The Department of Spanish provides two programs designed to deepen students’ understanding of cultural difference and diversity: a language program that fulfills the all-College distribution requirement in foreign language and an academic major program.

In its commitment to the study of foreign languages, the Department of Spanish strives to prepare students for active engagement in the Spanish-speaking world, both within the United States and abroad. Our language courses facilitate oral and written communication by presenting grammar in a cultural context. The language classroom provides a space for students to appreciate cultural connections and differences and to grow into their role as global citizens.

The academic major program offers a course of study in Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Latino/a literature and culture. Spanish majors attain depth and breadth of literary and cultural knowledge across historical periods and geographical areas.

The program is committed to promoting greater critical awareness of the differentials of power that perpetuate social injustice and inform cultural and cross-cultural assumptions. Students acquire the skills to become close readers and critical thinkers and to explore different modes of cultural production within specific social, political, and historical contexts. Our pedagogical goal is to prepare students to be productive critics of the world beyond the texts. To that end, students examine the ways in which different texts challenge or affirm aesthetic conventions and dominant social narratives, including race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and imperialism. In the process, our majors are encouraged to analyze the connections among systems of domination and to develop as scholars and promoters of social justice.

Achievement Test: Students seeking entrance credit in Spanish and wishing to pursue Spanish at Colby must have taken the College Board SAT Subject Test in Spanish or must take the online Spanish placement exam during summer prior to making their course selections for the fall semester.

Requirements for the Major in Spanish

Spanish 135 and 231 and at least seven additional literature, culture, or film courses at or above the 200 level, including at least one course in each of the following areas: Spanish, Latin American, and U.S. Latino/a literatures/cultures. Majors must take two courses at the 200 level or above on literature written before 1800 and two on literature written after 1800. Senior majors must enroll in 300- or 400-level courses and must take at least one senior seminar. Independent-study work does not replace required courses. Majors are strongly advised to spend an academic year studying abroad at the junior level. A minimum of one semester’s study abroad at the junior level is expected of majors. Majors must matriculate in a study-abroad program that offers university-level courses (not in a language acquisition program): all course work abroad must be conducted in Spanish. A minimum grade point average of 2.7 is required to retain the Spanish major and for permission to study abroad. All study-abroad plans for students majoring in Spanish must be approved in advance by the chair of the Department of Spanish. Eligibility prerequisites for Spanish majors to study abroad include the completion of Spanish 135 and Spanish 231 with a grade of C or better. Majors who are unable to study abroad due to special circumstances may petition for an alternative way of completing the Spanish major.

The following statements also apply:

1. The point scale for retention of the major is based on all Spanish Department courses numbered above 131.
2. No major requirements may be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory.
3. Students must receive a grade of C or better for the course to count toward the major.
4. All majors must take and pass with a grade of C or better at least one course in Spanish approved by the major advisor each semester until graduation.
5. No more than the equivalent of two semester courses of foreign-study credit may be counted toward the major per semester abroad, or four semester courses per year abroad.
6. No more than the equivalent of four semester courses of foreign-study or transfer credit may be counted toward the major.

Honors in Spanish

Students majoring in Spanish with a 3.7 major average or better and an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher may apply for admission to the honors program by the end of their junior year. Permission is required; interested juniors should contact their potential thesis advisors and go over guidelines established by the department. Successful completion of the work of the honors thesis and of the major will enable the student to graduate with “Honors in Spanish.”

Course Offerings
SP125f  Elementary Spanish I  The first semester of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in the Spanish language. Through an interactive approach to language learning, students gain communicative proficiency through fast-paced, task- and content-based exercises designed to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Videos, audio, and web materials introduce students to cultural differences within the Spanish speaking world.  

Four credit hours.  

ALLBRITTON, GARCIA-PINAR

SP126fs  Elementary Spanish II  The second of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in the Spanish language. Through a continued interactive approach to teaching and learning, students begin to develop skills for more independent communicative proficiency. Task- and content-based assignments challenge students to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a functional use of the language. Videos, audio, and web materials are incorporated.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 125.  

Four credit hours.  

FACULTY

SP127fs  Intermediate Spanish I  The third of three consecutive courses designed to develop fluency and accuracy in the Spanish language. Through an intensive grammar review, students develop skills for independent and creative interactive communication. Designed to refine students' major skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as to provide insight into the literature and culture of Spanish-speaking countries. Video screenings and short readings in Hispanic literature and culture deepen student understanding of linguistic and cultural nuances and serve as the basis for in-class discussions and writing assignments.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 126.  

Four credit hours.  

FACULTY

SP128fs  Intermediate Spanish II  Development of critical skills through analysis of fictional texts in Hispanic literature. Continuing work in vocabulary building and grammar review. Students will achieve a high intermediate level in the four basic language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and aural/oral comprehension.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 128.  

Four credit hours.  

MERCADO, MILLONES, WHITE

SP131fs  Conversation and Composition  Development of critical communication skills through conversation, and analysis of nonfiction texts as well as comparative, narrative, and descriptive writings. Introduction to the principles of composing a research paper. Continued work in vocabulary building and grammar review. Preparation for oral exams stresses team building as a basis for successful individual presentations. Topics include immigration, euthanasia, gun control, abortion, presidential elections, and the role of the university in preparing students for an ever-changing world.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 128.  

Four credit hours.  

BOLLO-PANADERO, SAVO

SP135fs  Introduction to Literary Analysis  Introduction to literary analysis through Spanish, Spanish-American, and U.S. Latino/a texts. Students are presented with works of fiction in prose, poetry, drama, and film and learn how to examine the texts through close reading, detailed analysis, and strategies of interpretation. Students develop skills in writing critical essays and learn the basics of scholarly research.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 131.  

Four credit hours.  

L, BOLLO-PANADERO, MILLONES, SAVO

SP231fs  Advanced Spanish  An in-depth analysis of Spanish grammar, focusing on the more complex and subtle linguistic and cultural dimensions of a variety of syntactical and lexical concepts. Students will achieve an advanced mastery of Spanish grammar and vocabulary.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 131 or 135.  

Four credit hours.  

BOLLO-PANADERO, OLIVARES

[SP264]  Uncovering Tradition: Introduction to U.S. Latino/a Literature  Seeks to cultivate an inclusive and broad understanding of U.S. Latino/a literature and its evolution, from the 19th through the 21st centuries. Special attention will be paid to the inherent diversity within the U.S. Latino/a world, which raises questions about class, race, ethnicity, gender, and language, among other topics. Students will gain not only an overall grasp of what one would consider the tradition of U.S. Latino/a literature, but also an appreciation for its relationship to U.S. literature at large, as well as Latin American and Caribbean literature. Conducted in English but knowledge of Spanish is essential.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 135.  

Four credit hours.  

L, U.

SP265f  The Short Novel in Spanish America  Close readings of contemporary Spanish-American short novels by representative authors. Explores representations of gender, history, human rights, politics, race, and sexualities within the context of the social and political realities of Spanish America in the 20th and 21st centuries. Also considers critical literary concepts such as narrative perspective, parody, intertextuality, and self-consciousness.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 135.  

Four credit hours.  

L, OLIVARES

SP266f  Language of Spanish Cinema  An examination of selected works by major Spanish directors of the 20th and 21st centuries. Introduces students to the discipline of film studies and investigates cinematic representations of Spain during the dictatorship and the subsequent transition to democracy. Special attention to questions of identity, violence, and instances of resistance.  

Prerequisite: Spanish 135.  

Four credit hours.  

A, I.  

ALLBRITTON

[SP267]  Family/History/Nation: Latina/o Genealogies  How do Latina/o literary constructs of "family" engage with the concept of nationhood? Do Latina/o genealogies affirm the nation? Do they contest it? We explore the answers to these questions by examining the relationship between family histories and national histories in Latina/o genealogies that move within and between the United States, Mexico,
and the Caribbean. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L, U.

[SP269]  Spanish Cultural Studies  The study of recent Peninsular Spanish expression across a variety of mass media (digital and print media, television, film). Introduces students to the discipline of cultural studies and considers how the concept of españolidad (Spanishness) comes to be defined in an ever-changing present and across regions and identities that may not even consider themselves such. Topics may include sex and sexuality, regionalism and linguistic difference, race and immigration, and the state of contemporary politics. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. A, I.

[SP273]  Contemporary Spanish-American Short Story  Close readings of contemporary Spanish-American short stories. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L.

[SP276]  U.S. Latina/Chicana Women Writers  An examination of a selection of novels, short stories, poetry, theater, and nonfiction by U.S. Latina and Chicana women writers. Interdisciplinary in approach, focused on the relationship between the texts read and several important contemporary issues. Topics include feminism, the social and cultural construction of race and ethnicity, immigration, cultural nationalism, and identity formation. Readings and class are in English. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L, U.

[SP278]  Narratives, Artifacts, and Monuments of Pre-Columbian Civilization  Studies narratives of pre-Columbian civilizations as transmitted by oral tradition or by drawings, painted codices, pottery, architecture, textiles, etc., and how all these cultural products were read and refashioned under colonial rule. Students develop skills in analytical reading of cultural productions as diverse expressions of power, identity, religion, race, and hybridity. Promotes a sophisticated understanding of the types of primary sources and methodological approaches that scholars use to reconstruct the world of pre-Columbian societies. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L.

SP298As  Becoming Vulnerable in Early Modern Spain  Analyzes the ways in which the Spanish empire's dominant ideology rendered subaltern groups vulnerable. Human beings are vulnerable on many different levels: from our own body, to our place within a community, to the privileges we may lack as a result of our gender, race, or social class. Together with both canonical and less well-known works of literature, students will read legal documents, political treatises, and historical accounts and watch various films or excerpts from Spanish television. Ultimately, we will discuss how literature serves as a vehicle for resistance to precariousness. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L.

SP298Bs  Latinx and Chicana Feminisms  Engages Latinx and Chicana feminist thought through critical essays, literature, and film, as well as visual and performance art. We will think through spatial and conceptual borders in relation to issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Questions of intersectionality, mestizaje, queerness, decoloniality, and self-representation will guide us through the work of writers such as Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga, and Ana Castillo. Students will gain an understanding of the challenges that Latinx feminisms pose to Western/North American feminism as well as of the coalesitional possibilities with Black and women of color feminisms. Prerequisite: Spanish 135. Four credit hours. L, U. MARTINEZ-RAGUSO

SP338s  The Diasporic Imagination: Cubans beyond Cuba  An examination of the cultural production of Cubans living in the diaspora after the 1959 revolution. Representative literary works of Reinaldo Arenas, Richard Blanco, Jennine Capó Crucet, Lourdes Casal, Ana Menéndez, Achy Obejas, Gustavo Pérez Firmat, Sonia Rivera Valdés, Guillermo Rosales, and Zoé Valdés. Also feature films, documentaries, TV shows, and songs. Topics will include the traumas of migration; the politics of exile; the workings of memory and nostalgia; the fantasies of return; the hybridization of culture; and the class, generational, gender, linguistic, political, racial, and sexual diversity of Cubans beyond Cuba. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course. Four credit hours. L. OLIVARES

[SP341]  Cities, Bodies, and Nations in Caribbean Literature  Examines the close but contested relationships between bodies, cities, and nations in contemporary Caribbean literature. Special attention will be paid to key moments in the history of the three Spanish-speaking islands: the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic, the Cuban Revolution of 1959, and Operation Bootstrap in Puerto Rico. In each instance, the role of migration will be explored, within the Caribbean, to the United States, and beyond. This will facilitate a discussion on transnationalism, a development that is integral to the current understanding of the relationships between bodies, cities, and nations. Prerequisite: 200-level literature, culture, or film course. Four credit hours. L.

[SP351]  Ideology and Ethics in Spanish Golden Age Literature  An examination of specific literary works as responses to Spain's changing political climate during the 16th and 17th centuries. How the literary work reinforces or questions, creates or undermines, an official discourse that, in both Reformation and Counter-Reformation Spain, seeks to define national identity in ethical and ideological terms. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course. Four credit hours. L.

[SP352]  Don Quijote  Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will explore the complexities of the narrative construction of Don Quijote as a mirror of Cervantes' society, as well as how the novel undermines the accepted discourses and mores of its time. Topics will include, among others, empire ideology, cultural identity, and social inequality—all in the context of a literary revolution. Prerequisite: A 200-level
Spanish literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  L.

[SP354] Detectives and Spies: Popular Culture in Spanish-American Fiction A consideration of how the classic detective story has permeated the realm of high or respectable art, and, in particular, how writers such as Bloy Casares, Borges, García Márquez, Leñero, Padura Fuentes, Puig, Sábado, Valenzuela, and Vargas Llosa have simultaneously appropriated and subverted the genre. While focused on the function of parody and intertextual relations, and on the distinction between the mimetic and the reflexive modes, the course will provide a framework to address questions of ideology, community, gender, sex, and sexuality. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  A, I.

[SP362] All about Almodóvar The study of contemporary Spanish history and film through the works of noted filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar. Analyzes the films of Almodóvar as representative of the changes in Spanish culture from the 1980s to the present day. Topics may include sex and sexuality, film genres and film history, and modern Spanish political and cultural life. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  I.

[SP364] Gender, Sex, and the Spanish Body Focus on contemporary film, media, and literature in Spain in order to explore how sex and gender are covered up, censored, and potentially recovered. Considers the importance of censorship to the development of Spanish attitudes towards sex and gender, and how these are not merely byproducts of a dictatorial regime but a persistent element of culture itself. Special attention paid to issues of national identity, sexual pleasure and violence, masculinities, and political rupture. Previously listed as SP398 (Spring 2014). Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  A, I.

[SP371] The Colonial Experience: European and Amerindian Responses Close readings of representative primary documents and iconography from throughout the Spanish and Portuguese empires that were produced to report, understand, legislate, and record various dimensions of the encounter between Europe and the New World during the 16th and 17th centuries. Emphasizes efforts by Europeans and Amerindians to control the memory of events and to position themselves in colonial societies. Students will explore texts and cultural productions used to exert dominance or resistance during a specific historical context, become critical readers of primary documents, and engage with key issues of colonial literature. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  L, U.  

MARTINEZ-RAGUSO

SP397Af Mexican-U.S. Border Studies Approaches the Mexican-U.S. border through a range of interdisciplinary perspectives, examining themes of Chicana feminisms, drug trafficking, migration, the maquiladora industry, and gender violence while engaging literary and cinematic representations of the border from the mid-20th-century through 21st-century science fiction. Critical, literary, and filmic texts in both English and Spanish will reflect on the lived experience of the border, the nature of border identities, and how the border shifts over time — particularly in response to global economic forces of neoliberalism. Prerequisite: A 200-level literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.  L, U.  

MARTINEZ-RAGUSO

SP397Bf Jesuits and the Origins of Environmental History The Jesuits' observations on nature during the Early Modern period can be found in a variety of texts and images produced from anywhere the members of the Society of Jesus established their missions or explored new lands. We will study the Jesuits' narratives about the geography and natural world of the Americas and their thoughts about the changes in the biological and physical environment. Students will engage with environmental humanities by analyzing the Jesuits' contribution to environmental history, including hands-on experience with rare book editions and a digital platform. Environmental humanities lab. Prerequisite: A 200-level Spanish course.  

Four credit hours.  L.  

MILLONES

SP483f, 484s Senior Honors Thesis The senior honors thesis can replace the senior seminar requirement. The thesis, which will be written in Spanish, is to be a substantial study of a carefully defined literary topic supported by critical sources. Prerequisite: A 3.7 or higher major average and an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher at the end of the junior year and permission of the department.  

Two to four credit hours.  FACULTY

SP483Jj Senior Honors Thesis Noncredit.  ALLBRITTON

SP491f, 492s Independent Study Individual projects in areas where the student has demonstrated the interest and competence necessary for independent work. Cannot substitute for formal course work toward the major. Prerequisite: Permission of the department chair.  

Two to four credit hours.  FACULTY

SP493s Seminar: Queer Spain The representation of queer lives and identities in recent Spanish history. We will engage with Spanish film, literature, and culture to consider and question the ‘origins’ of LGBTQ identity in Spain. Have we always imagined queerness as a coupling of people or movements to signify alterity and difference? Who gets to tell the story of queer lives in Spain, and whether such histories form a string of texts that resist silence and fear? Is Spanish queerness related to a transnational sense of queer identity? Thinking of queerness as a spectrum allows us to challenge the borders of sex and gender both within Spain and within our own cultures. Origins humanities lab. Prerequisite: Senior standing and a 300-level Spanish literature, culture, or film course.  

Four credit hours.