International Languages and Cultures

View International Languages and Cultures Department website
The Department of International Languages and Cultures is committed to the study of particular societies around the world, with the aim of bringing forth an understanding of the worldview and cultural perspective of peoples who live outside the English-speaking world. We are particularly concerned with promoting the development of both linguistic and cultural literacy. Through the expertise in the Department of International Languages and Cultures, students can gain linguistic proficiency and understanding of a large variety of cultures from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

As human beings, we’re increasingly confronted with the need to live in a globalized context. Patterns of international economic, political, social and cultural exchange increasingly define how we are to live, work and relate to one another. One of the major challenges facing our society is to learn how to work collaboratively with other societies in search of common interests.

Language is one of the main mediums through which we express our specific cultural identity in relationship to the human race in its totality. In order to understand a culture on its own terms, it’s necessary to approach it through its own linguistic framework.

The International Languages and Cultures (ILC) department currently offers a major and minor in Spanish. In addition to minors in Chinese and French, there is also an option to create a student-designed major in those languages, as well as a student-designed major in Latinx and Latin American Studies. Students majoring in ILC are required to produce an independently designed and closely mentored 8-credit St. Mary’s Project in their senior year. This project may either be in ILC or in another major discipline or a study area. The guidelines established in the selected area apply. The student should consult with the chair of ILC to discuss how the St. Mary’s Project requirement will be fulfilled.

We strongly advise majors to spend time abroad to gain both linguistic and cultural fluency and confidence. The experience abroad can be pursued in various manners: study abroad with our partner programs (programs we have pre-approved) or with those of other colleges and universities; internships with international organizations or governmental agencies
abroad, or “au pair” or other work-related experiences. Some of the experiences noted above can be pursued for credit, others not. It is important that students begin to think about experiences abroad as early as possible during their time at St. Mary’s, and that they discuss their interests with a faculty adviser within the department.

Learning Outcomes

- Communicate in grammatically complex and nuanced written expression in the language area of concentration
- Communicate in grammatically complex and nuanced oral expression in the language area of concentration
- Analyze a range of cultural contexts including literature, cultural production, and sociopolitical culture
- Develop intercultural competence to analyze target cultures as well as students’ own culture in a regional or global context.

Degree Requirements for the Major

Degree Requirements For A Major In Spanish
To earn a bachelor of arts degree with a major in International Languages and Cultures: Spanish, a student must satisfy the following minimum requirements:

General College Requirements
General College Requirements (see Curriculum section), including the following requirements to satisfy the major

Core Courses
Core courses (32 credit hours) in ILCS starting with ILCS 202 or ILCS 260, depending on student’s initial level. Of the 32 core credits, 24 must be Upper Level credits. A student may substitute no more than one ILCS course with a course taught in English on the Spanish-speaking world (ILCT 303, ILAS, or a Latinx and Latin American Studies course taught in English from HIST or POSC). Of the 32 core credits, at least 8 must be taken at the SMCM
home campus, 4 of which must be Upper Level credits.

- ILCS 202: Intermediate Spanish II
- ILCS 260: Composition for Cultural Analysis
- ILCS 360: Advanced Writing Workshop
- ILCS 361: Indigenous Cultures in Latin America (repeatable for core credit)
- ILCS 362: African Diaspora Cultural Expressions in Latin America (repeatable for core credit)
- ILCS 363: Cultural Perspectives on Gender (repeatable for core credit)
- ILCS 365: Creating for Social Change (repeatable for core credit)
- ILCS 372: Multicultural Characteristics of Early Modern Spain
- ILCS 373: The Invention of Latin America
- ILCS 374: Latin America and Globalization
- ILCS 390: Spanish in the Community
- ILCS 440: Special Topics in Hispanic Studies in Spanish (repeatable for core credit)
- ILCT 303: Special Topics in Hispanic Studies in Translation (repeatable for elective credit)
- ILAS 205: The Latinx Experience in the United States
- ILAS 210: Latin American Cultural Studies
- ILAS 315: Latin American Literature in Translation
- ILAS 350: Latin American Cinema
- ILCT 293: Introduction to Cultural Studies, two credits.

ILCT 293: Introduction to Cultural Studies, two credits. This course must be taken as a pre- or co-requisite to the first 300-level course in ILCS.
- ILCT 393: St. Mary’s Project Workshop, two credits.

ILCT 393: St. Mary’s Project Workshop, two credits. This course must be taken prior to the semester in which the student begins his or her St. Mary’s Project.
- ILCS 493/494

St. Mary’s Project in International Languages and Cultures (1-8 E). A student-initiated and student-executed project of eight credit hours in the language of concentration. Depending on the nature of the project, some components may be written in English, with the approval of the mentor. The project may be a research project in literary or cultural studies, a creative-expressive project involving the arts, or a pedagogical project involving teaching applications. Also, depending on the focus of the student’s course work and interests, the
A project can be single or multi-disciplinary based. Whatever the nature of the project, students must demonstrate in it: 1) linguistic competence equal to the task; 2) a method appropriate to the task; 3) adequate knowledge of the particular area of research or endeavor; and 4) an ability to analyze and reflect upon this knowledge in order to integrate it with knowledge in other areas of inquiry or performance. They also must critically discuss and share publicly the results of the project. The course is repeatable for up to a total of eight credit hours. NOTE: Students whose projects are to be based on material collected “in the field” while studying abroad during their junior year or while engaged in off-campus apprenticeships or internships should discuss their plans with a faculty adviser as early as the second semester of their sophomore year. Prerequisites: ILCT 393; approval of a faculty project mentor; approval of the department chair.

A Student-Designed Major in Chinese, French, or Latinx and Latin American Studies
For more information on how you can combine the depth of advanced coursework in Chinese, French, or Latinx and Latin American Studies with courses in other disciplines for student-designed majors in these languages, begin by contacting the ILC chair. Also consult the requirements for a student-designed major.

Degree Requirements for the Minor

Degree Requirements for a Minor in International Languages and Cultures with Concentrations in Chinese, French, or Spanish
Students may receive a minor in international languages and cultures with a concentration in any of the language areas of the department (Chinese, French, Spanish) by completing a minimum of 18 credits of course work in the target language, with a minimum of 12 credits of upper-level coursework (300 or 400 level) with a minimum grade of C- and a GPA of 2.0 in the relevant courses. Four of the upper-level credits for the ILC minor with a concentration in French must be taken at St. Mary’s home campus.