

Latin American Studies, MA

Modality

On Campus

Program URL

<https://clas.georgetown.edu/academics/las/>

The Master of Arts program in Latin American Studies is a rigorous, interdisciplinary program designed for students pursuing careers in government, business, and international organizations in the U.S. and abroad, as well as those who contemplate additional post-graduate work in the humanities or social sciences.

Academic Policies

Students in the Latin American Studies program are expected to comply with **Graduate Academic Regulations**.

Requirements

Program Requirements

The three degree requirements for the M.A. in Latin American Studies include the successful completion of 36 credit hours of graduate coursework (or the successful completion of 33 credit hours of graduate coursework and the successful writing and defense of a master's thesis) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; successful completion of a language proficiency examination in Spanish or Portuguese; completion of an internship; and successful completion of a capstone project, which may be taken after the student has successfully completed 30 credit hours of coursework.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
LASP 7501	Lat Amer Origins/Transformatio	3
LASP 7503	States & Societies: Lat Amer	3
Methods course (chosen based on concentration)		3
Credits		9
Total Credits		9
Year One		
Spring		
LASP 7502	Culture & Power in Lat Amer	3
LASP 7504	Political Econ of Lat Amer	3
Concentration course		3
Credits		9
Total Credits		9
Year Two		
Fall		
Concentration course		3
Concentration course		3

Concentration or elective course	3
Credits	9
Total Credits	9

Course	Title	Credits
Year Two		
Spring		
Capstone course OR Thesis course		3
Credits		3
Total Credits		3

Required Courses

Required courses correspond to your chosen concentration. You will take:

- Four core courses — the same four are required of all students.
- Six concentration courses, including one relevant research methods course. No specific courses are required to make up a concentration — courses are selected under advisement.
- One elective.
- One capstone course or one thesis course, depending on which track is chosen.

Concentrations

There are three available concentrations for you to choose from: Governance and New Leaderships, Development and Political Economy, and History, Culture and Society. If you select Government, Political Economy or any other course of study requiring work in economics as your concentration, you must have completed introductory courses in microeconomics and macroeconomics prior to enrollment.

Core courses

All M.A. candidates must take four core courses. These courses provide a broad, multidisciplinary approach to the history, politics, economics and culture of Latin America, and offer the analytic tools needed to study the region effectively. They draw from some of the best scholarship from North and Latin America, examining Latin America in hemispheric, transatlantic and/or global contexts, while seeking to convey the commonalities and diversities that Latin America encompasses. These four courses are:

LASP-7501: Latin American Origins and Transformations — Explores social, cultural, political and economic developments from pre-Hispanic times through the era of European rule and into the twentieth-century and the struggles to create national societies. (Offered only in the Fall Semester.)

LASP-7502: Culture and Power in Latin America — Explores the changing and contested constructions of identities and belief systems among the diverse peoples of Latin America. Emphasis is on the linked ways that power constitutes culture and that cultures construct powers, drawing on literary and popular texts, oral histories, film, etc. (Offered only in the Spring Semester.)

LASP-7503: States and Societies in Latin America — Students examine how the social sciences have understood the major trends of politics and governance in contemporary (mainly 20th century) Latin America. The central foci are issues such as regime change, authoritarianism, democratic transition, social movements and other broad themes, as well as more recent issues and challenges of

politics and governance in the 21st century. (Offered only in the Fall Semester.)

LASP-7504: Political Economy of Latin America — Explores the interplay between economics and politics in Latin America, focusing on production, profit, exchange, distribution, welfare and their relations with political power. The course analyzes market-centered models and policies, along with alternative statist experiments and proposals, with the goal of understanding the political economy debates that help shape the political and economic structures of the region. (Offered only in the Spring Semester.)

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Governance and New Leaderships

In this concentration, you will practice analytical skills to identify and effectively address the challenges and opportunities in the political development and governance of societies in Latin America and the Caribbean. You will train in quantitative research methods using causal inference.

Courses emphasize the analysis of key issues such as:

- The nature of the state, political representation, democracy, political order and citizen security
- The origins and social dimensions of conflict and peace and their implications for human rights, social movements and religion
- The rule of law, foreign policy and diplomacy

Development and Political Economy

This concentration provides analytical tools, skills and knowledge to identify and effectively address opportunities and challenges in Latin America's social and economic development.

You will examine the interplay of politics and economics, emphasizing how these factors contribute to economic growth, sustainable development and the strategic positioning of Latin America and the Caribbean in the global economy. Your quantitative research methods training will emphasize causal inference.

Courses emphasize key issues such as:

- Causes of and responses to poverty and socio-economic inequity
- Urban development
- Food security
- The environment
- Gender
- Economic growth

- Trade

History, Culture and Society

Through this concentration, you'll develop the tools, skills and knowledge to analyze and understand the complex histories and cultural ways of Latin America and the Caribbean. You'll examine how the people of Latin America arrived at their contemporary mix of creativity and challenges. You'll be trained in research methods from the diverse humanities and social science disciplines associated with your interests.

Courses explore:

- Evolving legacies of power and social relations
- Political ideas and ideologies
- Cultural constructions and debates
- Gender relations and debates

Knowledge is gained via scholarly explorations, literary representations and/or cinematic expressions. These understandings are necessary to engage the promise and uncertainties of our times and contemplate possible paths into the future.

Elective course

You will take one elective course worth three credits to further your study in fields outside of your concentration. This course should complement your program of study and can strengthen your understanding of a regional or issue focus. Any graduate-level course may fulfill this requirement. The elective could complement the concentration, it could expand learning outside of the concentration or it could help you complete a certificate.

Capstone option

You may choose to complete a capstone project at the end of your time in the program. You will take a capstone course, which is a collaborative seminar where you can continuously share and assess progress on your capstone project. You will provide updates on the work you've done through biweekly action reports and constructive and collegial discussions. You should expect to spend at least 10-15 hours per week devoted to the project outside the course. Faculty will guide discussions and help you navigate the process, organization and logistics for the successful completion of the capstone project.

Thesis Option

If you choose to complete a thesis, you must identify a research topic and a thesis advisor by the end of your first semester. You will then choose a second faculty member to serve as your second reader, and will begin developing your thesis proposal. We strongly suggest that the thesis advisor be a member of our faculty. Second readers may be either full-time Georgetown University professors or adjunct faculty. In your final semester, you will take a three-credit thesis seminar as you complete the project. You will continue working with your advisor and second reader, culminating in a public defense of your thesis.

Independent study

You may arrange independent studies for academic credit. These must include the development of an original research project on a topic related to your coursework or thesis. You must find an individual

mentor to oversee your study and your project must be approved by the CLAS Director of Academic Affairs.

Internship requirement

You will be required to pursue at least one internship in an area related to your concentration. The internship's goal is to give you the opportunity to combine your classroom experience with professional work experience while in Washington, D.C. (or elsewhere during the summer months). Internships may be for a semester or a year and may be with one organization or multiple organizations, depending on your research focus and concentration area.

You are encouraged to look for internship opportunities as soon as you begin your academic program. CLAS faculty and staff can serve as points of reference and contacts, particularly our vast network of alumni in Washington, D.C., and in the region.

CLAS's Summer Programs include an internship component that may satisfy one semester of the M.A. internship requirement.