DEPARTMENT OF HISPANIC STUDIES

Overview

At a time when worldwide globalization includes the demographically and culturally significant Hispanization of Texas, along with other areas of the United States, the study of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture is important to achieve an understanding of the world in which we live. The mission of the Department of Hispanic Studies is to create and disseminate knowledge about the cultures and languages of the Hispanic world. Our research agenda includes Hispanic contemporary and period literature, film and performance, photography, iconography and digital humanities, cultural studies, gender and diaspora studies, and the history and presence of Spanish in the United States. The department offers a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, a Minor in Spanish, and a Minor in Hispanic Studies for Community Engagement. The development of Spanish language proficiency is at the core of all these programs.

With class sizes that rarely exceed 30 students, the Department of Hispanic Studies is recognized for its excellent teaching and personalized attention to student needs. The department offers a full range of courses for undergraduates, including language instruction and content courses in literature, culture, professional Spanish, and linguistics. An undergraduate major in Spanish can show future employers and/or graduate schools that a student has achieved a high level of linguistic ability and understanding of Hispanic cultures. The undergraduate major is designed to help students grow in their oral and written language skills as they learn more about Hispanic cultures through literature and cultural studies. This kind of study is valuable for those who plan to go into international careers or for those who plan to work with Hispanic populations in the United States. A Spanish major is useful in careers such as banking, advertising, marketing, journalism, health services, government, social welfare and public administration, and it is an excellent preparation for professional school in medicine, law, and business. Teaching certification is available to Spanish majors through the College of Education and Human Development.

The department insists on a high level of language competence as the basis for other intellectual growth in the discipline and requires a 10-week experience abroad. To help facilitate the fulfillment of this requirement, the department sponsors a summer study abroad program for credit in a variety of locations, such as Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and Spain. Semester and year-long study abroad programs, reciprocal exchanges and internships are also available and encouraged.

Spanish Bilingual/Bicultural Enhancement Initiative

The Hispanic Studies faculty recommends that Spanish language students, especially heritage speakers of Spanish and Advanced Placement (AP) students, take a healthy mixture of coursework related, on the one hand, to achieving University-level linguistic competence in the language; and coursework related to the Hispanic or Latino cultural experience on the other. To this end students select from courses on language, grammar and culture in spoken and written Spanish and electives which broaden the Hispanic/Latino knowledge base taught in English. A prudent and timely selection of courses can allow the student to apply coursework taken in the pursuit of bilingual/biculturalism to satisfy some requirements on the student's degree plan. Many of the suggested courses will apply in the Core Curriculum, for example, in areas such as Humanities and Social Sciences. Discussions with a departmental advisor can help students to focus the best possible fit of coursework with their interests and degree plan.

HISP and SPAN Courses

Reflective of its dual mission of striving to provide students with opportunities for cultural and linguistic competence, the Department of Hispanic Studies offers courses under two different rubrics, HISP (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/hisp) and SPAN (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/span). HISP (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/hisp) and SPAN (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/span) courses cover a variety of topics pertinent to Hispanic culture, such as food, film, literature in translation, music and visual culture, as well as social and political issues; they are offered in English. SPAN (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/span) courses are conducted in Spanish, and while they also deal with cultural topics ranging from literature to visual culture, they emphasize aspects of language and linguistic development.

Required Foreign Language Placement Test

Students who intend to enroll for the first time in a college foreign language course, who have previous knowledge of the language, however acquired, and who have no college credit in the language MUST take a placement test to determine the appropriate course for their level of ability. The foreign language placement test also serves as a basis for the credit by examination.

Students who take the Advanced Placement (AP) test or other acceptable tests which grant college-level credit in Spanish do not have to take the required foreign language placement test, as the results of these tests may be used for placement, but they are encouraged to do so nonetheless. Heritage learners, or those who have acquired any level of Spanish outside of a formal academic setting, are also expected to take the exam to guarantee correct placement, even when AP test results are available.

The Spanish Language Placement Test is administered by the Department of Hispanic Studies on the Pre-Conference Day of the New Student Conference, along with other credit-by-examination tests. The test is also offered twice per week during the fall and spring semesters. Students who do not take the placement test on the Pre-Conference Day will not be able to register for a foreign language course during their first semester.

International students whose native language is not English are exempted from satisfying the University foreign language requirement. These students are not allowed to register in those courses in their native language (101, 102) which are used to fulfill that requirement.

Majors

- Bachelor of Arts in Spanish (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts/hispanic-studies/spanish-ba)

Minors

- Hispanic Studies for Community Engagement Minor (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts/hispanic-studies/minor)
- Spanish Minor (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts/hispanic-studies/spanish-minor)
Faculty

Arizpe, Norma L, Senior Lecturer
Hispanic Studies
MA, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, 1977

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Hispanic Studies
PHD, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, 1982

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Hispanic Studies
PHD, Arizona State University, 1982

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Hispanic Studies
PHD, Washington University in St. Louis, 1987

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Hispanic Studies
PHD, University of Colorado, 2003

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Hispanic Studies
PHD, Princeton University, 2000

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PHD, University of Illinois at Urbana - Champaign, 2005

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PHD, University of New Mexico, 1990

Miller, Stephen J, Professor
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PHD, The University of Chicago, 1976

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PHD, University of Kansas, 2001

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Hispanic Studies
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PHD, University of Florida, 2000

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PHD, Stanford University, 1986

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MA, University of Arizona, 2005

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