

Development Studies Concentration

Introduction

The Development Studies Concentration at the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies (LLILAS) aims to integrate resources across academic disciplines to provide individually tailored programs of study in specialized areas of development. Participating departments include Anthropology, Community and Regional Planning, Economics, Geography, Government, History, the LBJ School of Public Affairs, and Sociology. The concentration will encourage students to draw upon concepts and methods from two or more disciplines to analyze specific development issues, policies, and problems.

All students select at least one introductory course on development theories and themes, and one on evaluation and research methods. With the assistance of a faculty adviser, each student organizes a sequence of courses defined by crosscutting themes such as:

- Development and the Global Economy
- Social Policy and Development
- Comparative Politics of Development
- Local and Regional Development
- Civil Society Actors and Development
- Race and Ethnic Identities, Perspectives, and Rights
- Environment and Development
- Historical Perspectives on Development

Each student also completes a master's thesis on a specialized topic under the direction of a faculty member.

The Development Studies Concentration is designed for those planning a future career in public sector, community, and nongovernmental organizations in or relating to Latin America, as well as in multilateral institutions and international organizations. This concentration is also appropriate for students intending to pursue development issues further in an academic context or within other professions.

Students with a special interest in business, law, social work, journalism, and radio–television–film will also want to consider development–related seminars with Latin American content offered periodically by the McCombs School of Business, College of Communication, School of Law, and School of Social Work.

The Objectives

The Development Studies Concentration pursues five main objectives:

- 1) To highlight, integrate and, build upon UT–Austin's strong programs of teaching and research around key development issues in Latin America.
- 2) To attract highly qualified M.A. candidates, whose interests match areas of specialization at UT.
- 3) To equip future professionals with the analytical capabilities needed to work effectively in the development field.
- 4) To provide a solid foundation for students seeking a subsequent doctorate on development issues.
- 5) To structure the sustained demand for development–related seminars within the M.A. program, and thereby to facilitate graduate advising.

Approach

The Development Studies Concentration provides interdisciplinary perspectives on economic and social transformation in Latin America. Students acquire the capacity to gain an in–depth understanding of economy, politics, and society in individual countries, and to examine development issues within their domestic and international contexts. Several seminars consider the efforts of diverse social actors to influence the course of economic and social change. Within this dynamic setting, the concentration offers students the opportunity to develop skills and expertise in policy research, design, and evaluation.

While the concentration focuses on Latin America, development–related courses are often cross–listed with Asian and other areas study programs at the University of Texas, facilitating a comparative approach to the study of policy options and outcomes in a global economy.

The Development Studies Concentration grows out of a rich history of teaching and research on development issues at the (LLILAS). Likewise, it benefits from an ongoing exchange of ideas with Latin American scholars, policymakers, and civil society and community leaders, organized through the institute's regional and policy centers.

Visiting professors and scholars from Latin America enrich Development Studies at the institute. Students also have opportunities for summer internships in Latin America. The institute houses the largest U.S. university library collection of Latin American materials, the Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, providing further access to intellectual history and current thinking around development issues.

Admission Requirements

Students accepted to the M.A. Latin American Studies Program are eligible for the Development Studies Concentration, and may apply at any point in their graduate studies. However, space in some courses is limited, and not all courses are offered in a given year. A concentration committee member will serve on the Graduate Board, which evaluates applicants to the M.A. Latin American Studies Program.

Certification

Established procedures will apply for the certification of courses with Latin American content. The graduate or concentration adviser must approve all coursework that meets the Development Studies requirement. The concentration will not appear on the transcript or diploma.

Course and Semester Hour Requirements

The Development Studies Concentration represents the major within the M.A. Latin American Studies Program (Plan A). Students must complete at least five courses for 15 credit hours to fulfill the concentration requirement, including at least one course in Introduction to Development Studies, in Evaluation and Research Methods, and in a specialized area.

Courses must have both Latin American and Development Studies content to count toward the concentration requirement. Such courses are included in the Graduate Course List for Development Studies Concentrations. (Note: These courses will change. For the most recent course list, see the graduate studies or concentration adviser.)

Other courses that may count toward this requirement include: a) one upper-level undergraduate course provided the student has arranged with the instructor to take it as a graduate independent study; and b) a total of no more than two courses taken as independent study. In all cases, students must document their selection of course-work and obtain the approval of the graduate or concentration adviser.

Students also select a minor within the M.A. Latin American Studies Program (equivalent to three courses for nine semester hours), where they may choose to focus on a distinct but complementary theme to that pursued in the Development Studies major.

Thesis Requirement

Students must complete a master's thesis (LAS 698A+698B) under the direction of a faculty member affiliated with the LLILAS who has expertise in the development field. The chair of the concentration committee will maintain a list of such faculty.

Program Administration and Certification of Program Requirements

The concentration committee and the graduate adviser of LLILAS will jointly administer the program. Graduate Program Catalog

Description

The following description will appear in the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies Graduate Program Catalog:

Development Studies at LLILAS provides students with interdisciplinary perspectives on economic and social transformation in Latin America. The Development Studies Concentration integrates resources across academic disciplines to offer individually tailored programs of study around specialized areas of development. Representing the major within the M.A. Latin American Studies Program (Plan A), the concentration requires 15 hours of coursework with substantial Latin American and Development Studies content, and the completion of a master's thesis on a development theme. Additional information is available from the concentration and graduate adviser at LLILAS.