The Program in Latin American Studies (PLAS) promotes the study of the histories, cultures, societies, and political systems of Latin America and the Caribbean at the Johns Hopkins University. PLAS’s curricular offerings and extracurricular activities provide undergraduate and graduate students with opportunities to explore the rich political, aesthetic, intellectual, and scientific traditions of Latin America. Drawing on faculty expertise across the disciplines, PLAS aims to generate new perspectives on Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Latinx experience in the United States. PLAS coordinates an undergraduate minor in Latin American studies.

Information about PLAS may be found on its website: http://krieger.jhu.edu/plas (http://krieger.jhu.edu/plas/)

- Latin American Studies, Minor (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/program-latin-american-studies/latin-american-studies-minor/)

Cross-listed courses applicable to the PLAS minor include:

AS.010.205 (01) Art of Mesoamerica

This course provides a basis for the study of Mesoamerican visual cultures and urban settings. We will explore the artistic production of the Olmec, Maya, and Aztec as well as works created by the artists of Teotihuacan, Monte Albán, and West Mexico. With a focus on aesthetics and cultural function, case studies range from stone sculpture, painted ceramics, and screenfold codices, to architectural complexes from Mexico and Central America. Themes to be discussed include: representations of humans and deities, monumentality and rulership, mutilation and destruction of monuments, and ritual and political significance of materials.

AS.010.398 (01) Tombs for the Living

Centering on the tomb as the unit of analysis, this course examines the cultural and material aspects of death and funerary ritual. Case studies are drawn from North America, Mesoamerica, and the Andes. Collections study in museums.

AS.010.350 (01) Body and Soul: Medicine in the Ancient Americas

This course examines curative medicine in the Americas through its visual culture and oral histories. Philosophies about the body, health, and causes of illness are considered, as are representations of practitioners and their pharmacology. Case studies are drawn from cross the Americas (Aztec, Moche, Aymara, Paracas, American SW). Collections study in museums, Special Collections.

AS.100.115 (01) Modern Latin America

A class combining Latin American history since independence and digital humanities (revised with 2021 student feedback). Students will build guided research projects while thinking about questions of republicanism, freedom and unfreedom, migration, and development.

AS.100.379 (01) Brazil History and Cultures: A Glance from Baltimore

Using textual and visual documents (including books from Peabody Library), we will examine the contrasts of Brazilian history and culture, and its connections with 19th and 20th century Baltimore.

AS.140.685 (01) Histories of Reproduction

While there is a vast literature on reproduction in a global context, this course will focus on the arc of what we might call decolonial histories of reproduction—those that center issues of justice, freedom, intimacy, and agency, as well as cultural negotiation, conflict, and change. Students will write critical histories of reproduction, with attention to the ways in which reproductive politics interface with institutions that exert hegemonic, racialized, gendered, and ableist forms of state power and colonial power. We will also appreciate the ways in which reproduction interacts with other—non geographically-bound, non-institutionalized, and non-state mediated—forms of biopolitical power. We will analyze how the historiography has evolved over time and discuss future directions in the field.

AS.190.306 (01) Latin American Politics and Society in Comparative and Historical Perspective

The seminar will introduce students to the political and economic trajectories of Latin America as a whole and of individual countries, including Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. Special attention will be paid to the long-term trajectory of the political regime (democracy versus dictatorship) and of economic development (variations in GDP per capita). Competing theories, from economic dependence to historical institutionalism, will be examined for their contribution to our understanding of Latin America’s relative economic backwardness and low quality democracies.

AS.211.294 (01) Freshman Seminar: Soccer in Brazil: Opium of the Masses

Futebol offers a unique perspective on politics, race and citizenship in Brazil. This course seeks to understand Brazilian culture through the historic national pastime of futebol. In addition to the main textbooks chosen for the class, by reading a variety of texts from newspapers, academic journals, fiction and film, students will be able to find their own approach to understanding the phenomenon of futebol within the social and political traditions of Brazil. No knowledge of Portuguese is required, but those who can read in Portuguese will have an opportunity to do so. Everyone will learn some Portuguese words and expressions. This class may count toward the Minor in Portuguese.

AS.211.394 (01) Brazilian Culture & Civilization

Did you know that Brazil is very similar to the United States? This course is intended as an introduction to the culture and civilization of Brazil. It is designed to provide students with basic information about Brazilian history, politics, economy, art, literature, popular culture, theater, cinema, and music. The course will focus on how Indigenous, Asian, African, and European cultural influences have interacted to create the new and unique civilization that is Brazil today.

AS.215.407 (01) Power And Gender In Hispanic American Novels And Films

We will analyze and discuss four novels and three films impacted by gender violence and political idolatry under shattering stress. Oficio de tinieblas or The Book of Lamentations (1962) by Rosario Castellanos (Mexico). Zama (1956) by Antonio di Benedetto (Argentina). Delirio or Delirium (2004) by Laura Restrepo (Colombia). El ruido de las cosas al caer or The Noise of Things Falling (2011) by Juan Gabriel Vásquez
to combat their sale and use. These statistics raise important and illegal drugs—and the government spends more than $50 billion a year in the United States, we spend more than $100 billion annually on AS.230.397 (01) The Political Economy of Drugs and Drug Wars universalist theories of social change. how Latin American dynamics have both conformed to and challenged system. Attending to both local and global dynamics, this course will ask by racial, gender, and class power, situated within an unequal world rebellion, and revolution. Because revolutionary change is at once the most transformative and the most rare, this course will cover the exemplary cases of the Haitian, Mexican, and Cuban revolutions, but then also ask how theorists have understood the dynamics of both open rebellion and of everyday resistance in societies deeply structured by racial, gender, and class power, situated within an unequal world system. Attending to both local and global dynamics, this course will ask how Latin American dynamics have both conformed to and challenged universalist theories of social change. AS.230.397 (01) The Political Economy of Drugs and Drug Wars In the United States, we spend more than $100 billion annually on illegal drugs—and the government spends more than $50 billion a year to combat their sale and use. These statistics raise important and.