Spanish Language and Literature

Professors: Carosella, López Malagamba, MacLean (chair), Rábago, Romero-Eshuis, Valle

The Spanish program emphasizes a critical understanding of the Spanish-speaking world by focusing on language skills, analytical tools, and the study of a variety of cultural expressions. These studies are an effective way of gaining a deeper understanding of the world, which is an important element of a liberal arts education. The program offers courses in language, literature, film and other cultural expressions from the Spanish-speaking world, as well as courses for the professions. There are study abroad opportunities in Spain, Ecuador, Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba and Colombia, and a study away opportunity on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Off-campus experiences are complemented by on-campus study and experiences that maintain and improve a student's language skills. Opportunities to view Spanish language films, read Spanish publications, and converse with native speakers are an integral part of the Spanish program.

Faculty members meet students inside and outside the classroom, participate in campus activities, and counsel students regarding graduate and professional career choices in high school and college teaching, science, publishing, international trade, international banking, and other fields.

Placement

Language placement exams are required for students who have taken Spanish courses or who are native or heritage speakers of Spanish, even if they are not sure they will continue studying Spanish at Kalamazoo College. Students with three or more years of high school Spanish will not be placed into SPAN 101. Placement exams for first-year and incoming transfer students completed by June 15th will be scored before First-Year Registration in July. All placement exams for first-year students taken between June 15th and August 15th will be scored prior to Orientation week. All students (including first-year students) who do not complete a language placement exam prior to the deadlines indicated above will not be able to register for Spanish until they have taken a language placement exam. Students needing to take the language placement exam have until the end of 4th week of the current quarter to complete the placement exam if they wish to take a language class the following quarter. Exams taken by the deadline will be scored in 5th week so that students will know their placement in time for registration for the next quarter.

Those students who wish to receive credit for language courses they have taken at another college or university before enrolling at Kalamazoo College must take the Spanish language placement test and test into a higher-level course than the one for which they are seeking credit. Any appeal of the placement test results should be directed to a Spanish faculty member.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Credit for Spanish Major and Minor

Students with Advanced Placement (AP) or IB scores must still take the placement test in Spanish. An Advanced Placement (AP) score of 4 or 5 in Spanish language will count as one credit toward the Spanish major or minor, provided that the student takes Spanish 203 or beyond as her/his first Spanish course at the college.

An advanced placement (AP) score of 5 in Spanish literature shall count as one credit toward the Spanish major or minor provided that the student take Spanish 203 or beyond as her/his first Spanish course at the college.

IB scores of 5-6-7 on the Higher Level may count toward a major, minor, or concentration at the discretion of the department faculty.

Requirements for the Major in Spanish
Number of Units
Eight units are required, not including SPAN 101, 102, or 201 but which may include the SIP. No more than two of these units can be earned during study abroad. No more than three units total may be earned off campus through any combination of study abroad, AP, IB, transfer credits or inter-institutional enrollment. Although a student may take any number of courses at the 200 (intermediate) level, no more than three of these courses may count toward the major.

Requirements

- 0 – 3 units from intermediate courses (SPAN 202 - SPAN 206)
- SPAN 301 Introduction to Hispanic Literature (prerequisite to all 400 level courses) and up to one additional 300-level course
- SPAN 491 or 492: the Senior Seminar (taken in the senior year)
- Three or more 400-level courses besides the senior seminar
- Successful completion of Comprehensive Examinations during the Senior year
- Speech Communities: An experience of study abroad, study away, service learning, internship or community service in a Spanish-speaking environment; or growing up in a Spanish-speaking community that fostered the acquisition of language and cultural knowledge

Units from Study Abroad
Only two units, to be used toward the major in Spanish, may be earned in a long term (6 month) or an extended term (9 month) program. One unit only from a short term (3 month) program may be used.

1. The student who goes abroad AFTER having taken SPAN 301 may bring back one unit in hispanophone literature or culture, and another one in language or topics pertaining to the country/region; students on short-term programs may only bring back one unit. These units are typically classified as 400-level electives on an individual basis. That student must still take the Senior Seminar and enough 400-level courses on campus to complete the eight-unit requirement.

2. The student who goes abroad BEFORE having taken SPAN 301 may bring back one unit in hispanophone literature or culture and another one in language or topics pertaining to the country and region; students on short term programs may only bring back one unit. These courses are counted in ways that fulfill requirements on an individual basis. Students must still take SPAN 301, the Senior Seminar, and enough 400-level courses to complete the eight-unit requirement.

Spanish majors are expected to participate in a study abroad program and acquire a high proficiency of language skill. Spanish majors are encouraged to develop appropriate cognate programs in areas such as the Sciences, History, Political Science, Economics, Business, Music, Philosophy, Anthropology, Sociology, or International and Area Studies.

Requirements for the Minor in Spanish

Number of Units
Six or more units are required, not including SPAN 101, 102, or 201. No more than one of these units can be earned during study abroad.

Requirements

- 0 – 3 units from intermediate courses (SPAN 202 - SPAN 206)
- SPAN 301 Introduction to Hispanic Literature and up to one additional 300-level course
- Two or more 400-level courses
- Speech Communities: An experience of study abroad, study away, service learning, internship or community service in a Spanish-speaking environment; or growing up in a Spanish-speaking community that fostered the acquisition of language and cultural knowledge

Units from Study Abroad

1. A student may count one unit from abroad toward the minor in Spanish. The unit, which must be taught in Spanish, may be in the literature of the hispanophone world, or in language, or a cultural/topical course pertaining to the hispanophone world.
2. If a student has taken SPAN 301 (Introduction to Literature) before going abroad, the student brings back a unit in literature or culture (from abroad) towards the 400-level requirement for the minor. A student who goes abroad before taking SPAN 301 needs to take SPAN 301 and enough 400-level courses on campus after study abroad in order to complete the minor requirements. Students who go on study abroad before taking SPAN 301 should contact Spanish faculty prior to their return to determine which on-campus Spanish course to take next in the sequence and how their study abroad course will fit into their minor.

Spanish courses

SPAN 101 Beginning Spanish I
Introduction to the Spanish Language and the Spanish-speaking world. Students begin developing competency in the four basic skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) through communicative activities and cultural exploration. Offered every quarter.

SPAN 102 Beginning Spanish II
Further development of the four skills through continued exploration of the Spanish-speaking world. Students will work to acquire the linguistic skills and cultural knowledge needed to navigate a variety of cultural settings. Offered every quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-101 or Placement Test

SPAN 200 Intermediate Spanish in the Dominican Re
This is an experiential educational experience that builds on knowledge and skills acquired in SPAN 201. In this course students will further develop the main linguistic topic of complex sentence construction in an immersive classroom setting in the Dominican Republic (a Spanish speaking country in the Caribbean). Students will also explore cultural topics like the environment, urban development, the arts, careers and wellbeing as they exist in the D.R. This course is meant to activate knowledge and skills acquired in SPAN 201 in the specific context of a Spanish-speaking country with particularly close ties with the United States.  
Prerequisite: Must have taken or placed into SPAN-102;  
SPAN 201 Intermediate Spanish
The refining and expansion of communicative skills. Students develop critical thinking and cross-cultural competency by reading, discussing, and writing about authentic texts. Offered every quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-102 or Placement Test; SPAN-201L must be taken concurrently

SPAN 202 Conversation and Composition
Critical explorations of the Spanish-speaking world through focused reading, discussion, and related written assignments. Offered every quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-201 or Placement Test; SPAN-201L must be taken concurrently

SPAN 203 Advanced Conversation and Composition
An introduction to the critical analysis of texts from the Spanish-speaking world. Students begin to acquire a more sophisticated knowledge of the intricacies of the Spanish-speaking world while putting into practice more complex forms of written and oral expression. Offered every quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-202 or Placement Test; SPAN-203L must be taken concurrently

SPAN 205 Culture of Health and Disease in the Hispanic Community
This course enables students to connect with Spanish-speaking clients and healthcare providers by teaching appropriate vocabulary and presenting different cultural attitudes and practices relating to health and disease. A service-learning component is included in this course. Offered every spring quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-201 or place into SPAN-202 or above.

SPAN 206 Business Spanish/Español Comercial
Business Spanish is a course aimed at developing students' communicative skills and intercultural awareness when interacting with Spanish-speakers in a business setting. The course employs a multifaceted, communicative approach to second language acquisition that foments the development of all essential skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The course is driven by topics, language functions and situations pertinent to business settings. Offered every fall quarter.  
Prerequisite: Take SPAN-201 or place into SPAN-202 or above; SPAN-206L must be taken concurrently

SPAN 301 Introduction to Hispanic Literatures
An introduction to the periods, concepts, genres, and major figures of Spanish and Spanish-American literature. Using selected texts, discussion, and a variety of written assignments, this course will introduce students to literary analysis and bibliographic methods. Offered every quarter.  
Prerequisite: SPAN-203 or Placement Test

SPAN 302 Advanced Oral Communication
This course is for advanced Spanish students who are committed to improving their competency in spoken Spanish, and who are interested in moving to a cohesive multi-paragraph discursive level. Students will learn the strategies required to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts. Students will be expected to develop proficiency in a number of discursive modes including conversations, discussions, presentations, debates, and reports, among others. Attention will be given to pronunciation, intonation, both verbal and non-verbal communication, as well as the skill of active listening. This course will not count for the Spanish major prior to the 2018 catalog requirements. Offered every winter quarter.

Prerequisite: SPAN-203 or placement into SPAN-301; must take SPAN-302L concurrently.

SPAN 310 Teaching Spanish As a Second Language
This course explores second language acquisition theory and practice with the purpose of guiding Teaching Assistants and prospective teachers of Spanish in their role as foreign language instructors. Students will focus on classroom management techniques, error correction strategies, as well as what affects the language learner in the classroom. Students will also examine different approaches to teaching speaking and listening skills, vocabulary, grammar, and culture to nonnative speakers of Spanish.

Prerequisite: Must have taken SPAN-203 or with instructor permission.

SPAN 311 Teaching Spanish As a Second Language II
This course explores second language acquisition theory and practice with the purpose of guiding Teaching Assistants and prospective teachers of Spanish in their role as foreign language instructors. Students will focus on the role of L2 classroom technology in providing context for the target language as well as enhancing learner intake. Students will also examine different approaches to teaching reading and writing skills, the role of L2 pragmatics in cross cultural communication, and various approaches to effective L2 assessment.

Prerequisite: SPAN-203 or placement into SPAN-301 or with instructor permission.

SPAN 401 The Spanish-Speaking World on Film
Research, discussion, and analysis of selected topics and issues in the Spanish-speaking world as reflected in film. Students develop the vocabulary and critical-thinking skills necessary to analyze and interpret the genre in both oral and written form. This course may be repeated for credit toward graduation if the content is different, but may count only once toward the major or minor. Offered every winter quarter.

Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 435 Advanced Literary Studies
Course focuses on major figures and movements in Spanish and/or Spanish-American literature. Topics will vary. May be repeated for credit if the course content is different. Offered occasionally.

Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 445 Visual Practices in Latin America
This course introduces students to critical texts, debates and questions proposed by the visual studies field in the context of Latin American cultural production. It delves into various historical causes to reflect on how film, photography, painting, murals, etc. have been used as a tool of power and dominance and/or resistance and subversion. Students will examine the ways in which visual images have scrutinized the historical process and, at the same time, the ways in which history has shaped visual media. Offered every other year.

Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 455 Limits of Genre
This course explores the limits of the traditional boundaries (poetry, narrative, drama, essay) among literary classifications. Appropriate cultural, historical, and political context provides the backdrop to understand the crossing of boundaries among literary genres and the incorporation, in literary texts, of diverse art forms. Offered occasionally.

Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 465 Imperial Spain Enlightenment to the Restoration
A survey of Spanish literature from the 16th to the 18th centuries. This period covers Spain's imperial expansion, religious and political conflicts in Europe, and a problematic internal reorganization. This upheaval nevertheless sparked numerous literary innovations in narrative, theatre and poetry. Students will analyze literary texts, and appropriate secondary readings, in order to understand the key concepts and debates in the early modern period; some of which remain unresolved today. Offered every three years.

Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 470 Modern Spain
A survey of Spanish literature from the 19th and 20th centuries. As Spain's overseas territories won their independence, the Spanish nation struggled to modernize and redefine itself. Lingering internal conflicts fueled a series of civil wars, and regional differences challenged national discourses on unity and identity. The literary sphere is where many of these clashes were articulated, and where many versions of modern and postmodern subjectivities were posited. Students will use literary and visual texts to examine important themes and movements in Spanish culture. Offered every three years.
Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 475 Conquest, Colonization, and Independence
This course introduces Spanish America from the 15th century to the beginning of the 20th. As encounters and subsequent colonization took place, issues around race, social class, and economic structures found their way into chronicles, diaries, letters, essays and poetry. The emergence of the nation-state in the 19th century brought about a distinct affirmation of Spanish American individuality in some works, and a more cosmopolitan perspective in others. Towards the beginning of the 20th century a newfound stance of cultural unity and commonality prevails in the literary scene. Students will analyze texts and use supporting materials to understand encounter, mestizaje, slavery, and identities as key concepts in understanding the Latin American continent.
Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 480 Constructing Spanish-America
This course examines the 20th century in its political, historical, and cultural dimensions. As the century unfolded, each region of Spanish America experienced political upheavals, crises, and transformations (Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, Chile) while being impacted by the two World Wars, radical societal shifts, and global cultural exchanges. All of those elements led writers to break new cultural and artistic ground, which led from the Avant-Garde to the world-renowned Boom, its literary after-effects, and new developments in visual arts. Students will analyze texts by, among others, Mistral, Borges, Rulfo, Neruda, Márquez, Puig, and Traba, and will explore the impact of art forms such as film, painting, and music.
Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 485 Undoing the Nation: Contemporary Culture
This course explores Latin American cultural production from the 1980s to the contemporary moment. As the dictatorships and state violence of the 70s and 80s came to an end, Latin American nations witnessed the establishment of complex return-to-democracy and national reconstruction projects, as well as the installation of neoliberal programs. This course will cover major literary and visual works that (dis)articulate these economic and sociopolitical transformations. In addition, students will study 21st-century artistic tendencies and movements, which, while continuing to reflect on local/national historical processes, also engage post-national and transnational ideological frameworks.
Prerequisite: SPAN-301

SPAN 491 Peninsular Spanish Seminar
Advanced study of outstanding authors, works, or genres that will vary to reflect the interest of students and the professor. Either SPAN 491 or SPAN 492 is offered every Winter quarter.
Prerequisite: One unit above SPAN 301 and senior standing

SPAN 492 Spanish-American Seminar
Advanced study of outstanding authors, works, or genres that are generally recognized as seminal to an understanding of Spanish America's social, philosophical, and aesthetic traditions. Either SPAN 491 or SPAN 492 is offered every Winter quarter.
Prerequisite: One unit above SPAN 301 and senior standing

SPAN 593 Senior Individualized Project
Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Individualized Projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. See the Kalamazoo Curriculum -&gt; Curriculum Details and Policies section of the Academic Catalog for more details.
Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.

The Academic Catalog contains the most accurate information available at the time of publication. Statements contained therein are not contractual obligations, and verbal or other representations that are inconsistent with or not contained within the catalogues' offerings or policies are not binding. Kalamazoo College reserves the right to change, without specific notice, offerings, policies, procedures, qualifications, fees, and other conditions.

This content was last updated on April 22 2020.