

M.A. IN LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Overview

The Master of Arts in Latin American Studies is a 30 credit hour interdisciplinary degree characterized by a high degree of flexibility in allowing students to create a course of study focused on Latin American and the Caribbean that serves their interests. Combining core courses offered by the program with a large variety of courses combined with departments, programs, and units throughout the University of Miami, the program offers tremendous diversity in courses available for credit hour towards this degree. This encourages students to combine course offerings from around the university into a cohesive course of study that enables specialization in an area, topic, country, theme, or issue of their choosing and thus to tap into the many resources available at the University of Miami for students with a passion for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Admission Requirements

General application information

The Latin American Studies program employs a rolling admissions deadline. Students may apply for Fall, Spring, or Summer admission (with program permission). Interested students may apply to the program at any time, and are encouraged to contact the Program Director with any questions. Funding is available to students interested in applying for the Fall semester. Students who submit their application by March 1st will be given full consideration for the limited funding that is available. Applications must complete an application cover form which is generated through the application web portal (<https://www.applyweb.com/miamigrd/>).

Requirements

- Statement of purpose: This is the most important element of your application packet. This letter needs to reflect who you are, your goals for the program and your career after, and why you would be an asset to the program. It is very important to ensure it is grammatically correct and as detailed as possible. The statement of purpose should be no more than two pages in length. Please review before you submit.
- CV or Resumé.
- Official transcripts: Applicants must provide official transcripts from each post-secondary institution attended. Electronic transcripts are highly preferred, and may be emailed to las@miami.edu or submitted using the ETS code 5815. Official transcripts in languages other than English must also be submitted with a certified English translation.
- Three letters of recommendation must be provided. At least one letter should be from an academic reference.
- Undergraduate GPA: A minimum overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) is required.
- Applicants are not required to submit a GRE score, but may do so if they wish. If students choose to submit a GRE score, the University of Miami school code is 5815.

International Applicants

In addition to the criteria mentioned in the Admissions Requirements section, international applicants are required to submit:

- A copy of their passport.
- Diplomas and certificates. International students are required to submit a copy of all the diplomas or certificates earned. Each copy must be submitted in their original language with a certified English translation.
- Bank statement. Please provide a copy of your bank statement for the last six months. You may also provide a sponsorship letter indicating your method of funding.
- TOEFL/IELTS: All international students are required to take this exam in order to demonstrate sufficient English competency. The "Test Of English As A Foreign Language (TOEFL)" exam is offered as a paper-based test (PBT) or an internet-based test (IBT). A score of 550 is required for the PBT; a score of 80 is required for the IBT. Students may also take the "International English Language Testing System (IELTS)" exam to demonstrate sufficient competency in English. A score of 6.5 or higher is required.

Curriculum Requirements

The program consists of two core Latin American and Caribbean seminars, two regional fundamentals, and a minimum of three additional seminars to be taken as electives. Students writing a thesis also will be required to take one research methods course at the 600-level.

Code	Title	Credit Hours
LAS 601	Politics, Societies, and Cultures of Latin America and the Caribbean	3
LAS 602	Research Design in Latin American Studies	3
Two Regional Fundamentals courses ¹		6
Three electives from the list of LAS designated or combined courses (600-level or above) ²		9
One research methods course in the discipline of the student's specialization ³		3
Thesis, Capstone, or Comprehensive Exam ⁴		6

LAS 810	Pre-candidacy thesis credits (students may enroll in up to two semesters of this 3-credit course)	
LAS 697	Readings for the Comprehensive Exam (students may enroll in up to two semesters of this 3-credit course)	
Language Proficiency ⁵		
Total Credit Hours		30

- ¹ Regional Fundamentals are those courses that have a clear regional or sub-regional focus (e.g. Andean Region; the Caribbean; South America; Central America; Southern Cone; Brazil; South Florida) rather than a specific country focus.
- ² Electives may be taken from any pre-approved combined or core LAS courses at the 600-level or above, or from other courses approved by the academic director. With approval from the academic director, students may also take their elective credit hours with Latin Americanists in other Schools such as Communication, Law, Business, or Marine Sciences.
- ³ A Research Methods course may be chosen from any available and accessible Research Methods courses available at the University of Miami, but must be appropriate to the course of study chosen by the student and requires approval of the academic director. Under special circumstances, the research methods requirement may be waived with the prior approval of the academic director.
- ⁴ Students are required to write a master's thesis, create an equivalent capstone project, or pass a comprehensive exam. For each of these options, a committee consisting of at least three members is required. Students who opt for the comprehensive exam will take one more elective in the place of the Research Methods course and enroll in 6 credit hours of LAS 697, rather than LAS 810.
- ⁵ Students must demonstrate advanced language competence in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, or French by passing a course taught in the target language at the 600-level or above, or by passing a language competency exam.
- ** Students who are simultaneously enrolled in a certificate program (other than GIS) at the University of Miami may double-count courses between the certificate program and the Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, with approval of the academic director. In select cases (such as methods courses), seminars and courses at the 600-level that do not specifically target Latin America or the Caribbean, but for which the final project or paper produced by the student is focused on Latin America may be counted towards the Master of Arts in Latin American Studies, subject to the approval of the academic director.

Sample Plan of Study

Year One		Credit Hours
Fall		
LAS 601	Politics, Societies, and Cultures of Latin America and the Caribbean	3
First regional fundamentals course		3
Graduate-level elective (LAS, cross-listed, or from partner department)		3
Credit Hours		9
Spring		
LAS 602	Research Design in Latin American Studies	3
Second regional fundamentals course		3
Graduate-level elective (LAS, cross-listed, or from partner department)		3
Credit Hours		9
Year Two		
Fall		
LAS 810 or 697	Pre-candidacy thesis credits or Readings for the Comprehensive Exam	3
Research methods course in discipline of specialization		3
Credit Hours		6
Spring		
LAS 810 or 697	Pre-candidacy thesis credits or Readings for the Comprehensive Exam	3
Graduate-level elective (LAS, cross-listed, or from partner department)		3
Credit Hours		6
Total Credit Hours		30

Mission

The mission of the Master of Arts in Latin American and Caribbean Studies is to offer students the tools and resources that enable them to advance and disseminate knowledge of the history, literature, culture, politics, and economics of the region using various theoretical and analytical approaches.

Goals

This graduate program furthers the skills and knowledge gained in undergraduate study and expects graduates to conduct scholarly research, formulate an academically rigorous and unique Master's thesis, and eloquently defend a thesis reflective of the student's enhanced expertise in the region. Graduates are prepared to either pursue further graduate study or find employment as experts with mastery of a particular region or peoples in Latin America or the Caribbean.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate a deep understanding of the region, its peoples and societies, and its history and cultures.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to conduct independent and original research.
- Students will demonstrate their skills in written communication.
- Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills.