What will your curriculum look like?

Students may choose to either major or minor in Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS). The program offers an interdisciplinary approach to understanding South America, Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, Brazil, and the Latin American diaspora in the United States. Eight participating departments in the social sciences, humanities, and fine arts offer courses in LALS.

Ten semester courses are required for the major and five for the minor. A knowledge of Spanish is normally required for the major. Independent study with staff members may be arranged, and students may enroll in courses at four other area universities. Credit may also be obtained through internships in Boston-area institutions related to Latin America. Study abroad for a semester or year is strongly encouraged.

The program offers courses in African and Afro-American studies, anthropology, economics, fine arts, Francophone and English Caribbean literature, history, politics, sociology, and Latin American literature and culture.

Hands-On Learning Experience

Study abroad: Students are encouraged to spend a semester or year in Latin America. Majors and minors in the past have studied in Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Jamaica, and Mexico, among others.

Internships: Although internships are not a requirement for a major or minor in Latin American and Latino Studies, credit for them may be obtained through LALS 92a. It is an option available to those who want an off-campus, hands-on experience working in a nonprofit organization that deals with Latin American or Latino issues. Students arrange their own internships.

The internship normally combines approximately 100 hours of work at the internship site with written analysis under the supervision of a Brandeis faculty sponsor. It may be conducted during the academic year, in conjunction with a study abroad program, or during the summer.

Recent internship sites include:
• UNICEF (Boston)
• Centro Presente
• Massachusetts State House Internships
• City Life/Vida

What else does the LALS program offer?

Jane’s Essay Prize: All undergraduates are eligible for the Jane’s Essay Prize, a $500 award given annually for the best undergraduate research paper in any area of Latin America, Latino, or Caribbean studies.

Jane’s Travel Grants: Two Jane’s Travel Grant cycles are offered each year. These grants fund research in Latin America and the Caribbean during the intersemester break and the summer vacation, up to a maximum of $3,000 per student. All undergraduates are eligible for the winter break grant and all but graduating seniors are eligible for the summer grant.

Student organizations: AHORA! is the Hispanic and Latino Student Association club. It sponsors events relating to Latin American education and culture during Hispanic Heritage Month in October.

The Caribbean Connexion explores the social, political, and cultural customs of the Caribbean region. It sponsors talks, charity drives, and theater productions during its April Caribbean Week.

What kind of career and education options will you have?

The program in Latin American and Latino Studies has produced graduates in fields as diverse as academia, business, government, health care, journalism, law, and travel. By undertaking the broad areas of study available through the program, students prepare themselves for a variety of educational and professional opportunities.

How can you learn more?

Visit the program Web site at www.brandeis.edu/departments/lals or contact the program chair, Professor Javier Urcid, at urcid@brandeis.edu, or the program administrator, Marilyn Brooks, at mbrooks@brandeis.edu.