The Master of Arts in Latin American and Hemispheric Studies (LAHS) is an interdisciplinary program designed to provide a broad and deep knowledge of context and place based on sound theory and practice. The program prepares students to develop innovative approaches to the enduring problems and emerging challenges of the hemisphere. This training will allow graduates to grapple with an often contradictory blend of political and economic successes and failures throughout the region.

Grounded on the expertise of GW’s faculty and selected practitioners drawn primarily from the Washington, DC, policy community, the program combines rigorous academics with a professional orientation. The program coordinates a series of events that brings leading policymakers from Washington and the world over to engage with students and faculty on issues facing the hemisphere.

Specific admission requirements are shown on the Graduate Program Finder. Visit the program website for additional program information.

REQUIREMENTS

Specific admission requirements are shown on the Graduate Program Finder. Prerequisite: a bachelor’s degree with background course work related to Latin America and at least two years of study of Spanish or another relevant hemispheric language.

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

A language proficiency requirement. The ability to communicate across cultures in more than one language is a distinguishing and expected skill of the international affairs professional. Therefore, completion of the MA in Latin American Studies requires a demonstrated oral and reading proficiency in Spanish or Portuguese.

A graduate-level research methods course applicable to the student’s area of specialization. We strongly encourage this course be taken within the first three semesters to help prepare students for their capstone in their fourth and final semester.

All Elliott School master’s degree students (except MIPP students) are required to complete the capstone. Those students who wish to complete a thesis must do so in addition to the capstone requirement. Students pursuing a thesis need a minimum of a 3.5 GPA and approval from the faculty member they wish to serve as their thesis director. Thesis students also need to complete at least one research methods course. Thesis credits will be counted as elective or specialization credits with Program Director approval.

For more information including the specialized field course list visit the program website.

Code | Title | Credits
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Core field

In order to acquire a broad, multidisciplinary understanding of the hemisphere, students must take a total of three courses, each one in a different discipline that can be selected from the following list:

Anthropology

ANTH 6702 | Issues in Latin American Anthropology

Or another 6000-level anthropology course approved by the Program Director.

Economics/Political economy

ECON 6285 | Economic Development of Latin America *

or

IAFF 3187 | Special Topics in Latin American and Hemispheric Studies **

or

IAFF 6358 | Special Topics in Latin American and Hemispheric Studies

Geography

GEOG 6261 | Geographical Perspectives on Latin America

or GEOG 6232 | Migration and Development

History

Any HIST course numbered 3700 or above approved by the Program Director.

International Affairs

PSC 6484 | International Relations of Latin America

Political Science

PSC 6383 | Comparative Politics of Latin America

Spanish literature
Any SPAN course numbered in the 3400s, 3500s, 4400s, or 4500s that focuses on the literature of Latin America.

*Prerequisites: ECON 1011 Principles of Economics I and ECON 1012 Principles of Economics II or their equivalents; students requesting an exception should see the instructor upon entering the class.

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