From: Frank Robinson, Associate Director, Latin American and Iberian Studies  
Subject: Latin American Course Requirements – Catalog

Beginning with the academic year 2006-2007, the Center for Latin American and Iberian Studies (CLAIS) was designated as a stand-alone National Resource Center for Latin American Studies. This is the highest recognition the Department of Education can award the program, and this designation propels us into the top ranks of programs in the country. A major component of this $1.5 million grant involves incorporating Least Commonly Taught Languages (indigenous Latin American languages) into our undergraduate curriculum.

CLAIS faculty has approved adding an indigenous Latin American language option to our undergraduate major and minor. We propose to offer students three Latin American language options: Spanish, Portuguese, and an indigenous Latin American language. Students must acquire advanced knowledge of one Latin American language and intermediate knowledge of another Latin American language. It should be mentioned here that we are one of the only centers in the country that require knowledge in two Latin American languages. While only Spanish and Portuguese can be used to fulfill the requirement of advanced knowledge of a Latin American language, an indigenous Latin American language may be used to fulfill the requirement for a second language by completing Anthropology 269 (Introduction to Maya Language) or Anthropology 276 (Introduction to Yucatec Maya). These are 5 hour classes that include 3 hours of classroom instruction and 2 hours of individual tutoring with a native speaker per week. Since this is a non-western language, and an intensive course, we are counting completion as a sign of intermediate knowledge. (This is the standard of other LAS centers around the country).

Our language requirements make provision for students entering the program with prior language(s). For individual standardized language testing and evaluation, CLAIS uses the Short Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI) template set by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to determine functional language knowledge. ACTFL tests are currently being used by academic institutions, government agencies, and private corporations for purposes such as academic placement, student assessment, program evaluation, and professional certification. The ACTFL Oral Interview assesses how well a person speaks a language. It is a 20-30 minute face-to-face interview between a tester and an examinee. There are no active SOPI instruments for Portuguese or Maya languages, therefore we have had to develop a comparable instrument working with ACTFL-trained testers for those languages. The phrase “Individual standardized testing may also be used to demonstrate knowledge” refers to the current SOPI-based instrument administered to students by ACTFL-certified faculty from the Spanish and Portuguese department.

We at CLAIS certainly appreciate your attention to this request to change our major and minor language requirement. We appreciate your support in offering our students a broader and richer range of language options.

Thanks,
Frank
Catalogue changes are as follows:

**p. 315:**

change “Program of Concentration in Latin American and Iberian Studies” to “Program of Concentration in Latin American Studies”

**p. 315:**

I. *Language Requirement.* A student must acquire advanced knowledge of one Latin American language and an intermediate knowledge in another Latin American language. The requirement to acquire advanced knowledge of a Latin American language may be satisfied by completing Spanish 203, or any course with a higher number taught in Spanish, or Portuguese 202, or any course with a higher number taught in Portuguese. The requirement to acquire intermediate knowledge of another Latin American language may be satisfied by successfully completing Spanish 104, Portuguese 200, Anthropology 269, or Anthropology 276. Individual standardized testing may also be used to demonstrate knowledge.

**p. 316:**

IV *Area of Concentration*

B. *Language, Literature, and History of Art.*

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES: Anthropology 221, Maya Languages and Literature; Anthropology 258, Maya Languages and Linguistics; Anthropology 269, Introduction to Maya Language; Anthropology 276, Modern Yucatec Maya

**p. 317-318:**

*Minor in Latin American Studies:*

The Center for Latin American Studies also offers a minor in Latin American Studies. Students must complete 15 hours of approved courses with Latin American content including Latin American Studies 201. In addition, students must demonstrate intermediate knowledge of one Latin American language by successfully completing Spanish 104, Portuguese 200, Anthropology 269, or Anthropology 276. Courses taken to satisfy the language requirement may not be counted toward the 15 hours of core courses. Individual standardized testing may also be used to demonstrate knowledge.