

Cultural Politics of Afro–Latin and Indigenous Peoples Concentration

This graduate concentration in the master's program of the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies trains students to analyze the politics of racialized peoples at the margins of Latin American societies, through the lens of culture theory. Within this broadly defined approach, the particular strength of LLILAS faculty and greatest diversity of course offerings can be found in topics that cluster around the study of racial formation, language politics and ideologies, gender relations, identity politics and social movements, and ideologies of nation building, with a strong emphasis on historical analysis. This “cultural politics” approach has a dual point of reference: 1) analysis of political processes in which cultural difference plays a prominent role, and 2) systematic inquiry into the cultural construction of categories that people use to engage in politics and to explain political outcomes to one another. An example of the first is the analysis of indigenous and Afro–Latin movements for rights and resources in Latin America; an example of the latter is scrutiny of the categories of race and nation through which these very rights are claimed, contested, and exercised.

This concentration provides M.A. students with a structured, interdisciplinary program of study, with personalized academic advising from the concentration chair and associated concentration faculty. Efforts will also be made to help connect cultural politics students with research projects and opportunities for the M.A. thesis and beyond.

Admission

Candidates may apply to the concentration at any point in their graduate study. Each candidate must be in good standing at the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies. The concentration is open to all, although space in some courses may be limited and not all courses will be offered in a given year.

Course and Semester Hour Requirements

It is anticipated that any student who enrolls in the concentration can complete her or his course of study for the degree of Master of Arts in Latin American Studies in the same amount of time that should have been required for the degree alone.

Students must complete at least five courses for 15 credit hours. Students are encouraged to develop a list of courses unique to their own program of work. One independent study course may be applied to fulfill

the third requirement; the first two requirements must be fulfilled with organized courses. One upper-level undergraduate course may count as one of the five required concentration courses if the student has arranged with the instructor to take the course as a graduate independent study.

Students must take:

- One seminar (3 hours) from the cluster of historically oriented courses
- One seminar (3 hours) from the cluster of courses focused on critical race theory
- Nine remaining semester hours, chosen from the wide array of courses with a focus on indigenous and/or Afro-descendant peoples of Latin America.

Students in this concentration must complete a master's thesis. This involves taking two thesis courses in consecutive semesters (LAS 698A+LAS 698B), completed under the direction of a LAS faculty member who has "cultural politics" expertise, as established by the concentration committee.

Concentration Committee

The concentration chair recruits eight faculty members from the long list of "affiliated faculty" to serve as faculty members of the Concentration Committee. Workload on this committee is light and can be accomplished via email, except under unusual circumstances. The principal responsibility of the committee is to be available to advise concentration students on an "as needed" basis. The "first stop" for advising is the concentration chair. Committee members and chair serve for two years.

Committee members (Fall 2003–Summer 2005): Charles Hale (chair), Jafari Allen, Seth Garfield, Nora England, Juliet Hooker, Raul Madrid, Bryan Roberts, Shannon Speed.

Affiliated faculty (long list):

Allen, Jafari–Anthropology
Burnett, Virginia–LLILAS and History
Crowhurst, Megan–Linguistics
De Uriarte, Mercedes–Journalism
England, Nora–Linguistics
Garfield, Seth–History
Godreau, Isar–Anthropology

Gonzalez–Lopez, Gloria–Sociology
Gordon, Edmund–Anthropology
Hale, Charles–Anthropology
Hooker, Juliet–Government
Hunter, Wendy–Government
Madrid, Raul–Government
Menchaca, Martha–Anthropology
Nicolopoulos, Jaime–Spanish and Portuguese
Roberts, Bryan–Sociology
Sherzer, Joel–Anthropology
Speed, Shannon–Anthropology
Straubhaar, Joseph–RTF
Vargas, Joao–Anthropology
Walker, Sheila–Anthropology
Watkins, Craig–RTF