

Latin American and Caribbean Studies

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The Master of Arts in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (MALACS) is a unique interdisciplinary program that allows students to design their program based on their own research and career interests. The Program is particularly valuable to those students whose research and professional interests cannot be accommodated within a single discipline. MALACS students study the religious, political, economic, social and cultural processes shaping Latin America and the Caribbean and emerge from the program with the expertise required to become leaders in a variety of fields, including education, government, non-governmental business and social services organizations, among others. Students may choose to focus on a particular country, region, discipline, or topic such as, but not limited to, migration, comparative sociology, Cuban studies, cultural studies, economics, environmental studies, foreign policy and security studies, Haitian studies, Hispanic literature, history, international business, international development, and politics/international relations.

MALACS is administered by the FIU Latin American and Caribbean Center (LACC), one of the largest area and language studies centers in the US that specializes in the region. In addition to the MALACS degree, LACC also administers joint JD/MALACS and MBA/MALACS degree programs that allow the student to receive both degrees in substantially less time than would be required to pursue each degree individually. LACC also administers partnership degree programs with the Joint Forces Staff College and the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security

Cooperation (WHINSEC). More information on joint and partnership degrees is found at the end of this section.

For further information please contact LACC Graduate Program Director, Latin American and Caribbean Center, Florida International University, Modesto A. Maidique Campus DM 353, Miami, Florida 33199. Phone: (305) 348-2894; Fax: (305) 348-3593; email: MALACS@fiu.edu, or see the MALACS web site at <http://lacc.fiu.edu>.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet the following minimum admissions requirements:

1. Completed FIU graduate application.
2. A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution for higher education, or equivalent.
3. A grade-point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent) for the last two years of undergraduate study and for any post baccalaureate study.
4. A combined verbal and quantitative score of at least 1000 (40th percentile) on the GRE or the equivalent percentile or higher on other exams such as EXADEP, GMAT or LSAT.
5. A statement of purpose consistent with the goals of the program.
6. Three letters of recommendation.
7. International graduate student applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A total score of 80 on the iBT TOEFL or 6.5 overall on the IELTS is required.
8. Application for M.A. assistantship or fellowship (if applicable).
9. Approval by the program admissions committee.

Note: The above admission requirements are minimums and not all students meeting them are assured admission. Students with either a grade-point average or GRE score below the above minimums may still apply and request conditional admission. The student must provide an explanation of why the waiver is being requested.

Degree Requirements

The MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (MALACS) program is a highly flexible program requiring a total of 36 graduate credits. Required core courses include two research methods courses and an interdisciplinary course (9 credits). Students work with the Graduate Program advisor to design a cohesive and focused program. Twelve-fifteen credits are taken in a depth area, and six to nine credits are comprised of breadth or elective courses for a total of 21 credits. All courses must be passed with a grade of "B" or better. MALACS offers three graduation exit options that comprise six credits total (see exit options below). All courses to be counted towards the degree must have a minimum of 25% Latin American and Caribbean content and/or be a LACC approved course. Course requirements are distributed as follows:

- 9 credits, core
- 12-15 credits, depth (area of focus)
- 6-9 credits, breadth (electives)
- 6 credits, exit option

Required Core Courses (9 credits)

The core courses consist of an interdisciplinary overview course in Latin America and the Caribbean and two courses in MALACS approved research methods. First-year MALACS students enroll in a required interdisciplinary research methods course. In their second year, students select a research methods course in their depth area from the approved list and/or with the approval of the graduate advisor. The core courses and credits are distributed as follows:

LAS 6003	Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean	3
LAS 6934	Latin American and Caribbean Research Seminar	3
Research Methods*		3

**(selected from approved list and/or with the approval of the graduate advisor)*

MALACS Depth Courses or Area of Focus (12-15 credits)

MALACS students choose to concentrate on a particular country, region, discipline, or topic that serves as the focus of their study of Latin America or the Caribbean. Disciplinary areas (e.g. business, religious studies, art history, anthropology, history, political science) emphasize training and research within a particular academic department, while topical and regional areas (e.g. migration, Cuban studies, public policy, international relations, and gender studies) cluster coursework and research around specific issues or geographic regions. A primary goal of the coursework is to advance the student's core research area and expertise.

Breadth Requirements (6-9 credits)

Students select six to nine credits from the MALACS approved course list.

All courses to be counted toward the degree must have a minimum of 25% Latin American and/or Caribbean course content.

Foreign Language

Each student is required to demonstrate reading proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese, or in another language such as French, Haitian Creole, or Dutch when justified by research interests. Proficiency demonstrated by scoring an advanced level on the ACTFL exam for Spanish, Portuguese, or French. For other languages, corresponding tests of proficiency and levels of achievement will be required.

Advanced level on the ACTFL exam (2+ on the US government scale) can normally be attained by students with six undergraduate semesters of language instruction (in basic, intermediate and advanced level). Attainment of the required language proficiency is the responsibility of the student and extra instruction to achieve the required proficiency level must be taken outside the MALACS curriculum. Fellowships and scholarships to study Portuguese and Haitian Creole are available to selected MALACS students. Opportunities for students to improve their language proficiency is provided in courses offered by the FIU Modern Languages Department, through special summer institute language programs, and by taking designated Foreign Language Across Curriculum

(FLAC) courses. Completion of a FLAC course meets the MALACS language proficiency requirement.

Exit Options (6 credits)

MALACS students select one of the following options:

LAS 6970	Thesis	6
Students complete a thesis paper supervised by three committee members. All members of the committee must have FIU Graduate Faculty Status.		
or		
LAS 6942	Internship in Latin American and Caribbean Studies	6
Supervised internship leading to a major research paper in Latin American and Caribbean Studies		
or		
LAS 6905	Directed Research in Latin American and Caribbean Studies	6

Students complete two directed research papers of about 35-40 pages each.

Professional Development Activities

Students must complete a minimum of 39 points of professional development prior to graduation. A short 1-2 page response paper submitted to MALACS graduate directors and/or advisors is required as documentation for participation in the non-research paper activities. Activities may consist of the following:

- Published article (25 pts.)
- Public research proposal presentation at a conference (15 pts. per student conference; 20 for professional conference presentation)
- MALOKA (graduate student organization), University Graduate School, or other approved FIU community service, professional development or peer mentoring activities (3 pts. per activity)
- Attendance at LACC lectures, symposiums, colloquiums, conferences or other approved scholarly events (3 pts. per lecture; 6-9 pts. per conference or extended event)

Students should meet with their graduate advisor during advising sessions twice per year to discuss options for the completion of professional development points.

MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Ph.D. in History Combined Degree Program

The Combined Latin American and Caribbean Studies MA/Ph.D. in History program allows qualified graduate students to complete the MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (MALACS) en route to the Ph.D. in History. Capitalizing on the intellectual affinities between the graduate programs in Latin American and Caribbean Studies and in Atlantic History, the program allows students to enroll simultaneously in both programs and to count 36 credits of coursework toward fulfillment of the requirements for both graduate degrees. The MA program provides a multi-disciplinary perspective on the region as well as deep expertise on the region's history, culture and political economy, while the Ph.D. Program in Atlantic History is aimed at honing students' skills in historical methods while training them to approach individual nations

and regions of Latin America and the Caribbean as sites of broader exchanges along the Atlantic corridor.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for admission.

1. Baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution for higher education (or equivalent);
2. Minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent) for the last two years of undergraduate work and/or a GPA of 3.25 on any previous graduate work;
3. Minimum score of 1120 (combined verbal and quantitative) on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or, for International students, a minimum score of 525 on the EXADEP (Spanish version of the GRE); or a minimum of 590 on the GMAT;
4. International graduate student applicants whose native language is not English and have not obtained a degree from an English-speaking academic institution are required to submit a score for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A total score of 90 on the IBT TOEFL (equivalent to 575 on the paper-based version, or 232 on the computer-based version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required.

Admission Procedure

To be accepted into this program, students must submit an application to the PhD in History with a sub plan for a MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. This designation will appear in the menu of programs in the graduate application. The application must be submitted by January 15 in the year in which they wish to begin their studies.

The following documents must be submitted as part of the application. They will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee from both units.

Official transcripts of all prior college-level work (undergraduate Bachelor's degree and any graduate transcripts);

- Official GRE scores or equivalent;
- Official TOEFL scores, if applicable;
- A curriculum vita;
- A detailed statement of research interests, reasons for seeking the MA/ PhD, future career goals, a summary of scholarly and extra-curricular activities, and the names of History Department faculty members who would be appropriate dissertation advisors (Note: Consult the department website for information about faculty members)
- A writing sample (such as a seminar paper) which demonstrates the ability to conduct research and write effectively; and
- Three letters of reference from academic sources or others able to judge academic abilities and potential.

In addition, an interview (in person or phone) with members of the MALACS Program and/or appropriate faculty in the Department of History is highly recommended.

MA in Latin America and Caribbean Studies

Thirty-six graduate credits are required for the MALACS, including 9 credits of core courses, 12 credits within a concentration, 9 credits of electives and 6 credits for the directed research paper exit option. There is also a Foreign Language Requirement.

MALACS Core Courses: (9 credits)

LAS 6003	Survey of Latin America
LAS 6934	Research Seminar in Latin American and Caribbean Studies
HIS 6059	Historical Methods

MALACS Concentration Courses: (12 credits total)

LAH 6932	Research Seminars in Latin American History I
LAH 6933	Research Seminars in Latin American History II

6 credits from the following list:

LAH 5905	Readings in Latin American History
LAH 5935	Topics in Latin American History
LAH 6906	Advanced Readings in Latin American History
LAH 6915	Research in Latin American History

MALACS Electives Courses: (9 credits from other areas)

MALACS Exit Option for Combined Degree Program: (6 credits)

Preparation of two directed research papers through enrollment in 6 credits of LAS 6905 Directed Research in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Students are strongly encouraged to revise the research paper produced in the two-semester LAH research seminar for submission one of their directed research papers. Both papers require an oral defense to be evaluated by a committee of three professors.

MALACS Language Requirement

Each student will be required to demonstrate reading proficiency in either Spanish or Portuguese, or in another language such as French, Haitian Creole, or Dutch when justified by research interests. Proficiency demonstrated by scoring an advanced level on the ACTFL exam for Spanish, Portuguese, or French. For other languages, corresponding tests of proficiency and levels of achievement will be required.

Application for Graduation from MALACS

Students should apply for graduation for the MALACS as soon as they have completed all requirements for the degree – including the exit option. Ordinarily, the MA will be conferred before the student advances to candidacy for the PhD in History.

Ph.D. in History

Students will begin study towards the Ph.D. in History immediately following their satisfactory completion of MALACS degree requirements. Students are expected to meet all the degree requirements for the Ph.D. in History, which requires a total of 75 credits.

Courses required *in addition to* the degree requirements for the MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (minimum 39 credits)

HIS 6906	Advanced Readings in Atlantic Civilization	3
HIS 6918	Research in Atlantic Civilization	3
3 credits in LACS		
6 credits outside of LACS and Atlantic Civilization (also excluding Methods), 3 credits of which must be in a comparative course (HIS or WOH prefix)		
Electives		9
HIS 7890	Dissertation	15

Language Requirements

All students must acquire reading competence in two languages other than English. The language requirement may be fulfilled in one of two ways: 1) achieving a High Pass on the department examination in one language, and at least a Pass on the second; or 2) achieving a Pass or High Pass in departmental examination in one language, and competency in social science quantitative skills, demonstrated by receiving a grade of "B" or "B+", for Pass, and "A" or "A-", for High pass, in an appropriate course approved for this purpose by the Director of Graduate Studies. At least one High Pass must be received. Language requirements vary, according to the concentration fields. In cases where the dissertation will be in the history of US or English-speaking countries, one language plus the quantitative skill is sufficient. In Latin American history, either Spanish or Portuguese, and a second language appropriate to the student's field are required. Language exams will be graded on a High Pass, Pass, and Fail basis; a High pass is required in the student's primary language. Students should check with the Department's Director of Graduate Studies to determine which languages are appropriate for their program of studies.

Comprehensive Examinations and the Dissertation

Following completion of all course work, satisfaction of language requirements, and the constitution of a dissertation committee, students will be required to pass a written and an oral comprehensive examination. After the completion of their comprehensive examinations and the approval of a dissertation proposal by their dissertation committee, students will write a doctoral dissertation. The time needed for the research and writing of dissertations in History is variable, although doctoral candidates normally spend one year engaged in continuous field research and a second year in full-time writing.

Restrictions

1. The grade of "B" or better is required for graduate credit.
2. At the end of the second semester of residence, or upon completion of the first 18 credit-hours of work, the Graduate Committee will examine and evaluate the student's progress and prospects. Professors will provide detailed written evaluations of the work of all first-year Ph.D. students they have taught. Students whose progress is deemed insufficient will be advised to withdraw from the program.
3. No more than 6 semester-hours of Topics (5935) courses toward meeting the degree requirements,

without permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

4. No more than 6 semester-hours of HIS 5908 (Independent Study) toward meeting the degree requirements, without permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Course Descriptions

Definitions of Prefixes

FLAC – Foreign Language Across Curriculums;
LAS – Latin American and Caribbean Studies.

F – Fall semester offering; S – Spring semester offering;
SS – Summer semester offering.

LAS 5120 Ecuador Abroad: Andean Shamanism, Religion, and Ritual (3). Offered in conjunction with the study abroad program in Ecuador and focuses on the indigenous spirituality and religion on the Andes. Field experience includes community service, lectures, workshops. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

LAS 5301 Culture and Society in the Rio de la Plata (3). Argentinean and Uruguayan societies through an interdisciplinary approach and a series of relevant texts. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.

LAS 5907 Independent Study (1-3). Supervised readings or field research and training. Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor. (F,S,SS)

LAS 5920 Teaching Latin American Studies (1). Fundamentals in the teaching of Latin American Studies. Relevance and effectiveness of various methods and strategies, as well as pedagogy-related exercises. Prerequisite: Graduate standing. (F)

LAS 5933 Graduate Seminar in Latin American Studies (3). Exposes graduate students to interdisciplinary issues for students pursuing the MA in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. May be repeated up to 3 times with change of topic. Prerequisite: Graduate Standing. (F,S,SS)

LAS 5955 Haiti Study Abroad (3). Study abroad examination of Haitian Politics and Society. Part of Haitian Summer Institute. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

LAS 6003 Survey of Latin America (3). A multidisciplinary, multimedia survey of the history, politics, societies and cultures of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Prerequisite: Graduate standing. (F)

LAS 6025 Seminar: The Humanities in Cuba (3). Interdisciplinary graduate seminar on the development of the humanities in Cuba, focusing on the major movements, artists and works in architecture, visual arts, literature, music and dance. FLAC course. Prerequisite: Graduate Standing. (F)

LAS 6905 Directed Research in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (3). Directed research under a major professor conducted to meet MALACS graduation requirements instead of a thesis. Two directed research courses are required. Prerequisite: Completion of all MALACS courses. (F,S,SS)

LAS 6930 Latin American and Caribbean Data Analysis (3). This course introduces students to basic empirical data analysis techniques while they complete an

empirical research project in a Latin American or Caribbean topic. Prerequisite: Recommend a graduate research design course. (S)

LAS 6934 Research Seminar in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (3). Introduces students to intermediate level research methods while they complete a directed research project in Latin American and Caribbean studies. Prerequisites: LAS 6930 or equivalent. (F)

LAS 6942 Internship in Latin American and Caribbean Studies (1-6). Supervised internship leading to a major research paper in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Prerequisite: All MALACS coursework completed. (F,S,SS)

LAS 6970 Thesis (1-6). Requires students to enroll for thesis research for at least one credit hour every semester until thesis is completed. Prerequisite: Completion of all MALACS courses. (F,S,SS)

MALACS Approved Courses

A sample of courses approved for each MALACS concentration is provided on the MALACS web site at <http://lacc.fiu.edu>.

Courses approved for the MALACS program are posted each semester on the FIU Class Schedule at <http://lacc.fiu.edu/catalog/>. (Under "Special Programs and Certificate Programs" select "Latin American & Caribbean Studies.") All courses listed from 5000 through 7000 series may be applied to the degree program. Approved courses are also posted each semester outside LACC (DM 353) or are available from the Graduate Program Director.

MALACS Joint and Partnership Degree Programs

Joint JD/MALACS Degree Program

An agreement approved by the University Graduate School, between the FIU College of Law and the College of Arts and Sciences allows students to pursue simultaneously the Juris Doctor (JD) and MALACS degrees, thereby saving considerable time over pursuing each degree separately. Students must meet the entrance requirements for both the JD and MALACS programs. Fifteen credits from the law school curriculum will be allowed toward the MALACS program and will constitute a MALACS concentration in International and Comparative Law. Nine credits from the MALACS program will also count toward the law school curriculum requirements. All other requirements to receive either the JD or MALACS degree must be met. Additional information on the joint degree program is available on the College of Law and MALACS web sites.

Joint MBA/MALACS Degree Program

An agreement approved by the University Graduate School, between the FIU Alvah H. Chapman, Jr. Graduate School of Business and College of Arts and Sciences allows students to pursue simultaneously the Master's in Business Administration (MBA) and MALACS. In doing so the student will finish both programs much sooner than if they pursue each degree separately. Students must meet the entrance requirements for both the MBA and MALACS

programs. Twelve credits from the MBA curriculum will be allowed toward the MALACS program and will constitute a MALACS concentration in International Business. Nine credits from the MALACS program will also count toward the MBA curriculum requirements. All other requirements to receive either the MBA or MALACS degree must be met. Additional information on the joint degree program is available on the Chapman Graduate School of Business and MALACS web sites.

MALACS Partnership Degree with the Joint Forces Staff College

An agreement between FIU and the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) of the National Defense University allows JFSC graduates to transfer 15 JFSC credits toward the MALACS degree completion requirements. Students will receive a MALACS concentration in Foreign Policy and Security Studies from JFSC courses. Students wishing to take advantage of this partnership must be accepted into the MALACS program through normal application procedures. Once accepted, students are required to take 15 credit hours of MALACS courses (5 classes): a research methods class, LAS 6003, LAS 6930, and two breadth courses in at least two MALACS concentrations other than Security Studies. JFSC students must also complete a MALACS exit option (6 credit hours) and meet MALACS language proficiency requirements. Additional information on the JFSC partnership degree program is available on the MALACS web site.

MALACS Partnership Degree with the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation

An agreement between FIU and the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) allows WHINSEC graduates to transfer 15 WHINSEC credits toward the MALACS degree completion requirements. Students will receive a MALACS concentration in Foreign Policy and Security Studies from WHINSEC courses. Students wishing to take advantage of this partnership must be accepted into the MALACS program through normal application procedures. Once accepted, students are required to take 15 credit hours of MALACS courses (5 classes): a research methods class, LAS 6003, LAS 6930, and two breadth courses in at least two MALACS concentrations other than Security Studies. WHINSEC students must also complete a MALACS exit option (6 credit hours) and meet MALACS language proficiency requirements. Additional information on the WHINSEC partnership degree program is available on the MALACS web site.