Latin American Studies

The Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies offers Washington University students the opportunity to pursue a multidisciplinary specialization on this region of the world while completing their PhD degree. The Certificate combines discipline-based learning with cultural studies, thus allowing for a rigorous approach to Latin America’s social, economic, and political history. At the same time, students are exposed to new theories and current debates on the topics of nation formation, governance, colonialism, development, regionalism, public health, modernization, globalization, neoliberalism, etc.

At the national level, programs of Latin American Studies date back to the late 1940s, when the Area Studies paradigm became central in the internationalization of academic focus in the context of the Cold War. Today, as globalization has made internationalization an even more pressing concern, Latin American Studies is part of a new need for better understanding of other world regions. In fact, Latin American countries consistently play an important role within the intellectual and political spheres of the United States. Latin America is the single largest source of immigrants to the United States today. It has the third trade partner of the U.S. (Mexico), one of the most vibrant emergent economies in the world (Brazil), countries that have been at the core of U.S. foreign policy for decades (Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, and the Andean region, for instance) and a vibrant population and culture that is growingly the focus of U.S. students.

Application

Students will be required to apply to be considered for the certificate program and will be evaluated by the graduate certificate committee on a rotating basis. This application is submitted at the beginning of the student’s doctoral courses in Arts & Sciences and requires a support letter from the director of graduate studies (DGS) of their PhD home department or program. The chair of the Graduate Certificate Committee will forward recommendations for admission to the dean of the Graduate School for final approval. All applicants to the certificate program are expected to be in good academic standing as defined by the Graduate School.

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Faculty

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Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies

Students interested in earning the Graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies must complete 15 graduate units. Six of those units may also count toward the PhD requirements with the prior approval of the PhD home department director of graduate studies. The Graduate Certificate is awarded concurrently with the PhD degree. Students in the LASP Graduate Certificate program must fulfill all requirements of the PhD required by their respective home departments and the Graduate School, and the following LASP certificate requirements:

Complete a total of 15 graduate credits:

- 3 credits from one (1) LASP core course
- 3 credits from one (1) 400-level course from the LASP core program
- 9 credits from three (3) LASP-related courses in at least two departments or schools outside the student's major department
- Have proven proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese, following the guidelines established by the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures
- Spend at least one summer abroad, conducting research in Latin American Studies
- Participate actively in the Latin American Colloquium for at least one semester, including the presentation of a research paper. The presentation should ideally result from the summer research mentioned above.