

Central American Studies Program

Interdisciplinary Minor

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

Program Office: Jerome Richfield (JR) 219
Telephone: (818) 677-2736

COORDINATOR: Beatriz Cortez

ADVISORS: Douglas Carranza, Beatriz Cortez, Alicia Estrada.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE: Rudy Acuña (Chicana/o Studies); Douglas Carranza (Central American Studies, Chicana/o Studies); Beatriz Cortez (Central American Studies, Coordinator, Chicana/o Studies); Susan Fitzpatrick-Behrens (History); Marta López-Garza (Chicana/o Studies, Women's Studies); David Rodriguez (Chicana/o Studies).

MINOR PROGRAM: The Central American Studies Program is an interdisciplinary program that emphasizes the transnational character of Central American communities. Courses offer a variety of perspectives and approaches, including the study of politics, art, culture, identity, and literature. Many of the courses can also be counted toward GE requirements. The courses in the Program put a strong emphasis on helping students build the skills they need to be successful in college. The Program is community-oriented, and includes an Academic Internship component to emphasize the importance of learning through work in the community. The Minor Program will be valuable for students seeking to understand their own heritage, as well as those who plan to work with the large Central American community in Los Angeles, and those who have a scholarly interest in understanding the character of this active and growing transnational community.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR (24 UNITS)

LOWER-DIVISION REQUIRED COURSES (9 UNITS)

- One of the following two courses:

CAS 100	Introduction to Central American Studies.....	3
CAS 102	The Salvadoran Experience.....	3
- CAS 201 Survey of Central American Literature and Art3
- CAS 270 Fieldwork in Central American Communities3

UPPER-DIVISION REQUIRED COURSES (15 UNITS)

- One of the following two courses:

CAS 309	Ancient to Pre-Modern History of the Central American Peoples.....	3
CAS 310	Modern History of the Central American Peoples.....	3
- CAS 311 The Central American Diaspora3
- CAS 365 Changing Roles of Central American Women.....3
- One of the following two courses:

CAS 368	Central American Revolutionary Movements3	
CAS 369	Contemporary Social and Religious Movements of the Central American Peoples.....	3
- One of the following four courses:

CAS 440	Research Seminar on Central American Culture.....	3
CAS 460	Research Seminar on Central American Political Issues.....	3
POLS 433A	Politics of Central America.....	3
SPAN 421	Central American Literature.....	3

NOTE: In order for students to complete the minor successfully, students are encouraged to develop a proficiency in Spanish listening, speaking, reading and writing. While not a requirement, we recommend that students follow one of the two tracks listed below.

TRACK I (for native speakers)

SPAN 104	Elementary Written Spanish II	3
and either		
SPAN 220B	Intermediate Spanish II	3
or		
SPAN 296A	Spanish for Natives: Intermediate Written Spanish.....	3

TRACK II (for non-native speakers)

SPAN 220A	Intermediate Spanish.....	3
and		
SPAN 220B	Intermediate Spanish II	3

COURSE LIST

LOWER-DIVISION

CAS 100. INTRODUCTION TO CENTRAL AMERICAN STUDIES (3)

Comparative, historical introduction to political, cultural, and socioeconomic aspects of the Central American experience both in Central America and in the United States. Considers the question of whether there can be a single Central American identity in light of the great variety of experiences of race, gender, ethnicity and social class in the Central American community. (Available for General Education, Comparative Cultural Studies)

CAS 102. THE SALVADORAN EXPERIENCE (3)

Introduction to the political, economic, social and cultural realities of Salvadoran life in El Salvador and in the United States. Emphasis is on various aspects of the institutional and private life of Salvadoran communities. The course is framed by historical and contemporary comparisons with other Central American national groups with respect to their experiences of race, ethnicity, class, gender and national identity. (Available for General Education, Comparative Cultural Studies)

CAS 201. A SURVEY OF CENTRAL AMERICAN ART AND LITERATURE (3)

Analysis of the literary and artistic traditions throughout the history of Central America from pre-Hispanic times to the present. Focus on 20th century literary and artistic movements, with the main emphasis placed on the historical and political elements and the revolutionary struggles in which these artists and writers were formed. Includes a discussion of the relationship between artistic creation and the development of Central American identity. (Available for General Education, Arts and Humanities)

CAS 270. FIELDWORK IN CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (3)

Preparatory: CAS 100 or 102. Field study in a selected Central American community. By reflecting on their work experience students learn how the needs of the community can best be met, and how the well-being of the community is impacted by its relationships to state and local governments, community organizations, and private institutions. Faculty Supervisor assist students in obtaining appropriate work placements. Field study to be conducted under supervision and after preparatory instruction to acquaint the student with field learning techniques. Variable content. May be repeated for credit with permission of the instructor. Academic Internship course. (Available for General Education, Lifelong Learning)

UPPER-DIVISION

CAS 309. ANCIENT TO PRE-MODERN HISTORY OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEOPLE (3)

Preparatory: Completion of lower-division writing requirement. Survey of the history of Central Americans from pre-Hispanic times to the pre-Independence days. Major topics include: Indigenous cultures (complex and simple societies); Indigenous and European (Spanish and Anglo) relations; religion, family and land tenure; language and education; disease, labor and population; local and global trading; indigenous revolts and pre-independence movements. (Available for General Education, Social Sciences)

CAS 310. MODERN HISTORY OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEOPLE (3)

Preparatory: completion of the lower-division writing requirement. Survey of the History of Central Americans from Independence times to the present. Major topics include: Independence movements; 19th and 20th century dependency; state-nation and identity formation; politics of mestizaje; Indigenous resistance; imperialism and economic growth; relations with the United States and Europe; politics of development; contemporary social movements; Central American diaspora. (Available for General Education, Social Sciences)

CAS 311. THE CENTRAL AMERICAN DIASPORA (3)

Preparatory: Completion of the lower-division writing requirement. Comparative survey of the socioeconomic conditions and cultural life of Central American peoples in the United States today, particularly in California. Issues of immigration, employment, income, education, gender, family, language, national identity, acculturation and political participation will be examined. Discussion of Central American diaspora communities in other parts of the world may also be included. (Available for General Education, Comparative Cultural Studies)

CAS 365. CHANGING ROLES OF CENTRAL AMERICAN WOMEN (3)

Preparatory: Completion of the lower-division writing requirement and either CAS 100 or 102. Comparative examination of the shifting cultural, political, economic and sex/gender roles that have shaped the lives of Central American women, including women's roles prior to and after the revolutionary movements. Also includes discussions of women activists and women's movements in various Central American communities both in the United States and in Central America; the search of Central American women for identity in the United States; and women's contributions to art, music, poetry, literature, politics, and culture. (Available for General Education, Comparative Cultural Studies)

CAS 368. CENTRAL AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS (3)

Preparatory: Completion of the lower-division writing requirement and either CAS 100 or 102. Examines the historical and socio-economic conditions that have shaped the Central American revolutionary movements. Major topics of discussion include: the history of Central America leading up to these movements, the role of the U.S. policy in the region before and during the movements, the ideological sources of the revolutionary movements and their organizing strategies, the impact of the U.S. anti-intervention and solidarity movements, the peace processes in the region, and the influence of these movements on the post-revolutionary diaspora communities in the United States. (Available for General Education, Social Sciences)

CAS 369. CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEOPLES (3)

Preparatory: Completion of the lower-division writing requirement and either CAS 100 or 102. Designed to provide students with a basic theoretical and practical understanding of the contemporary social and religious movements that shape Central American life in both Central America and the U.S. Emphasizes the transnational nature of Central American social and religious movements, as well as the way in which these movements are responding to the legacy of war and violence that has impacted Central American life both in the region and in diaspora communities. (Available for General Education, Social Sciences)

CAS 440. RESEARCH SEMINAR ON CENTRAL AMERICAN CULTURE (3)

Preparatory: Upper-division standing; 6 credits in Central American Studies, including CAS 201. Techniques and practice of the critical analysis of culture. Develop and implement comparative research projects that explore in depth some aspect of Central American cultures. Variable content. Possible topics include the role of literature in the construction of national identity, the creation of texts through oral history, cultural transformation and continuity in the Central American diaspora, Art and social protest, medicine, religion and sorcery in the central american diaspora. May be repeated for credit with instructor consent.

CAS 460. RESEARCH SEMINAR ON CENTRAL AMERICAN POLITICAL ISSUES (3)

Preparatory: 6 credits in Central American Studies, including CAS 201 and Upper-Division standing. Purpose of this seminar is to acquaint students with the techniques and practice of theoretical research. Students will develop and implement comparative research projects that explore in depth some aspect of the Central American political experience. Variable content. Possible topics include: Sandinismo in theory and practice; the role of the Catholic Church and the influence of Evangelical Protestantism in Central American communities; postwar democracy in Central America; political activism in Central American diaspora communities in California.