



STUDENT LIFE

THE CAREER CENTER

Latin American & Caribbean Studies

FROM STUDY TO SKILLS

All academic programs offered at the UM help students develop valuable transferable skills. The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LACS) is a U.S. Department of Education National Resource Center, promoting the study and research of Latin American history and culture, including less commonly taught and indigenous languages such as Quechua, the language of the Incas, which is still spoken by millions of people in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia.

The concentration offered by LACS is designed to provide a broad-based, multidisciplinary approach to the study of this important region. In our increasingly global world,

as a student of Latin America and the Caribbean, you will learn to engage with multiple worlds, gain proficiency in at least one foreign language, obtain a broad-based liberal arts education, and develop excellent critical thinking and communication skills.

Related fields include Romance Languages and Literatures, History, Anthropology, Political Science, American Culture, Latino/Latina Studies, Afroamerican Studies, History of Art, Economics, Sociology, Public Policy, Museum Studies, and Linguistics.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Research/Project

Development Skills

- Gathering information
- Working with original sources
- Identifying areas for research
- Planning long-term projects
- Establishing hypotheses
- Applying methodologies from many disciplines

Analytical Skills

- Weighing values
- Reading critically
- Assessing evidence
- Comparing different translations
- Perceiving patterns
- Synthesizing information
- Identifying and questioning assumptions

Interpersonal/

Cross-Cultural Skills

- Sensitivity to problems of ethnicity and nationalism
- Understanding/working with people from different cultures
- Acknowledging value systems
- Understanding historical origins of present societies
- Applying interdisciplinary knowledge to a region
- Interpreting cultural norms

Communication Skills

- Reading and writing in another language
- Translating and interpreting
- Writing clearly
- Explaining complex ideas
- Presenting to groups

BUILDING YOUR SKILLS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Employers seek out individuals who can demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, initiative, and a strong work ethic. Student organizations and campus employment offer valuable opportunities to add to the skills you are developing in your classes. LACS students are active in student organizations, from advocacy to social groups. Honors thesis research and field research with faculty members provide further learning opportunities.

Other options include off-campus employment, volunteering in the community, or studying or working abroad, which is particularly helpful in building language proficiency and cross-cultural skills. Finally, a summer internship may be the best way of all to test out a career field and develop marketable skills.

FROM SKILLS TO CAREER

LACS concentrators develop both general and technical skills applicable to a wide range of careers in government, non-profits, education, and business. For example, cross-cultural communication skills may be equally

Research/Project

Development Skills

Population policy researcher 
Professional association director
Archivist, ethnic organization archives
Manuscript curator 
Museum curator 
Folklorist

Analytical Skills

Physician 
Epidemiologist 
Immigration lawyer 
National security agency analyst
Foreign policy analyst 
Investment analyst
Political risk consultant 
International banker
Development officer
College professor 

 = Further Study Required

For more career information, see O*Net at online.onetcenter.org

useful whether working as a social worker, a corporate recruiter, or a freelance journalist. Many concentrators go on to graduate or professional school. The list below is a sample of careers undertaken by LACS graduates.

Interpersonal/ Cross-Cultural Skills

Social worker 
Anthropologist 
Foreign service officer 
Court interpreter
Relocation coordinator
Corporate trainer
Relief agency volunteer coordinator
Foundation international programs officer
Diversity trainer
Study abroad director
Peace Corps/VISTA worker

Communication Skills

K-12 teacher
Language school manager
Legislator
Publishing house acquisitions editor
Journalist
Foreign correspondent (all media)
Newsletter writer

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

The LACS concentration requires 30 credit hours above the 200 level with a great deal of flexible choice. At least one course must come from each of the following areas: Anthropology, History, Literature, and Political Science. Many students elect to do a double concentration with one of these areas.

Intermediary knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese is required. Further language study, as well as study abroad in a relevant country, is highly encouraged, but not mandatory.

An Honors Concentration and a five-course minor are also available. Refer to the LSA Bulletin or the Center website for further information on prerequisites and requirements.

Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies

International Institute
1080 South University Ave., Suite 2607
734-763-0553
ii.umich.edu/lacs

Newnan Advising Center

1255 Angell Hall
734-764-0332
lsa.umich.edu/advising

NEXT STEPS/RESOURCES

To begin exploring opportunities for overseas study and work, go to: lsa.umich.edu/cgis or global.umich.edu

To identify internships or job opportunities, visit Career Center Connector: careercenter.umich.edu/article/c3

To begin connecting to professionals in fields that interest you, create your own LinkedIn account: careercenter.umich.edu/article/getting-started-linkedin

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On-campus jobs (work-study and non work-study jobs) are listed at:

studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx

Maize Pages list hundreds of organizations for students to get involved in: maizepages.umich.edu

Connect to Community lists volunteer opportunities in local organizations: connect2community.umich.edu

The Career Center

3200 Student Activities Building
734-764-7460
careercenter.umich.edu
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