Hispanic Studies Minor

World Languages and Cultures
College of Liberal Arts

The Hispanic Studies program provides cultural knowledge, language skills and a broader world perspective. Situated in the Department of World Languages and Cultures (WLC), Hispanic Studies reflects the variety of cultural products, practices, and perspectives that students will experience in our classes. We are committed to continuing to connect with our students and to help them become engaged citizens of the world. Our students apply their linguistic and interdisciplinary skills to a wide variety of local, regional, national and international career choices.

Why UMD

Many UMD Hispanic Studies minors study abroad! Possibilities include the UMD faculty-led four-week six-credit program to Salamanca, Spain, in June, a semester at the UMD-sponsored University of Deusto in Bilbao, Spain, or a wide array of semester-long and short-term UMD featured programs in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Peru, among others. Scholarships are available through the Study Abroad Office, the College of Liberal Arts and the Department of World Languages and Cultures. Our faculty are award winning teachers and scholars. Our curriculum is comprised of language coursework; classes on film, literature, and sociocultural movements in communities where Spanish and coetaneous languages are spoken. We also offer a for-credit internship and Advanced Spanish for Business. Our classes—and our extracurricular events—are dynamic spaces where students are encouraged to be creative and to take calculated risks.

Acquired Skills

Hispanic Studies fosters the development of cross-cultural competency and broader world perspectives through the study of history, cultural production and texts of Spanish-speaking communities and cultures, and their concomitant inherent diversity. This minor presupposes the acquisition of Spanish language in order to carry out coursework in the study, analysis and understanding of literary texts and cultural products from Spain, Latin America, and United States Latino communities. It prepares students for graduate or professional school programs such as law, or for work in government, in education or with agencies and businesses having international ties. Many students who minor Hispanic Studies major in science or business.

Career Possibilities

Recent graduates have utilized their intercultural competency, language proficiency and critical thinking skills in a variety of careers and experiences: working in the Peace Corps, Human Resources, Cultural Consulting, Government work in the US and abroad, AmeriCorps, teaching abroad as well as in the US; continuing studies in professional programs such as Law and Pharmacy, or attending graduate school in Linguistics, Museum Studies, Hispanic Studies, Government and Public Policy, Education and Communication Sciences and Disorders.
Scholarships

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, Hispanic Studies students are eligible to receive World Languages and Cultures departmental scholarships: the Alayne and Charles Berkins Scholarship, the Angela Marinelli Scholarship and the Frances A. Knobloch Scholarship. Faculty also work with students and encourage them to apply for College of Liberal Arts, Study Abroad and University of Minnesota scholarships. Of the twenty-one students that studied in Salamanca in June 2017, twelve received University of Minnesota scholarships, eleven received World Languages and Cultures scholarships, and two received CLA scholarships.

Student Clubs

The UMD Club de Español (Spanish Club) is a student-run organization that plans events where students (and faculty) can connect and celebrate their love of the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures. Recent events include a bonfire in Bagley Nature Area, a holiday goodie decorating party, yoga in Spanish, among others. The club has also hosted fundraisers such as Mock-arita miércoles. The club’s leadership team organizes student volunteering with the Spanish immersion program at Lowell Elementary School.

Faculty Highlights

Our faculty are nationally and internationally known scholars who publish on the literature, cinema, social realities and diversity of the Spanish-speaking world. Recent publications pertain to identity and intersectionality as they relate to race, gender and language use; female exile in Europe; representation and identity formation in 21st-century Spain; recovery of historical memory in the wake of the Spanish Civil War and dictatorship, social media and indigeneity, among others. Our faculty secure prestigious grants to travel to conduct interviews, research in archives and have first-hand contact with the subjects they investigate. The faculty have received recognition and awards for their teaching and research. Our faculty are leaders: including holding elected positions in organizations such as the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese. We connect with our community through events such as the World Languages and Cultures Film Series, in which we have shown and discussed cinematic works such as “Ixcanul,” the first film every produced in the Kaqchikel language (which is in the Mayan family language group), and “14 kilómetros,” on the perilous and deadly voyage of those who cross the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain in search of a better life.

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