



# LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM [LASP]

## RECOMMENDED CREDITS

Students apply to one of four concentrations: Latin American Studies, Advanced Language and Literature, International Business (fall only) or Environmental Science (spring only).

Spanish Language	6
Core Seminar	3
Concentration Courses	6
Practicum/Travel	1-3
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>16-18*</b>

The program recommends that students be granted the equivalent of 16-18 semester hours of credit. Credit distributed is specific to each concentration.

\*Enrollment in 18 credit hours requires prior approval of the program and the home campus.

## CORE COURSES

Spanish Language study, Core Seminar, and the Travel Practicum form LASP's experiential and academic "Core".

### Spanish Language Study [6 credits]

Students come to Costa Rica with varying degrees of fluency in Spanish, so LASP places them in the Spanish class that corresponds to each participant's level of oral proficiency based on a placement exam and interview during orientation. Students study grammar, conversation, phonetics and/or literature based on the results of their tests. Classes are taught by Latin Americans. Because of this, participants hear and learn the language the way it is spoken in Latin America. This is reinforced during everyday interaction with Spanish-speaking host families.

Possible Credit: Spanish Language.

### Core Seminar: Perspectives on Latin American History and Contemporary Issues [3 credits]

This seminar introduces the social, historical, political, economic and theological currents that constitute Latin American society and culture. The course includes discussions with Latin American

experts and field trips to various sites. This seminar introduces students to:

- The historical development of Latin America, including selected case studies;
- A variety of analytical perspectives from which the Latin American reality is explained and understood;
- The character, past and present, of U.S. policy in the region;

The nature and influence of the economic reality in the region.

Possible Credit: History, General Studies, Cross-Cultural Studies.

### Travel Practicum [1-3 credits]

The LASP group travels to several countries in Central America during the semester. The travel practicum component is not a vacation trip; it is an integral part of the learning process. Students will be required to attend conferences, complete selected readings and maintain a journal of ideas and perceptions developed throughout the trips.

## CONCENTRATIONS

Each applicant selects one of the following four concentrations: the Latin American Studies Concentration (offered fall and spring); the Advanced Language and Literature Concentration (offered fall and spring); the International Business Concentration (offered only in the fall); and the Environmental Science Concentration. (offered only in the spring). Concentration courses take place during weeks 10-15 of the semester and consists of coursework and practicums/internships.

## LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES CONCENTRATION

Pre-requisite: Equivalent of one year of college Spanish.

Responses to Third World Reality [3 credits]  
Service Opportunity/Internship [3 credits]

This concentration is interdisciplinary by design. Here students are challenged in a seminar that includes diverse perspectives, broad readings and hands-on experience in a practicum setting. Course

content is adapted to changes in Latin American society. In recent semesters, the concentration has included a study trip to Cuba.

The concentration aims that participants:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of how Costa Ricans and Cubans have chosen to respond to their realities;
- Re-examine their worldviews by exploring the beliefs of those they meet during the Costa Rican Practicum Experience and the Cuba Study Trip;
- Articulate faith-informed positions on the appropriateness of North Americans serving in Latin America, the relationship between humans and creation, and the use of violence in response to conflict;
- Allow their telos to direct their praxis, becoming Christian agents for change in the world.

Possible Credit: History, Cross-Cultural Studies, Religion/Theology/Missions, Sociology.

## ADVANCED LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE CONCENTRATION

This concentration is designed for Spanish language majors with a minimum of one-year of college/university intermediate Spanish and one semester of advanced-Spanish conversation and/or composition.

Language & Literature Seminar [3 credits]  
Service Opportunity/Internship [3 credits]

This concentration focuses on the social, cultural, political, economic and religious issues of Latin America in the target language. Students examine how Latin Americans view their neighbors to the north and around the world through conversations, conferences and related literature. Presentations by invited speakers are delivered in Spanish and all required readings and assignments are written in Spanish.

This concentration is designed to:

- Expand students' Spanish language skills through a seminar taught exclusively in Spanish, a practicum or trip in the Latin American context and the daily use of Spanish while living with a Costa Rican host family;
- Examine Latin America through its literature, using it as a means to examine society and culture;
- Meet and interact with prominent literary figures in the region;
- Attend local theatrical and film productions.

Possible Credit: Spanish Language, Linguistics, Literature.

## INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CONCENTRATION (FALL SEMESTER ONLY)

Pre-requisite: Course background should include macro-/microeconomics and introductory-level management. Basic marketing and international relations or cross-cultural studies are also recommended.

Business Seminar [3 credits]  
Case study Project/Internship [3 credits]

Business concentration students spend an intense six weeks addressing the fundamentals and application of international business. Business concentration students are exposed firsthand to the political, social and economic realities of Latin America and must constantly answer the question: "What should the role of a Christian person be in the face of these realities?" Throughout this concentration, students will:

- Meet Latin American business and government leaders;
- Visit plantations, cooperatives, maquilas and local businesses of interest;
- Participate in a hands-on case study/internship project.

Possible Credit: Business Administration.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE CONCENTRATION (SPRING SEMESTER ONLY)

Science seminar [4 credits]  
Field research [2 credits]

Participants in this concentration explore the natural sciences in a tropical setting and study their influence on the process of sustainability. Students are immersed in a variety of ecosystems: dry forests, lowland rainforests, mountain cloud forests, volcanic regions, as well as beautiful coral reefs. Costa Rica serves as a natural laboratory. Students of the Environmental Science Concentration will:

- Aid in research projects ranging from ecology to ecotourism;
- Examine sustainable development and management of Costa Rica's protected natural areas;
- Investigate the general ecology of several tropical biomes, including highland cloud forest, mangrove forest, coral reefs, lowland rain forests and dry forests;

Study from the perspective of an informed Christian steward of creation.

Possible Credit: Biology, Botony, Environmental Science.