

Spanish Language and Literature

Courses of Study:
Minor
Major (B.A.)

Objectives

The Spanish program deals with Hispanic and Latino studies. Courses promote not only communication skills, but also an understanding of the various cultural contexts through interdisciplinary explorations of texts. Literature, film, history, politics, gender studies, etc. lead to some depth of understanding of issues facing Hispanic communities at home and abroad. Increasingly, technology (uses of the Internet, Webpage design, Power-Point presentations, etc.) plays a part in these explorations.

Students are prepared to pursue careers in a wide range of fields where effective communication is essential, including those in which they will have contact with Spanish speakers and/or Hispanic cultures, in this country or globally. Students often go on to pursue graduate studies in professional fields (law, medicine, business, international relations, education, social services, etc.), in which their language and technological skills will make them especially attractive to employers, and which will enable them to succeed in a competitive environment.

How to Become a Major

Students considering a Spanish major should complete the language requirement as soon as possible, preferably by the end of their first year at Brandeis. They are then advised to take SPAN 105a before beginning the sequence of Spanish language (SPAN 106b or SPAN 108a) and literature, including at least one but no more than two of the following: SPAN 109a, 110a, or 111b. For a total of nine courses to complete the major, students take up to six electives numbered above 111, and in the fall of the senior year, the required Senior Seminar (SPAN 198a). Please note: Many Spanish majors and minors choose to study in Spain or Latin America for all or part of their junior year. Normally, any full-credit Spanish or Latin American literature course taken abroad will count toward the Spanish major up to a maximum of four courses for majors and two courses for minors. Students interested in learning more about the Spanish major or minor are encouraged to speak with the undergraduate advising head in Spanish.

Faculty

See Romance and Comparative Literature.

Requirements for the Major

The major consists of nine semester courses.

A. SPAN 106b (Spanish Composition, Grammar, and Stylistics) or SPAN 108a (Spanish for Bilingual Students).

B. At least one, but no more than two of the following: SPAN 109b (Introduction to Hispanic Cultural Studies), SPAN 110a (Introduction to Peninsular Spanish Literature), or SPAN 111b (Introduction to Latin American Literature), to be completed as early as possible.

How to Fulfill the Language Requirement

The Foreign Language Requirement is met by successful completion of a third semester course (numbered in the 30s) in the language program.

How to Choose a Course at Your Level

To choose the appropriate course for your level, you will need to take a Placement Exam. It is a self-graded exam that you can access online at www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. After finishing the exam, you will choose the course that seems best to fit your needs and then complete a questionnaire on line. A faculty member will then contact you to discuss the courses that you have chosen.

If you have a score of 620 or above on the Spanish SAT II, or a score of 4 or 5 on the Spanish AP exam, these scores will automatically fulfill the language requirement, and you are eligible to enroll in 100-level courses.

C. The additional courses must be from the Spanish literature offerings numbered above 111, at least one of which must deal with Spanish or Latin American literature before 1700 (SPAN 110a also fulfills this requirement). No more than two of these electives may be taken in English. Courses conducted in English include those abbreviated SECS (Spanish and European Cultural Studies).

D. SPAN 198a (Seminar in Literary and Cultural Studies) in the fall semester of the senior year. Those seeking departmental honors will also take SPAN 99b in the spring to complete the Senior Thesis. Honors students must have maintained a 3.60 GPA in Spanish courses previous to the senior year. Honors are awarded based on cumulative excellence in all courses taken in the major, including the Senior Thesis.

Students may petition the undergraduate advisor for changes in the above program. Students wishing to receive credit toward the Spanish major for courses that are crosslisted under ECS (abbreviated SECS) will be required to do the reading and writing in Spanish.

Requirements for the Minor

The minor consists of five semester courses.

A. SPAN 106b (Spanish Composition, Grammar, and Stylistics) or SPAN 108a (Spanish for Bilingual Students).

B. At least one but no more than two of the following: SPAN 109b (Introduction to Hispanic Cultural Studies), SPAN 110a (Introduction to Peninsular Spanish Literature) or SPAN 111b (Introduction to Latin American Literature).

C. The additional courses must be from the Spanish Literature offerings numbered above 111. No more than one of these electives may be taken in English. Courses conducted in English include those abbreviated SECS (Spanish and European Cultural Studies). All students pursuing a Spanish minor will be assigned an advisor in the department. Enrollment in the Spanish minor must be completed by the end of the first semester of the senior year. All courses are conducted in Spanish, unless otherwise noted.

Courses of Instruction

(1-99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

SPAN 10a Beginning Spanish

Students who have completed two or more years of study of Spanish must obtain permission of the instructor before enrolling.

For students who have had no previous study of Spanish. A systematic presentation of the basic grammar and vocabulary of the language within the context of Hispanic culture, with focus on all five language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and sociocultural awareness. Several sections will be offered. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 20b Continuing Spanish

Prerequisite: SPAN 10a or the equivalent. For students with some previous study of Spanish. Continuing presentation of the basic grammar and vocabulary of the language within the context of Hispanic culture and practice of the four language skills. Special attention to reading and writing skills, as well as guided conversation. Several sections will be offered. Usually offered every semester.
Staff

SPAN 31a Intermediate Spanish: Composition and Grammar

[fl]
Prerequisite: SPAN 20b or the equivalent. This course focuses on the development of writing and/or grammatical skills in the context of continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 32a Intermediate Spanish: Conversation

[fl]
Prerequisite: SPAN 20b or the equivalent. This course focuses on the development of oral expression and conversational skills in the context of continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 33a Intermediate Spanish: Reading

[fl]
Prerequisite: SPAN 20b or the equivalent. This course focuses on the development of reading skills in the context of the continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 34a Intermediate Spanish: Topics in Hispanic Culture

[fl]
Prerequisite: SPAN 20b or the equivalent. Topics or themes from Hispanic cultures are the context for continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 40b Intermediate Spanish II

[hum]
Prerequisite: Any 30-level Spanish course or the equivalent. Prepares students for practical applications while continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish.
Staff

SPAN 41b Spanish for Cultural and Literary Studies

[hum]
Prerequisite: Any 30-level Spanish course or the equivalent. This course prepares students for the more advanced Spanish courses leading to the major and minor. It focuses on cultural and literary topics in the Hispanic world while continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 42b Spanish for the Professions

[hum]
Prerequisite: Any 30-level Spanish course or the equivalent. Prepares students for practical applications of Spanish in the United States and foreign communities while continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. Each section focuses on a single topic such as business Spanish, medical Spanish, Spanish for the social sciences. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 98a Independent Study

May be taken only with the written permission of the advising head of the major and the chair of the department. Reading and reports under faculty supervision.
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SPAN 98b Independent Study

May be taken only with the written permission of the advising head of the major and the chair of the department. Readings and reports under faculty supervision. Usually offered every year.
Staff

SPAN 99b Senior Thesis

Students should first consult the area head of the major. Usually offered every year.
Staff

(100-199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students

SPAN 105a Spanish Conversation and Grammar

[fl hum]
Prerequisite: Any 30-level or 40-level Spanish course or the equivalent, or permission of the advising head. Students learn to communicate effectively in Spanish through class discussions, oral and written exercises, presentations, literary and cultural readings, film, and explorations of the mass media. Emphasis on improvement of oral and written fluency, and acquisition of vocabulary and grammar structures. Usually offered every semester.
Staff

SPAN 106b Spanish Composition, Grammar, and Stylistics

[fl hum wi]

Prerequisite: SPAN 105a or permission of the advising head.

Focuses on written communication and the improvement of writing skills, from developing ideas to outlining and editing. Literary selections will introduce the students to the principles of literary analysis and serve as topics for class discussion and writing. Usually offered every semester.

Staff

SPAN 108a Spanish for Bilingual Students

[hum]

Designed specifically for bilingual Spanish speakers, who would like formal training in the language. Focuses on reading and writing skills, and works towards developing critical thinking in the context of Latino culture. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Davila

SPAN 109b Introduction to Hispanic Cultural Studies

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 106b or SPAN 108a, or permission of the instructor.

Introduces students to basic ideas with respect to the study of Hispanic cultures. "Texts" are drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions and might include literature, film, architecture, maps, music, and even pop stars and pop-star wannabes. Usually offered every third semester.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 110a Introduction to Peninsular Spanish Literature

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 106b or SPAN 108a, or permission of the instructor.

Was el Cid a political animal? How do women, Jews, and Muslims fare in classical Spanish literature? Study of major works, authors, and social issues from the Middle Ages to the end of the 17th century. Texts covered range from the epic *Cantar del Cid* to *Cervantes* and masterpieces of Spanish Golden Age theater. Usually offered every third semester.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 111b Introduction to Latin American Literature

[hum nw]

Prerequisite: SPAN 106b or SPAN 108a, or permission of the instructor.

A journey from the lyric writing of Mayan society to urban and fantastic contemporary prose, making a stop in a 17th-century Mexican convent where a nun wrote the best of Baroque Spanish American literature. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Pérez

SPAN 120b Don Quijote

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

A reading for fun and critical insight into what is often called "the first modern novel." Discusses some reasons for its reputation as a major influence on subsequent fiction throughout the Western world and view several film interpretations. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 125b Literary Women in Early Modern Spain

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

Examines works by and about women in early modern Spain, with particular attention to engagements with and subversions of patriarchal culture on theater, prose, and poetry, by such writers as Caro, Zayas, Cervantes, and Calderón. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 140a Topics in Poetry

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

Topics vary from year to year, but may focus on different periods, poets, or poetics from both sides of the Atlantic. Study may include jarchas, Garcilaso de la Vega, Becquer, the Generation of '98 or '27, Neruda, Vallejo, Rosario Castellanos, Octavio Paz, Huidobro, Borges. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Mandrell and Ms. Pérez

SECS 150a Golden Age Drama and Society

[hum]

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation.

The major works, comic and tragic, of Spain's 17th-century dramatists. Texts may include Cervantes's brief witty farces, Tirso's creation of the "Don Juan" myth, Lope's palace and "peasant honor" plays, and Calderon's Baroque masterpieces, which culminate Spain's Golden Age. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 155b Latin America Between Baroque and Kitsch

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

Analyzing general characteristics associated with a Baroque style such as ornamentation, double meaning, parody, satire, imitation, etc. this course offers opportunities to understand how artists and writers have used this aesthetic artifice to contest the hegemonic discourses of their times. Literature, films, and art from the 17th and 20th centuries. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Pérez

SPAN 163a The Latin American Boom and Beyond

[hum nw]

*Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.**Course may be repeated for credit.*

Examines texts of the Latin American "Boom" as well as contemporary narrative trends. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Dávila

SPAN 164b Studies in Latin American Literature

[hum nw]

*Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.**Course may be repeated for credit.*

A comparative and critical reading of main trends, ideas, and cultural formations in Latin America. Topics vary year to year and have included fiction and history in Latin American literature, Latin American autobiography, art, and revolution in Latin America. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Dávila and Ms. Pérez

SPAN 166b Writing the Latin American City

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

Examines the representation of the Latin American city within the context of modernity. Texts from various Latin American countries are examined in light of critical approaches to the city and its inhabitants. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Dávila

SPAN 168b Latin America Narrated by Women

[hum nw]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

How do Latin American women represent their own realities? How do their artistic versions of social realities challenge traditional historical representations? Why aren't women included in the "boom" of Latin American literature? Literary and artistic works from the 17th to the 21st centuries are studied, looking at the different ways in which gender intersects their discourses. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Pérez

SECS 169a Travel Writing and the Americas: Columbus's Legacy

[hum]

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation.

Following the arrival of Columbus, the continent later known as America engaged with other continents in a mutual process of cultural, historical, geographical, and economic representation. The development of some of those representations is explored, beginning with travel writing and ending with recent images of the Encounter. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Pérez

SPAN 170b Seduction and Society, or Don Juan

[hum]

Prerequisites: SPAN 109b, 110a or 111b.

A study of the character of Don Juan as he develops over time, from dramatic texts to novelistic representation. Considers this evolution in terms of seduction and the roles that it plays in society. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 191a Hispanic Topics in Translation

[hum]

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. Course may be repeated for credit.

Topics vary from year to year, but might include Realist Representations of Women, Ideas of the Modern and Modernity, Spanish Realism, or the Spanish Civil War. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Dávila and Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 192a Women's Fiction in Translation

[hum nw]

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. Course may be repeated for credit.

A consideration of contemporary fiction by Spanish, Latin American, and Latina women writers. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 193b Topics in Cinema

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor. Conducted in Spanish.

Topics vary from year to year, but might include consideration of a specific director, an outline of the history of a national cinema, a particular moment in film history, or Hollywood cinema in Spanish. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Pérez

SPAN 195a Latinos in the United States: Perspectives from History, Literature, and Film

[hum]

May not be repeated for credit by students who have taken LAS 100a in the spring of 2003. Open to all other students.

Conducted in English with readings in English translation.

Studies Latin American diaspora in the United States during the twentieth century. Focuses on the experiences of Latinos in the United States and the ways in which their migration is changing the culture and politics of the United States. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Dávila

SPAN 198a Seminar in Literary and Cultural Studies

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor.

A research seminar organized around varying themes ("the other," "the nation," etc.). Instruction on literary/cultural theory, researching a topic, and analytical skills necessary for developing a scholarly argument. Students present research in progress and write a research paper of significant length. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Mandrell and Ms. Fox