Our program develops analytical skills and methodologies needed to explore Hispanic and Hispanic-American languages and cultures.

It is important to note that department majors and minors are not simply Spanish and Portuguese language majors or minors; rather, they are liberal arts majors and minors concentrating on Spanish, Latin American, and/or Luso-Brazilian literary, cultural, and linguistic studies with language skills at the foundation. All major and minor options in this department begin with prerequisite language courses, followed by advanced language skills courses (special arrangements may be made for native speakers of Spanish or Portuguese). These are followed by critical analysis skills courses in Hispanic literature, culture, and linguistics that prepare students to take advanced coursework in specific areas. The major options culminate in the completion of a senior project through a SPAN 5xxx course or SPAN 3972W.

Majors are required to enroll in a minimum 6-week study abroad experience, or a semester-long service learning course. The study abroad requirement must be fulfilled in a Spanish-speaking country, involve coursework in Spanish, and include courses related to Spanish studies. Students must meet with the department adviser prior to departure. The service learning requirement is fulfilled by SPAN 3401, or SPAN 3404, or other courses with adviser consent. Detailed information regarding Spanish and Portuguese studies undergraduate academic issues is printed in the Undergraduate Advising Handbook.
The College of Liberal Arts Advantage: More Than a Major

When you study Spanish at the University of Minnesota, you gain the added advantage of a College of Liberal Arts education. At CLA, the liberal arts mean you get more than just a degree in one major or another; it means you will be exposed to different areas of study, to different ways of thinking and learning. In fact, the liberal arts teach you how to learn—how to ask the right questions, how to problem solve, and how to innovate. The liberal arts prepare students for the complexities of our world, because here at CLA you will study not just, say, politics or art but also where politics and art intersect, where science and ethics intersect, where economics and the environment intersect.

Meet Our Students

The annual Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Conference provides a platform for students to share their academic work in a professional setting. It’s an experience that co-chairs of the event, Maryanne Williams Smoczyk and Danielle Dadras, believe allows for students to grow academically and professionally: “The College is placing emphasis on professionalization and readiness as a way to help students understand their potential in the work world.”

Read more about Maryanne's story, and learn more about our undergraduate program.

Student Experiences
Learning Abroad: Prepare to Lead in a Global Economy

Learn more about study abroad for Spanish Studies majors.

Internships: Gain Valuable Experience in the Twin Cities and Beyond

Did you know? CLA Career Services has its very own internship reflection course! Students taking an internship can use this course to reflect on ways that their work experience is preparing them for successful careers - and receive credit for the work.

Undergraduate Research: Turn Curiosity into New Knowledge

The Department of Spanish & Portuguese Studies brings together world-renowned faculty whose research and teaching focus on the languages, literatures, cultures, and linguistics of Iberia, Latin America, and Lusophone Africa. The work of our faculty is characterized by an engagement with theoretical analysis and social approaches to a wide variety of cultural productions and phenomena. The diversity of disciplines, cultures, and languages represented among our faculty and graduate student research are united by a desire to foster an interdisciplinary approach that crosses traditional geographic, linguistic, and disciplinary borders.

Student Organizations: Find Friends and Grow as a Leader

- Spanish and Portuguese Across Cultures Organization
- SPRG - Spanish & Portuguese Research Group

Meet Our Faculty

Spanish Professor Frances Matos-Schultz and her colleague Adolfo Carrillo Cabello are conducting research on how a new online coaching program is improving
students’ Spanish speaking skills and increasing their confidence speaking the language in and outside the classroom.

Read more about Professor Frances Matos-Schultz's story.

Meet Our Alumni

CLA Graduates: Successful Careers and Purposeful Lives

CLA graduates succeed in many different careers — law, health care, medicine, business, government, teaching, advertising, arts and entertainment, international relations, and more — precisely because they understand how to navigate a complex and interconnected world. As our alumni explain below, “Being a good employee means being curious, and continuing to evolve, and learn, and educate yourself, and I can think of no stronger foundation for doing that than a liberal arts education.

“An education in the liberal arts is a springboard to lifelong career success”
-- Dean John Coleman

You might also explore

Spanish and Portuguese Studies
Global Studies


Associated Careers

Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations Managers; Community Organizers and Activists; Foreign Service Officers; Interpreters; News Analysts, Reporters, and Correspondents; Public Interest Advocates; Translators

Admission Information

FRESHMAN: Admission information

TRANSFER STUDENTS: Requirements for the College of Liberal Arts

Beyond admission, if you have questions about transferring, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) has transfer advisors to help. Please feel free to contact them about any of the topics below:

- Course plans before transferring
- Estimated time to graduation
- Career preparation in CLA
- Getting ready for orientation, if admitted
- Connecting with major/minor departments