

Fall 2025 Course Offerings

Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies

Courses preceded by an H are humanities courses; by an SS, social sciences courses; and by an NS, natural science courses.

Introductory Courses – these courses provide a broad overview the region and cultures as they will provide students with a strong basis for understanding more in-depth analysis in mid and upper-level courses. For students finding LACX later in their college years, these courses can provide critical context for better understanding the region.

H – Elementary and Intermediate Language courses:

SPAN 101, 102; 151, 152 *Courses offered at various times. SPAN and 101 and 102 include a recitation.*

PORT 101 TR 11:05am – 12:20pm, W 10:25am – 11:15am; PORT 151 12:30 – 1:45pm, W 11:50 – 12:40pm

H - DANC171 – Capoeira: Brazilian Art Movement (Russell) - 2-credit course

An art form of self-defense with aerobic and dance elements that brings together a harmony of forces. Through history, movement, and culture, students gain self-confidence, power, flexibility, endurance, and tools towards self-discovery. Open to all, Capoeira balances the body, mind, and soul and enables one to break through limits, revitalizing oneself for everyday life.

SS - HIST150 – Colonial Latin America (Sierra) MW 2-3:15pm

This introductory survey focuses on the Spanish and Portuguese conquests and colonization of the region. Contrary to popular belief, the Conquest was constantly negotiated. Indigenous and African rebels, French and Dutch pirates and religious minorities eroded the Iberian hold on this vast territory. Primary source readings will introduce you to the writings of Inca nobles, Spanish conquistadors, and free African merchants. As a result, our course focuses on the vibrant societies defined as much by their cultural mixture as by their inherent political, social and economic inequality.

H - ATHS223 – Aztecs and their Ancestors (Bautista) TR 10:25 – 11:40am

This course is a survey of Mesoamerican archaeology that is meant to introduce students to the archaeological and ethnohistoric study of ancient Mesoamerican cultures that includes Olmec, Teotihuacan, Toltec, Zapotec, Tlaxcallans, Aztecs, and Maya, among others. Topics that will be covered in this course include the first settling of Mesoamerica, the origins of agriculture, the development of social complexity, the rise of cities, and the emergence of large-scale states culminating in the Aztec. Special attention will be paid to how these societies adapted to the diverse ecology of Mexico and Central America.

H - SPAN159 – Spanish for Heritage Speakers (Rojas-Rimachi) MW 2-3:15pm

A Spanish heritage speaker has personal and familial, as well as community connections to an environment where Spanish is spoken. This course has been developed specifically for heritage speakers of Spanish with oral proficiency but little or no formal training in the language. The goal of this course is to develop oral, written, and readings skills in order to achieve an academic register in Spanish, starting with the language foundation students already possess, and building on the rich experiences and influences of bilingual and bicultural upbringing. We address the study of progressively complex grammatical structures in order to attain communicative competence, and to expose students to different forms of cultural production in the Spanish language. Limited to 12 students. Major, minor, and cluster credit. ****Placement in this course is based on the required departmental online placement test score, an interview, and a writing evaluation done by the instructor.**

Mid-level courses – these courses are ideal for LACX students who already have a foundation through introductory courses. They also work well for students who with introductory courses in one discipline who are exploring LACX as a possible cluster, minor, or major.

SS - ANTH231 – (Il)legal Anthropology (Mondragón) MW 2 – 3:15pm

This course uses anthropological approaches to explore the sociopolitical construction of “the law” in the contemporary world. We will examine how the state’s power and regulatory practices constitute contingent domains of il/legality and how they shape people’s lives. We will also look at a range of illegal activities—including racketeering, piracy, drug trafficking, and political corruption—as well as how certain racialized and gendered bodies are subjected to criminalization. In so doing, we will look critically at the boundary between the illegal and the legal and its assumed alignment with dis/order and the im/moral at local, national, and global scales. We will examine case studies from Latin America, the Middle East, East Asia, the US, and elsewhere.

SS - HIST248W – African Diaspora in Latin America, 1804 - 2009 (Sierra) MW 10:25 – 11:40am

This course focuses on the historical experiences of Africans and their descendants in the Latin American region. Beginning with the Declaration of Haitian Independence in 1804, we will analyze the complexity of Black participation in the wars for (and against) independence. The course then shifts to Cuba's 1844 Escalera Rebellion and the diaspora of free people of color. The abolition of slavery, passage of free womb laws and struggle for political inclusion will lead us to Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, while arguing for an Afro-Latino experience that transcends national borders.

SS - BLST258 – Flights to Freedom: Maroons, Marronage, and the Making of the Americas (Frierson) MW 12:30 – 1:45pm

By focusing on flight from enslavement, this course traces the contours of colonization in the Americas, how maroons challenged the naturalness of the colonial order and shaped larger geopolitical relations among colonial powers. What did it mean to free yourself from enslavement in different parts of the Americas? What constitutes success? How does agency, resistance, and complicity emerge in the transition from unfreedom to freedom? What are the legacies of such actions in the contemporary moment? By focusing on flight from enslavement, we will trace the contours of colonization in the Americas, how maroons challenged the naturalness of the colonial order and shaped larger geopolitical relations among colonial powers. First, we will take a nuanced approach to broad themes such as freedom, independence, and resistance as we examine case studies from Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America. We will then explore how these narratives of freedom and resistance have been used in the present day for a variety of purposes from commemoration to tourism to activism. By following the lives and afterlives of maroons in the Americas, this course asks us to critically engage with the often ignored co-authors of the hemisphere’s past, present, and future.

SS - PSCI255(W) - Poverty and Development (Anderson) TR 9:40-10:55am

Why are some countries poor, while others enjoy a high standard of living? Why some enjoy stability and freedoms, while others suffer with corruption, repression and violence? Why countries stagnate or decline in their economic development. This course is designed to provide a broad theoretical framework for thinking about these problems, focusing on the political and institutional causes of differences in economic development across countries.

H – SPAN200 *placement or pre-requisite*, SPAN152 TR 2-3:15pm / 10:25 – 11:40am (2 sections offered)

Course designed to refine reading and writing skills in preparation for entering upper-level Spanish electives. Focus on developing logical arguments with evidence, and critical cultural and reading competencies.

Upper-level courses – Designed for advanced students, these courses will provide students with a deeper dive into selected LACX-related topics. Many of these courses carry (or can carry) W designations. Some can be considered capstone projects.

H - AHST 347 – Collecting Ancient Americas (Radlo-Dzur)

A history of the Americas in collections of objects. Topics discussed include the role and aesthetics of archaeological illustrations; the invocation of the past in the formation of national identities; contemporary artists responding to Indigenous history; the techniques used in the faking and restoration of ancient objects; the aesthetic, didactic, and ethical considerations of museum display and exhibition design; the reconstruction of ruined cities into tourist destinations; and the deployment of Indigenous cultures of the Americas in spiritualisms, conspiracy theories, and popular entertainments.

SS - HIST364W – The US-Mexico Borderlands (Kuhn) M 2-4:40pm

This course provides an in-depth examination of both the history of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, from the seventeenth century to the recent past, and the concepts that structure how we think about this place. Specifically, we will examine nation, borderlands, race, indigeneity, and settler colonialism through the work of scholars such as Benedict Anderson, Gloria Anzaldúa, and others.

SS - HIST 352W - Racial Democracies (Ball) T 2-4:40pm

This advanced seminar will explore the process by which these Mexico and Brazil grappled with their diverse populations during the modern era. We will pay particular attention to how policies and attitudes impacted citizens, residents and perceptions. The course will investigate the limitations that arose from Mexico's pursuit of a "cosmic race" and how the myth of Brazil's "racial democracy" was created and dispelled. Students will complete an independent research paper as a culminating project.

H - RELC284 – Civil Disobedience (Downey) T 2 – 4:40pm

This course will examine the varieties of thought about, and practice of, civil disobedience within social movements, with an emphasis on contemporary activism. When, why, and how do communities choose to push back against structures of violence and injustice? Throughout the semester, we will study canonical texts? of modern resistance history speeches, writing, direct action protests, art and will consider the role of this form of counter-conduct within larger campaign strategies to build power from below and get free.

H - SPAN 274 Latin American Cultures in the Anthropocene (Rodríguez-Hernández) MW 2 – 3:15pm

Our current geological age reflects ecological crises caused by human activity. In Latin America, the arts, literature, and film reimagine possible futures. Accelerated effects of industrialized nations on developing ones emphasize different worldviews either celebrated or negotiated. Pre-req SPAN 200

NS - Design of Medical Devices for Low Resource Settings (Castañeda) *restricted to engineering majors*

Explore the unique challenges and opportunities associated with designing medical devices to be used in two types of communities: one in the middle of the jungle in Peru and the other near the Greater Rochester Area. Students will receive lectures from current (or former) officials of the Peruvian Ministry of Health about the healthcare situation of Peru and invited talks from UR faculty about the situation of healthcare in the United States with emphasis in NY and the area surrounding Rochester. These introductory lectures will have the participation of students from "Proyecto de Biodiseño" (similar to Senior Design) in the BME Department at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru (PUCP). This course is a combination of theoretical knowledge, first-hand information and practical application, aimed at providing the students with the skills necessary to design medical devices that are not only innovative but also accessible and affordable for low-resource settings.