

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EDUCATION

Higher education:

Teaching

Research

Student affairs administration:

International student services

Study abroad

Multicultural programming

Student support services

Information/Library science

Primary and secondary education

Language services

Private tutoring

Interpreting

Translating

Community education:

Literacy

English as a second language

GED preparation

EMPLOYERS

Universities and colleges

International schools

Overseas dependent schools

Third party study abroad providers

Campus cultural centers

Support programs (e.g., Educational Advancement Program, Upward Bound)

School and community libraries

K-12 schools, public and private

Federal government agencies

Head Start programs

Nonprofit organizations including those promoting literacy (e.g., VISTA)

Adult education programs (e.g., those focusing on GED preparation)

Libraries (for Latinx Studies, museums, etc.)

STRATEGIES

Earn a Ph.D. in order to teach and research at four-year institutions. The interdisciplinary nature of Latin American Studies makes it good preparation for advanced education in a variety of fields.

Obtain a master's degree in student affairs or library/information science to prepare for those fields.

If interested in K-12 teaching, fulfill requirements for certification. This may involve a double major or a minor. Research alternative paths to certification such as Teach for America and other similar programs.

Research certification options for teaching English (e.g., TESOL, CELTA, TEFL)

Get involved in leadership roles on campus such as peer mentor, resident advisor, or orientation leader.

Join related professional associations as a student member.

Interact with students from Latin America. Participate in international programming on campus.

Plan to study, work, or volunteer in Latin American countries.

Develop strong communication and public speaking skills, particularly in Spanish or Portuguese.

Volunteer with community organizations that serve the Latinx population. For example, tutor non-native English speakers.

Secure strong recommendations from faculty, and maintain a high grade point average.

Assist a professor with research or take an independent study class to develop research skills.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

ADVOCACY/NONPROFIT

Domestic and international advocacy
Humanitarian services
Development:
 Economic
 Community
 Housing
Disaster/Disease relief
HIV/AIDS advocacy
Policy development
Policy analysis
Program administration
Education
Volunteer coordination
Grant writing
Program management and development
Fundraising/Development
Research
Community education & outreach
Public relations and marketing

Community action agencies
Labor unions
Nonprofit organizations (e.g., Amigos de las Americas, Centro Hispano)
Social service agencies
Private voluntary organizations
Private foundations (e.g., The Boston Foundation, Lumina Foundation)
Faith based organizations (FBO's) and churches (e.g., Catholic Relief Services)
Hospitals, medical centers and clinics (especially those in areas of high Latinx population)
International aid and relief organizations
Non-governmental Organizations (NGO's) (e.g., International Red Cross)
Federal government agencies with an international focus (e.g., Peace Corps, USAID, etc.) or a focus on community assistance (e.g., Americorps)
State and local government agencies
Special interest groups
Cultural heritage organizations
Research organizations (e.g., Pew Hispanic Center)

Volunteer at local social service agencies that work with Latinx communities to gain experience, demonstrate interest, and build contacts in the field.
Participate in an international service learning experience or church-led mission trip to Latin America.
Learn to speak Spanish or Portuguese, focusing on relevant technical vocabulary for your chosen field.
Pursue scholarship opportunities to study relevant languages, teach English, or conduct research abroad (e.g., Fulbright).
Get involved with cultural and international events or organizations on campus.
Take additional courses in social work, global studies, or other relevant areas.
Develop excellent research, writing, communication, and organizational skills, particularly in Spanish or Portuguese.
Learn how to motivate individuals and groups.
Plan to move to geographic regions where the Latinx population is growing.
Learn how to write grants and gain an understanding of budgeting and fiscal management.
Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field.
Research organizations' values to find a good fit with yours.
Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities and advancement.

HUMAN SERVICES

Healthcare advocacy
Counseling
Psychotherapy
Mental health services
Case management
Social work
Vocational/career counseling
Programming

Mental health institutions
Hospitals and clinics
Residential treatment facilities
Private and group practice
Correctional institutions
Federal, state, or local government (e.g., Department of Human Services)

Supplement curriculum with courses in psychology, social work, or child and family studies.
Obtain a graduate degree in psychology, counseling, or social work for increased counseling opportunities or advancement into administrative work.
Obtain a graduate degree in public health for increased opportunities in areas of healthcare access and advocacy.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

HUMAN SERVICES CONTINUED

Community relations
Fundraising/Development
Administration

Organizations that aid immigrants, migrant workers, and refugees or focus on cultural issues
Youth organizations and camps (e.g., YMCA's, Boys and Girls Clubs)
Nonprofit and social services organizations (e.g., United Way, Goodwill Industries, Salvation Army, etc.)
Faith-based programs

Gain essential practical experience through part-time or summer jobs and internships.
Volunteer with organizations that assist people of diverse backgrounds, particularly the Latinx population.
Participate in training opportunities (e.g., suicide prevention or crisis hotline response).
Gain a firm understanding of various Latinx cultures and how culture impacts individuals and families.
Become bilingual in Spanish or Portuguese in order to better assist some clients, emphasizing acquisition of relevant technical vocabulary.
Acquire knowledge of government and community resources available for those in need.
Research state licensure requirement in fields such as counseling, social work, and psychology.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

International business
International development
Importing/Exporting
Logistics
Banking and finance
Management
Customer service
Sales
Marketing
Advertising
Public relations
Labor relations
Training and development
Human resources
Equity and diversity functions
Travel and tourism
Real estate
Consulting
Agricultural economics

Public and private corporations in various industries:
Banks and financial institutions
Insurance companies
Retail stores
Hotels and restaurants
Consumer goods manufacturers
Businesses targeting Latinx customers
Staffing agencies
Consulting firms
Market research firms specializing in Latinx populations
Public relations agencies
Latin American firms operating in the U.S.
U.S. firms with operations in Latin America
International real estate, marketing, or trade firms
Hispanic chambers of commerce
Minority business development centers
Latino trade associations (e.g., Latin Business Association)
Travel agencies and tour operators

Double major or minor in Business.
Gain business experience through internships or part-time and summer jobs.
Through research, identify corporations that have a reputation for reaching out to Latinx populations.
Become bilingual in Spanish or Portuguese, emphasizing acquisition of relevant technical vocabulary.
Gain leadership experience through campus organizations or professional societies.
Understand the skills employers desire and be prepared to demonstrate them, such as communication (oral and written), computer, interpersonal, leadership, and teamwork.
Conduct informational interviews with professionals to learn more about career fields.
When job searching, seek employers interested in hiring "any major."

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY CONTINUED

Convention and visitors' bureaus
Organizations for research on and advancement of Latino's in business (e.g., Stanford Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative (SLEI))

Learn how to sell your Latin American Studies major to companies that value cultural diversity. For international assignments, plan to start in U.S. based positions and gain experience with the company/industry. Usually more seasoned employees are given international assignments. Earn an MBA or a graduate degree in another area of interest such as accounting or finance for more advanced opportunities.

LAW AND POLITICS

Law:
Corporate practice
Public interest law
Civil law
International
Immigration law
Lobbying
Government relations
Elected or appointed leadership
Public policy
Research
Intelligence
Campaign management
Special interest advocacy
Program administration
Immigration services

Law firms
Corporate legal departments
Public defenders offices
District attorneys
Public interest groups (e.g., The Center for Justice and International Law)
Civil rights organizations (e.g., National Council of LaRaza)
Legal aid
Sole practitioner
Government agencies (e.g., Department of State (foreign service))
Lobbying groups

Obtain a law degree (J.D.) for law positions or an advanced degree in public administration, public policy, or international relations for government positions.
Supplement curriculum with relevant courses to prepare for law school (research and writing skills).
Participate in activities that develop strong debate and public speaking skills such as mock trials.
Run for office in student government or work on a political campaign.
Get involved with the pre-law society on campus.
Gain relevant experience through jobs or internships with law firms, government agencies, or mediation centers.
Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations.
Prepare for and take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT).
Study abroad in a Latin American country.
Learn Spanish or Portuguese, specifically relevant technical vocabulary.

AREAS

MEDIA AND THE ARTS

Journalism
Creative writing
Freelance writing
Copy writing
Editing
Research and analysis
Broadcasting:
 Television
 Radio
Media sales
Museum work
Arts programming
Art sales
Fundraising/Development

EMPLOYERS

Newspapers
Magazines (e.g., *Hispanic*, *Latinax*)
Broadcast media companies (e.g., the television and movie industry)
Radio stations
Foreign news agencies
Trade, professional, or consumer publications
Internet sites marketed toward Latinx audiences
Advertising agencies
Publishing houses
Large corporations
Freelance
Museums
Galleries
Organizations and centers dedicated to promoting Hispanic visual and performing arts (e.g., Latino Arts Inc., National Association of Latino Arts and Culture)
Smithsonian Latino Center

STRATEGIES

Pair an interest in Latin American Studies with communication skills and/or language skills to write about Latinx people or for publications targeting a Latinx audience.

Study a second field such as journalism, English, or broadcasting to prepare for a career in media.

For positions in the arts, consider a minor in art history or music history. Plan to pursue a relevant graduate degree such as Museum Studies.

Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or department/program newsletters. Work at campus radio or television stations.

Intern with a publishing house, magazine, radio or television station depending upon area of interest.

Create a portfolio of writing samples, especially those that have been published. For other areas, create a website or digital portfolio to promote skills to potential employers.

Seek opportunities for recognition and networking through writing contests and freelance writing submissions.

Become familiar with the proposal and submission process involved in freelance writing.

When job searching, research media outlets to find those that target Latinx audiences.

Volunteer in local museums or galleries.

Travel to Latin American countries and visit local museums and cultural attractions.

Learn to speak Spanish or Portuguese and develop relevant writing and communication skills in the language.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Latin American Studies provides an interdisciplinary background that helps students develop analytical, critical thinking, and writing skills while gaining knowledge about the cultures, histories, and languages of Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, as well as Latinx populations in the United States.
- When paired with a major in another field, Latin American Studies can enhance the employability of a student because of a deeper understanding of the Latinx experience which many organizations will value. Training in this field can lead to a better appreciation of certain customers or clients.
- Some students may choose to pursue Latin American Studies because they enjoy the subject but wish to pursue careers requiring "any major." In this scenario, it is critical to develop skills relevant to targeted field through internships, part-time or summer jobs, or volunteer experiences.
- Latin American Studies majors are excellent candidates for a number of graduate school options because of their broad liberal arts background as well as specific interests that may set them apart from other students. For those wishing to pursue graduate education, maintain a high GPA, establish relationships with faculty to secure strong recommendations, and gain experience through volunteer, work, or research opportunities.
- Travel as much as possible to Latin America to experience it first-hand. Complete at least one study abroad experience. In the U.S., look for ways to interact with people from Latin America who are living in or visiting the States.
- More job opportunities may exist in parts of the United States where the Latino population is the largest (e.g., Florida, Texas, California, New York, Chicago) or growing (e.g., Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee).
- Read and stay abreast of politics and current events in regions of interest.