great literature comes not only from London or Paris, from the U.S. or Russia. Several of these novels, moreover, directly challenge European and Western cultural hegemony and make an implicit claim for the legitimacy of Latin American cultural concerns.
Attributes: GBST Latin American Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 206 (S) Latin-American Civilizations
An introduction to the multiple elements constituting Latin-American culture. Class assignments include readings from selected Latin-American essayists and screenings of classic films. Particular focus on the conflict between local and foreign cultural traditions. Areas to be considered: Spanish Catholicism, the influence of European liberalism and U.S. expansion, the Indian and African contribution, and the cultural impact of social revolution in Mexico and Cuba. Conducted in Spanish.
Class Format: seminar
**Requirements/Evaluation:** two essays on assigned topics, one oral presentation, active discussion of the ideas and the facts presented in class, a midterm, and a final

**Prerequisites:** RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

**RLSP 209 (F) Spanish for Heritage Speakers**

This course is intended for students of Latino/a heritage. It will address the unique needs of students whose knowledge of Spanish comes primarily from informal and family situations rather than a conventional classroom experience. The goal of the course is to build on and expand students' existing knowledge of Spanish while developing skills for using the language in more formal/academic contexts.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** homework, class participation, and a series of communicative projects

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Enrollment Preferences:** potential Spanish majors/certificate students and LATS concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 19

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Fall 2019

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Carolina Melgarejo-Torres

**RLSP 211 (S) A Survey of Spanish Literature from the 11th to the 17th Centuries**

This course will introduce the student to some of the major works of Spanish literature from its beginnings through the Golden Age. We will study the historical context in which the works were written as well as the literary history of the periods in question. Students will learn methods of textual analysis through readings of relevant literary criticism. Readings will include selected canonical prose, poetry, and drama of the periods; special emphasis will be given to the myth of the coexistence of three religions in Iberia and the often misguided idea of dividing this literature into the categories of 'medieval' and 'Renaissance'. Conducted in Spanish. This course fulfills the pre-1800 requirement for the Spanish major.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on class participation, short paper assignments, and a final paper

**Prerequisites:** RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01 TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Leyla Rouhi

**RLSP 214 (S) "Ecologismo": Literature, Culture and the Environment in Latin America (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** RLSP 214 ENVI 218

**Primary Cross-listing**

How have Latin American authors and artists responded to environmental concerns, from the logging and rubber booms that threatened the Amazon in the early 20th century to contemporary global warming? How do the realities of Latin American societies—including massive disparities of wealth and poverty; the cultural and political impacts of the region's indigenous populations; and the complex histories of colonialism, dependency and neoliberalism—inform Latin American responses to environmental issues? How does Latin America's environmental imaginary differ from those of the U.S. and Europe? In this course we will explore these issues and more through literature and other cultural texts from Latin America. We will consider...
short stories and novellas by authors including Horacio Quiroga (Uruguay), Luis Sepúlveda (Chile), Mempo Giardinelli (Argentina), and Ana Cristina Rossi (Costa Rica); poetry by Esthela Calderón (Nicaragua), Juan Carlos Galeano (Colombia), Homero Aridjis (Mexico); the paintings of Tomás Sánchez (Cuba); and feature films as well as shorter documentaries. In Spanish.

Requirements/Evaluation: brief response papers, as well as three 5- to 7-page essays based on close-readings of literary and cultural texts

Prerequisites: RLSP 105, placement exam results, or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish and Environmental Studies majors

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RLSP 214 (D1) ENVI 218 (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course is inspired by and organized around Arturo Escobar's notion of "the political ecology of difference:" our work throughout the semester aims to understand the myriad ways in which "difference"—economic, ecological, and cultural— informs Latin American responses to environmental degradation.

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 220 (S) Women on the Verge

Cross-listings: WGSS 222  RLSP 220

Primary Cross-listing

From the early twentieth century to the present day, the radical changes in the lives of Spanish women have clearly reflected the tug of war between progress and tradition in recent Spanish history. The dramatic upheavals in Spanish politics have marked and transformed the lives of women to such a great extent that one can often gauge the political and social climate of any given historical moment by considering how the role of women was defined by the law, the Catholic church, education, and other social and political institutions. Using literary and historical texts as well as films and graphic materials, this course will look at the transformations in the public and private lives of Spanish women during the following periods: the turn of the century, the Second Republic, the Spanish Civil War, the Franco years, and the transition to democracy.

Prerequisites: RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish and Comparative Literature majors

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

WGSS 222 (D2) RLSP 220 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 225 (F) Subalternity, Dictatorship, and the Dream of Emancipation: Paraguay, 1811-Present

Paraguay is at once the most "typical" of Latin American countries and the most enigmatic. With a predominantly Guaraní-speaking population, enormous disparities of wealth and poverty, and a political tradition that favors authoritarian dictatorship, Paraguay is also celebrated, in certain circles, as the only Latin American nation that actually achieved economic and political independence when the other republics were fast becoming economic dependencies of Britain and the US in the 19th century. This course explores the subjects of subalternity, dictatorship, and the "dream of emancipation" in Paraguay's cultural production of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. We will examine together the writings of the brilliant novelist Augusto Roa Bastos, especially Son of Man and I the Supreme; stories and poems by Teresa Lamas, Josefina Pla, and others; Paraguay's rich and vibrant tradition of visual art; and works of classic and contemporary film. Conducted in Spanish.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: three essays of 5-7 pages, shorter writing assignments, discussion-leading, active and engaged class participation

Prerequisites: none
RLSP 228 (S) Velázquez, Goya, and Picasso

Cross-listings: ARTH 228 RLSP 228

Primary Cross-listing

This course will provide an introduction to three major Spanish painters--Velázquez, Goya, and Picasso--who lived and worked, respectively, in the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Though these painters are world famous, they are rarely studied comparatively, and in the context of their Spanish artistic roots. The syllabus will cover the historical and social contexts in which they started working, and how they followed, and departed from, artistic conventions of the time. Through specific paintings, we will consider the historical evolution of the artists’ relationship to their patrons and subjects, from the elite status of Velázquez within the royal court, to Goya's dramatic rise with the reigns of Charles III, and Charles IV, and his subsequent exile to France. Picasso was free of royal patronage and also lived in France, yet despite this freedom he remained deeply connected to the themes and concerns of his Spanish artistic predecessors. In addition to key paintings including Velázquez's "Las Meninas" and other royal portraits, Goya's "Maja Desnuda" and his series "The Disasters of War," Picasso's "Guernica," and his own 20th century reinterpretation of "Las Meninas," we will focus on the artists’ shared subjects of portraits and war, and consider the following issues: How does the role of the Spanish artist change over the periods covered? How did the artist exercise his freedom whilst under the scrutiny of the court and the Catholic Church? How were these painters’ lives and work shaped by key historical events such as the Inquisition, Napoleon's invasion of Spain, or the Spanish Civil War? How does the work of art evolve in its role from private royal commission to public display in museums open to all? We will read short literary pieces from each period, primary materials such as letters and other documents, and historical and critical works. All readings will be in English. Knowledge of Spanish is encouraged, but not required.

Requirements/Evaluation: 3- to 5-page weekly assignment

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ARTH 228 (D1) RLSP 228 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 230 (F) Mexican Literature and Film

This course will offer a survey of the rich and varied cultural production of Mexico, from the colonial period to the present. Students will explore a variety of literary genres (novels and shorter works of prose fiction, poetry and essays) as well as film, journalism and other kinds of cultural production within a framework of historical contextualization and formal analysis. Conducted in Spanish.

Requirements/Evaluation: essays, oral presentations, active and engaged class participation

Prerequisites: RLSP 105, placement exam results, permission of instructor or Department Chair

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors and certificate students, current and potential; LATS concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year
RLSP 251 (F) Somos Sur: US-Mexico-Central American Borderlines (WS)
What are borderlands? How have they been created? How do they affect the life of those who cross or are being crossed by these borders? This course focuses on the cultural production that explores US-Mexico-Central American borderlands and the diverse policies and practices that (re)create and (re)image these borders. In consideration of some of the dictatorships in Central America, the NAFTA agreement and post 9/11 policies, as well as war zones and the drug war; we will explore the concepts of citizenship, migration, nationalism, and (in)visibility in its intersection with gender, racial positioning, and social class. Drawing upon cultural studies, feminist theory, history, and ethnography we will examine materials such as photography, installation art, journalism, literature, film, and music. This interdisciplinary approach aims to shed light on the causes and consequences of the political, cultural, and economic narratives involved in our current understanding of these fronteras. This class is conducted in Spanish; readings will be in both English and Spanish.

Requirements/Evaluation: essays, oral presentation, participation
Prerequisites: RLSP 105, placement exam results, permission of the instructor or the Department Chair
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors
Expected Class Size: 18
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1) (WS)
Writing Skills Notes: Weekly short (less than 1000 words) papers, alternatively letter-graded and graded P/F; at least three letter-graded papers will be revisions of a P/F paper; and final 5 pages long paper, which is a revision and expansion of the last weekly paper.

RLSP 266 (S) The Exemplary Fiction of Miguel de Cervantes
Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) is considered by some to be the father of the modern novel, and known worldwide for authorship of Don Quijote. This course will offer students the opportunity to read another body of work by Cervantes: his collection of short prose works collectively titled Las novelas ejemplares. Attention will be given to the structure and design of the tales, the socio-political and literary context that shaped them, and the often unsettling implications of Cervantes’ approach to themes such as honor, social and moral presuppositions, marriage, adultery, and the place of representation in art and life.

Requirements/Evaluation: active and meaningful participation; three short assignments
Prerequisites: any RLSP 200 taken at Williams, results of the Williams College Placement Test, or permission of the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: Spanish and Comparative Literature majors
Expected Class Size: 25
Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: ARTH pre-1800 Courses

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 274 (S) Women’s Contemporary Cultural Production in Latin America (DPE)
Cross-listings: COMP 286  WGSS 275  RLSP 274
Primary Cross-listing
In Latin America, women have been largely displaced as historical subjects and reduced, in many ways, to symbolic figures or icons whose trajectories have been depicted as essential to the construction of diverse social projects within the context of patriarchal nation-states. Each country has formed a specific idea of what a woman is, and can be, through its cultural production, and this constant erasure/objectification has led to a complex problematic when it comes to addressing women as cultural producers. Keeping this in mind, in this course we will explore the concept of "Woman" as a representation and women as cultural producers in contemporary Latin America. We will address intersections of race/ethnic positioning, sexual
identity, and social class to explore their role in the reception and understanding of the work of these female artists. Through the analysis of varied cultural production, the syllabus will present an interdisciplinary approach to the contributions of female artists to the cultural representation of race/ethnicity, masculinity, femininity, violence, sexuality, gender identity, nationalism, citizenship, and social movements. We will explore the work of artists such as Sara Castrejón, Nahui Ollin, Citlali Fabián, Amparo Dávila, Alejandra Pizarnik, Rosario Castellanos, Reina Roffé, Ana Tijoux, Lucrecia Martel, Chavela Vargas, Graciela Iturbide, Celia Cruz, Lucía Puenzo, Cecilia Barriga, Cristina Rivera Garza, María Novaro, Cristina Peri Rossi, Maruch Sántiz Gómez, Leonora Carrington, and Maris Bustamante, among others. In addition, we will read theoretical texts on diverse subjects corresponding to each specific cultural product.

Requirements/Evaluation: essays (7-8 pages), weekly written reports, oral presentation, active and engaged class participation

Prerequisites: RLSP 105, placement exam results, permission of instructor or Department Chair

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors and certificate students, current and potential; LATS concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 286 (D1) WGSS 275 (D1) RLSP 274 (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: We will address issues of racial/ethnic positioning, sexuality, gender identity, and social class in light of diverse human experiences in contemporary cultural production in Latin America.

Attributes: LATS Countries of Origin + Transnationalism Elect

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 280 (S) From Roma to Yalhalhj: Race and Identity Politics Through Contemporary Mexican Cultural Production (WS)

In 2017, the National Institute of Statistics in Mexico (INEGI) used for the first time a color palette to measure individuals' skin tone. The study showed that “Mexicans who were classified by the interviewers as having darker skin tones tend to have lower levels of education and are worse off economically than their lighter-skinned counterparts” (Zizumbo and Flores, 2017). Raising controversy among those who would like to think of Mexico as a post-racial nation and those who recognize social inequality and discrimination on the basis of skin tone, the debate resonates in the way Mexican citizenship and cultural identity are both represented in mainstream media, even with the intention of showing diversity. The prevalent whitewashing dominating mass media in Mexico extends from advertisements to films, promoting an image of wealth and education intrinsically related to not only skin tone but also with race/ethnic positionality and gender. This course will explore the representation of these variables and their intersections through the analysis of photography, films, novels, paintings, reality shows, telenovelas, advertising campaigns, and music videos. In addition, we will take into account questions of representation, agency, and visibility addressed by cultural producers from pueblos originarios who do not consider themselves Mexican citizens. This class will be conducted in Spanish.

Class Format: Lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: essays, oral presentation, participation

Prerequisites: RLSP 105, placement exam results, permission from the instructor or the Department Chair

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish major

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

Writing Skills Notes: Weekly short (less than 1000 words) papers, alternatively letter-graded and graded P/F; at least three letter-graded papers will be revisions of a P/F paper; and final 5 pages long paper, which is a revision and expansion of the last weekly paper.

Attributes: FMST Related Courses

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01  W 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm  Roxana A. Blancas Curiel
RLSP 303 (S) Cervantes' "Don Quijote"

A close study, in Spanish, of one of the most influential and early European novels. Don Quijote by Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616 C.E) was a hit in its day in the seventeenth century, and has not ceased to influence artists and thinkers since. Moving between humorous and serious tones, Cervantes takes on several issues in the Quijote: the point of fiction in real life, the complications of relationships between men and women, the meaning of madness, the experience of religious co-existence, the shapes of friendship, and the task of literary criticism, just to name a few. We will read the book in a fine unabridged edition, and set it in several relevant contexts to better understand its original intellectual horizon as well as the reasons for its continuing relevance.

Class Format: discussion conducted in Spanish

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation, two short papers, and a final project in close consultation with the instructor

Prerequisites: any RLSP 200-level literature class taken at Williams, or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish and Comparative Literature majors

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: this course fulfills one of the requirements for the Spanish major

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020

SEM Section: 01 TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Leyla Rouhi

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RLSP 306 (S) Latino Writing: Literature by U.S. Hispanics

Cross-listings: COMP 302 RLSP 306

Primary Cross-listing

Writing by U.S. Hispanics constitutes a new voice in American letters. In this tutorial, we will read and discuss work by U.S. Latinos and examine the social backgrounds to their texts. The experiences of immigration and assimilation, and the specific complexities of being both Hispanic and North American will be addressed. Authors to be studied: Jose Antonio Villarreal, Tomas Rivera, Richard Rodriguez, Sandra Cisneros, Rudolfo Anaya, Piri Thomas, Oscar Hijuelos, Cristina Garcia, Junot Diaz and historical texts by Carey McWilliams, and Rodolfo Acuña. Given the absence of a critical consensus around these recent titles, our task is to gain some sense of their common traits as a tradition, and place them within the larger body of literature of the Americas and the world. The tutorial will examine one work or set of authors per week. A student will bring, written out in full, an oral presentation focusing on the artistic features and sociocultural content of the assigned reading. Questioning of the presenter, on the part of the second tutee and the tutor, will follow. The course is designed to accommodate both Spanish and English speaking students. A student able to read and speak Spanish will be paired with another student of similar proficiency. Students who neither read nor speak Spanish will be paired together.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: five short oral presentations/papers (about 20-25 minutes) and a final longer one (about 40-45 minutes)

Prerequisites: some previous course work in any literature beyond the 100 level is helpful; students selecting the Spanish option for credit toward the Spanish major must have taken at least one 200-level RLSP course or seek permission of the tutor

Enrollment Limit: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 302 (D1) RLSP 306 (D1)

Attributes: AMST Arts in Context Electives AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora LATS Countries of Origin + Transnationalism Elect

Not offered current academic year

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RLSP 308 (S) The Subject of Empire: Race, Gender and Power in the Colonial Era

This class studies Latin American literature of the colonial era (1492-1898) from the perspective of the constitution of the subject: the autobiographical 'yo' that is both the subject of discourse and the object of sovereign power. Our readings will include the most outstanding texts of the group
collectively known as the Chronicles of the Conquest—the letters of Christopher Columbus and Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo’s True History of the Conquest of New Spain, among others—whose authors endeavor to establish their historical authority and legitimate their actions before the Spanish king. We will also read later works in which racially and sexually marginalized subjects struggle to contest the identities and the conditions imposed on them by a distant sovereign through far-reaching institutional networks: the mestizo historian known as El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the cross-dressed soldier Catalina de Erauso, the poet Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and the slave Juan Francisco Manzano.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: one short (7-page) paper, one longer (15-20 page) paper, proposal, bibliography, discussion-leading
Prerequisites: one RLSP course at the 200-level or above or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: GBST Latin American Studies Electives

Spring 2020
SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

RLSP 319 (S) Dictatorship and the Latin-American Novel (DPE)
Military dictatorship is among the most crucial factors in Latin-American society and history, and some of the continent’s leading novelists have taken it upon themselves to depict the experience in their work. In this course we will examine both the fact of dictatorship itself and the diverse representation thereof in Spanish-American fiction. Novels by García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Poniatowska, and Tomas Eloy Martínez will be closely studied. Students will also read Absalom! Absalom! by Faulkner, whose influence on Latin-American authors’ techniques of representation has been decisive and profound.

Requirements/Evaluation: three 8-page papers, an oral report, a final 3-page paper, and class participation
Prerequisites: RLSP 105, or RLSP 200, or results of Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors, Latina/o Studies concentrators
Expected Class Size: 5-10
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course focuses on the ultimate sort of power—namely, military dictatorship. And it focuses on the historical fact of such a phenomenon within the U.S. political sphere of influence—Latin America. To study dictatorship and its depiction in literature is a means of understanding the nature of that power imbalance and of taking a first step toward some sense of equity.
Not offered current academic year

RLSP 322 (S) Islam in Spain
Cross-listings: RLSP 322 ARAB 322
Primary Cross-listing
The presence of Islam—in all its diverse manifestations—is not new to Europe, least of all to Spain. In this course we will focus for the most part on the medieval and early modern periods, and study several works—primarily of literature, though we will supplement with other texts—in which Muslims and Islam have been portrayed in the Iberian Peninsula. We will cover a wide range of perspectives that include Christian and Muslim writers as well as converts on both sides. While the bulk of the course is focused on the period prior to 1700 CE, we will devote the final few weeks of class to the study of Islam in contemporary Spain using fiction, legal debates, and issues related to immigration. Conducted in Spanish

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: two short papers, oral presentations, one final project
Prerequisites: any RLSP 200-level class, or results of the Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors, Arabic Studies majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RLSP 322 (D1) ARAB 322 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 401 (F) Climate Changes (Latin America): Aesthetics, Politics, Science

Cross-listings: ENVI 301 RLSP 401

Primary Cross-listing

In her 2007 book, In Catastrophic Times: Resisting the Coming Barbarism, philosopher Isabelle Stengers offers a chilling observation: "we are more badly equipped than ever for putting to work the solutions defined as necessary" to avoid the most devastating effects of global warming—the extinction of 25 to 75% of existing species; an increase in sea levels that will drown island nations and coastal cities; the breakdown of agricultural systems, leading to widespread famine; and the recurrence of powerful hurricanes and other so-called "natural" disasters. All of this, as Stengers and others point out, will create human upheaval, conflict and suffering on an unprecedented scale. This senior seminar examines works of literature, art and film that Latin Americans have produced in response to the catastrophic times in which we live. We will discuss the political, economic, and cultural histories that have led to our present moment, including neoliberalism, dictatorship, and the rise and fall of the leftist and right-wing Pink Tide. Through works of new and experimental fiction, poetry, film, performance and visual art, we will consider the lives and work of environmental activists, including Berta Cáceres and others who were murdered because of their outspoken opposition to extractive capitalism, examine the struggle for the decolonization of environmental knowledge, an epistemological battle increasingly waged on behalf of all living things, and experience the politics of mourning for the hundreds of thousands of life-forms disappearing from the planet. Cultural texts to be explored throughout the semester may include: La vorágine (José Eustasio Rivera, Colombia, 1924); Distancia de rescate (Samanta Schweblin, Argentina, 2014); Lo que soñó Sebastián (Rodrigo Rey Rosa, Guatemala, 1995); Serras da desordem (Andrea Tonacci, Brazil, 2006); Boi Neón (Gabriel Mascaro, Brazil, 2015); American Fork (George Handley, USA, 2018).

Requirements/Evaluation: rigorous preparation and participation in class discussions, oral presentations and discussion-leading, response papers, one 5- to 7-page paper and one 15- to 20-page paper

Prerequisites: one 300-level course in the department, evidence of a successful direct-enroll experience at a local university in Latin America or Spain, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: senior Spanish majors; after that, priority will be given to ENVI majors with a strong command of Spanish

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: this is the senior seminar required for all Spanish majors

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ENVI 301 (D1) RLSP 401 (D1)

Fall 2019

SEM Section: 01 TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Jennifer L. French

RLSP 402 (S) Senior Seminar Madrid: 1939-2004

In this course we will examine life in Madrid during two key periods: the post-Franco Dictatorship (1939-1975), and the first four decades of democracy (1975-2016). We will consider how representations of urban landscapes (churches, convents, prisons, museums, slums, bars and schools) have shaped and reflected the lives of madrileñas and madrileños past and present. We will study works by 20th century and contemporary Spanish
authors, filmmakers, photographers, and journalists, as well as period advertisements and examples of popular culture. How was Madrid’s image as international capital of art, sun, soccer and bullfighting forged? What remnants of the past lurk behind this appealing façade? How do the Atocha train Station bombings of 2004 relate to unresolved political tensions from 1939?

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation in class discussions, oral presentations, short writing assignments, and a final essay

Prerequisites: any 300 level RLSP course or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors and certificate candidates

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 403 (F) Senior Seminar: Early Modern Love and Marriage

We might think that love is a natural human feeling and marriage its happiest consequence, but in fact these two conditions are among the most carefully constructed phenomena in any society, highly dependent on time period and place. In this senior seminar we will focus on pre-modern Iberia to study the many manifestations and constructions of love (and marriage), several of which continue to influence definitions of both to this day. We will look at sacred, profane, family, and married love through treatises, medical writings, plays, short stories, poems. Our theoretical underpinnings will come from reflections on love from the time period under consideration as well as contemporary critiques of love and marriage. Primary sources will include early lyrical traditions, the poetry of King Alfonso X, the works of Santa Teresa, Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, Cervantes, among others. Conducted in Spanish.

Requirements/Evaluation: regular presentations, two to three short papers, one research paper preceded by class presentation, active participation and regular attendance required

Prerequisites: any 300-level RLSP course or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: senior Spanish majors and Comparative Literature seniors with Spanish focus

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLSP 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Spanish

Spanish senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

HON Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLSP 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Spanish

Spanish senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

Class Format: independent study

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020
RLSP 497 (F) Independent Study: Spanish
Spanish independent study.
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019
IND Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLSP 498 (S) Independent Study: Spanish
Spanish independent study.
Class Format: independent study
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020
IND Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

Winter Study ---------------------------------------------------------------

RLSP 25 (W) Somos Sur: Mexico-Central American Borderlines and Visual Culture
Cross-listings: RLSP 25 LATS 25
Primary Cross-listing
What are borderlines? How have they been created and how do they affect the lives of those who cross or are being crossed by these borders? Motivated by the attention that borders have drawn recently with the caravans of Central Americans traveling north, we propose a trip to Chiapas, Mexico to explore the realities of the communities, activists, and border entities. This trip will engage students with the visual response and the relationship with spaces created in these borderlands. The class will meet for an intensive week of class on-campus with readings and discussion followed by a 10-12 travel to Chiapas with Borderlinks. The Borderlinks pedagogical model is based on "dynamic educational experiences that connect divided communities, raise awareness about the impact of border and immigration policies, and inspire action for social transformation." Their leaders accompany the delegation at all times. Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow at Williams 2018 - 2020.
Requirements/Evaluation: short paper and final project or presentation
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: based on statement of interest in the course
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: $3,208
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
RLSP 25 LATS 25
Attributes: TRVL Winter Study Travel Course

Winter 2020
TVL Section: 01 TBA Jane E. Canova, Roxana A. Blancas Curiel
RLSP 30 (W) Honors Essay: Spanish
To be taken by candidates for honors other than by thesis route.
Class Format: honors essay
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
HON Section: 01  TBA  Jennifer L. French

RLSP 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Spanish
To be taken by students registered for Spanish 493-494.
Class Format: thesis
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
HON Section: 01  TBA  Jennifer L. French

RLSP 88 (W) Spanish Sustaining Program
Students registered for RLSP 101-102 are required to attend and pass the Spanish Sustaining Program. However, students are also required to register for a regular Winter Study course. Once the regular Winter Study registration process is complete, the Registrar's Office will automatically enroll you in the Sustaining Program. Check your class schedule to confirm enrollment.
Grading: pass/fail option only

Winter 2020
LAB Section: 01  TBA  Jennifer L. French

RLSP 99 (W) Independent Study: Spanish
Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.
Class Format: independent study
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
IND Section: 01  TBA  Jennifer L. French