



Latin American, Latino, & Iberian Studies

lalis.richmond.edu

What Is Latin American, Latino, & Iberian Studies?

LALIS offers an interdisciplinary humanities program that highlights the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Iberian Peninsula and the Americas, including varieties of Spanglish in the United States. Students of all linguistic backgrounds are welcome, whether their language experience began at home or in school, in the United States or abroad.

Curriculum

Courses emphasize content relevant to the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking world. The LALIS course catalog includes courses in languages, literatures, linguistics, and community-based learning, as well as film, theater, performance, translation, cultural, and Latino studies.

In LALIS, we recognize that not all students come to the classroom with the same Spanish-language experience. Therefore, we now offer two separate tracks for heritage speakers of Spanish, defined here as students who grew up speaking and/or hearing Spanish (or Spanglish) at home (during childhood) in the United States.

Typical Track 1 heritage speakers excel in listening comprehension but feel significantly less comfortable speaking, reading, and writing in Spanish. Track 2 heritage speakers, though they share many of these same characteristics, tend to be relatively more confident in their ability to speak, read, and write in Spanish, often, though not necessarily, because they've taken Spanish classes in middle and/or high school. To be assigned into Track 1 or Track 2, students must complete a written proficiency assessment and then meet with Dr. David Giancaspro, who will determine which of the two tracks is most appropriate for them.

Though the curriculum differs slightly for Track 1 and Track 2 heritage speakers, as outlined below, students in both tracks are required to take LAIS 310: Spanish for Heritage Speakers, a writing-intensive course designed to help heritage speakers broaden their vocabulary, sharpen their grammatical accuracy, and improve awareness of what it means to be a native Spanish speaker in the United States.

LALIS Major

9.5 units

- 2 chosen from LAIS 301-309
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 331, or 332
- 3 units above LAIS 310 (excl. 388 & 389)
- 3 units 400 level seminars
- 0.5 Student research symposium

LALIS Major: Track 1 Heritage Speakers

9.5 units

- 1 unit chosen from LAIS 301-308
- 1 unit LAIS 310 Spanish for Heritage Speakers
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 331, or 332
- 3 units above LAIS 310 (excl. 388, 389)
- 3 units 400 level seminars
- 0.5 unit Student research symposium

LALIS Major: Track 2 Heritage Speakers

9.5 units

- 1 unit LAIS 310 Spanish for Heritage Speakers
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 331, or 332
- 4 units above LAIS 310 (excl. 388, 389)
- 3 units 400 level seminars
- 0.5 unit Student research symposium

LALIS Minor

6 units

- 2 chosen from LAIS 301-309
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 322, 331, or 332
- 3 units above 310 (excl. 388 & 389)

LALIS Minor: Track 1 Heritage Speakers

6 units

- 1 unit chosen from LAIS 301-308
- 1 unit LAIS 310 Spanish for Heritage Speakers
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 331, or 332
- 3 units above LAIS 310 (excl. 388, 389)

LALIS Minor: Track 2 Heritage Speakers

6 units

- 1 unit LAIS 310 Spanish for Heritage Speakers
- 1 unit FSLT – LAIS 321, 331, or 332
- 4 units above LAIS 310 (excl. 388, 389)

Luso-Brazilian Studies Minor

Up to 6 units

- 1 unit LAIS 314 (with optional CLAC)
- 1 unit LAIS 349
- 3 elective units with CLAC chosen from offerings in other departments (History, Political Science, Economics, Geography, Art and Art History, etc.)

Central to the LALIS major are the senior seminars, offered on such topics as:

- True Lies: Fiction and Truth in Don Quijote
- The Art of Embodiment: Space and Body in Colonial Spanish America
- Barcelona: Text and City
- The Sounds of Spanish
- Visions of Contemporary Spain
- Modern Theatre in Spain
- Writing Sex and Gender in Latin America
- U.S. Latino/a Literature
- Literary Journalism in Latin America
- Bilingualism in the U.S., Latin America, and Spain

Topics covered prior to the senior seminars include:

- Spanish in the Community
- Spanish in Fiction
- Spanish in the Media
- Literary Spain
- Introduction to Latin American Literature
- Portuguese for Romance Language Speakers

In addition, many department courses are applicable toward other majors and concentrations, such as global studies; international business; linguistics; Medieval and Renaissance studies; Jewish studies; American studies; leadership studies; and women, gender, and sexuality studies.

Community Engagement

The LALIS program prepares students to become engaged and informed citizens through LAIS 301 – Spanish in the Community and different community-based and project-based learning opportunities. Students create projects and participate in activities that merge the classroom with public spaces. LALIS also offers extensive opportunities for outreach work and experiential learning within the Richmond Latino community.

Study Abroad Opportunities

The curriculum includes established summer programs, as well as semester-long programs, in Latin America and Spain. These programs offer an experience of complete immersion and innovative courses. Additionally, the faculty has worked extensively in creating and organizing

exchange programs with institutions throughout Latin America and Spain. Each semester, numerous students participate in these programs abroad under the guidance of LALIS faculty.

Global Studio

Located in the Carole Weinstein International Center, the Global Studio multimedia laboratory supports technology-enhanced learning, including exciting initiatives in the use of podcasts, blogs, digital storytelling, and online language exchanges with international partners. Students use the workstations for multilingual computing, digital audio recording, and multimedia production.

Career Opportunities

The LALIS program prepares students for entry into a range of professional fields including education, law, business, medicine, and publishing as well as graduate work in literary, cultural, language, and international studies.

Recent LALIS graduates are working in varied positions for organizations including: Capital One, Pepsi-Cola Company, General Services Administration, and the U.S. Department of State.



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May 2023