

Hispanic Studies

Courses of Study:
Minor
Major (BA)

Objectives

The Hispanic studies 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, Web page design, PowerPoint 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 academic or professional fields (education, law, medicine, business, international relations, 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 or a Minor

Students considering a major or a minor in Hispanic studies should complete the language requirement as soon as possible, preferably by the end of their first year at Brandeis. Students who complete a 30-level Spanish course are advised to enroll in SPAN 104b; students with an AP Spanish score of 4 or an SAT II score of 620 in Spanish should enroll in SPAN 105a, and those with an AP Spanish score of 5 should enroll in SPAN 106b. Heritage speakers should enroll in SPAN 108a. These last two courses are the first in the sequence that count toward the major.

Faculty

See Romance Studies.

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.
- C.** The additional courses must be from the Spanish literature offerings numbered above 111, at least two of which must deal with Spanish or Latin American literature before 1900. No more than two of the electives may be taken in English. Courses conducted in English include those abbreviated SECS (Spanish and European Cultural Studies).

Once students have completed SPAN 106b or SPAN 108a, they then begin the sequence of literature and culture courses. These include 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 (two courses per semester) up to a maximum of four courses and minor (up to two courses). Students interested in learning more about the Spanish major or minor are encouraged to speak with the undergraduate advising head in Spanish.

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, you 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, complete the questionnaire online. A faculty member will then contact you to discuss your placement. Students who fail to take the placement exam will not be permitted to enroll.

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. See above under "How to Become a Major or a Minor."

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 advising head for changes in the above program. Students wishing to receive credit toward the Spanish major for courses that are cross-listed under ECS (abbreviated SECS) will be required to do the reading and writing in Spanish. All courses are conducted in Spanish, unless otherwise noted. All students pursuing a Spanish major will be assigned an advisor in the department. Enrollment in the Spanish major must be completed by the end of the first semester of the senior year.

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.

Special Notes Relating to Undergraduates

Students may take two 30-level Spanish courses for credit with permission of the director of language programs.

Courses of Instruction

(1–99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

SPAN 10a Beginning Spanish

Prerequisite: Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. 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. Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. 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. Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. 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. Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. 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. Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. 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. Students enrolling for the first time in a Spanish course at Brandeis must take the online placement exam, www.brandeis.edu/registrar/spantest.html. Topics or themes from Hispanic cultures are the context for continuing development of linguistic competence in Spanish. 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.
Staff

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 undergraduate advising head. Usually offered every year.
Staff

(100–199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students

HUM 125a Topics in the Humanities

[hum]

An interdisciplinary seminar on a topic of major significance in the humanities; the course content and instructor vary from year to year; may be repeated for credit with instructor's permission. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

SPAN 104b Peoples, Ideas, and Language of the Hispanic World

[fl hum]

Prerequisite: 30-level Spanish course or equivalent.

Participants will expand their skills in Spanish while deepening their understanding of Hispanic cultures. Focuses on aspects of the history and idea that shape the Spanish-speaking world, from its peninsular origins to the realities of Spanish speakers in the Americas.

Staff

SPAN 105a Spanish Conversation and Grammar

[fl hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 104b, or an AP Spanish exam score of 4, or an SAT II Spanish exam score of 620 or higher, or permission of the instructor.

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, an AP Spanish exam score of 5, or permission of the instructor.

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 heritage Spanish speakers who would like formal training in reading, writing, and critical thinking. Students wishing to use this course to fulfill the language requirement must pass the department exemption exam after this course. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Davila

SPAN 109b Introduction to Hispanic Cultural Studies

[hum fl]

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 year.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 110a Introduction to Peninsular Spanish Literature

[fl 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 seventeenth century. Texts covered range from the epic *Cantar del Cid* to Cervantes and masterpieces of Spanish Golden Age theater. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 111b Introduction to Latin American Literature

[fl 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 seventeenth-century Mexican convent, where a nun wrote the best of baroque Spanish-American literature. Usually offered every semester.

Ms. Perez and Mr. Rosenberg

SPAN 120b Don Quijote

[hum fl]

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 views several film interpretations. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 125b Literary Women in Early Modern Spain

[hum fl]

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 Calderon.

Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Fox

SPAN 136b Latino Cultural Expression: Literature, Performance, and Film

[hum]

May not be repeated for credit by students who took LAS 100a in spring of 2003, or students who took SPAN 195a in spring 2007. Readings in English with English translation. Discussions in English.

Introduction to Latino creative expression in various genres. Themes include the relationship between gender and sexuality with race and ethnicity; class; language; autobiography and memory; migration and diasporas; sexual and cultural citizenship; multiracial ideates; queer subjectivities; and religious "transgressions." Usually offered every year.

Ms. Negron

SPAN 140a Topics in Poetry: Hispanic Poetry of the Twentieth Century

[fl 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, Bécquer, the Generation of '98 or '27, Neruda, Vallejo, Rosario Castellanos, Octavio Paz, Huidobro, Borges. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Perez and Mr. Rosenberg

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 seventeenth-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

[fl 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 seventeenth and twentieth centuries. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Perez

SPAN 160a Literatura y Justicia en Latinoamerica

[fl hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 111b.

Arbitrator, advocate, and witness in Latin America's social and cultural conflicts. This course examines how alternative meanings of justice have been formulated and understood within that forum. Topics include the intersection of literary and political-legal discourses, the presence and impact of legal concepts in literature, and the problematic way that literature has dealt with concepts such as right, adjudication, jurisdiction. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Rosenberg

SPAN 163a The Latin American Boom and Beyond

[hum nw fl]

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. Davila

SPAN 164b Studies in Latin American Literature

[nw fl hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 109a, or SPAN 110a, or SPAN 111b, or permission of the instructor. Course may be repeated for credit; may not be repeated for credit in fall 2007 by students who took SPAN 164b in fall of 2006.

A comparative and critical study 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, and humor in Latin America. Usually offered every year.

Ms. Davila, Ms. Perez, and Mr. Rosenberg

SPAN 166b Writing the Latin American City

[hum fl]

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. Davila

SPAN 168b Latin America Narrated by Women

[fl 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 seventeenth to the twenty-first century are studied, looking at the different ways in which gender intersects their discourses. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Perez

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. Perez

SPAN 170a Topics in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Spanish Literature

[hum]

Prerequisite: SPAN 110a or permission of the instructor. Course may be repeated for credit.

Topics will vary from year to year, but might include Spanish Enlightenment and Romanticism: *costumbrismo*, Romantic drama, Bécquer, Galdós (the novelas contemporaneas), or eighteenth- and nineteenth-century poetry of the sublime. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 185b España 200X

[hum fl]

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

Looks at cultural production and its context in Spain for an entire calendar year. The goal is to familiarize students with what has been read and watched in Spain most recently and to understand it in terms of contemporary politics and society. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Mandrell

SPAN 191a Hispanic Topics in Translation

[fl 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, "Latinidad," or the Spanish Civil War. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

SPAN 193b Topics in Cinema: Global Latin American Cinema

[hum wi]

Course may be repeated for credit; in fall 2007 this course will be 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. Perez or Mr. Mandrell, and Mr.

Rosenberg

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.

Comparative overview of Latino literature and film in the United States. Particular attention paid to how race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and concepts of "nation" become intertwined within texts. Topics include: explorations of language, autobiography and memory, and intertextuality. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

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," Cervantes, 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. Rosenberg

Cross-Listed Courses**LALS 108a**

Latin Music in the U.S.: From Bomba to Hip-Hop and Then Some