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University offers new degree in Latin American Studies

A new Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin American Studies, designed to offer an interdisciplinary study in social sciences and humanities that concentrates on the national experience of countries in Latin America, will be offered at Fresno State for the first time this fall.

The 120-unit program, the only new degree approved for Fresno State by the CSU Chancellor this year, is offered through the Department of Chicano and Latin American Studies. The department also offers a Bachelor of Arts degree and a minor in Chicano Studies and a minor in Latin American Studies.

"The new degree recognizes the importance of Latin America in terms of economic relations between the United States and Latin America," said Dr. Maria Lopes, faculty chair of the department.

"We saw a need to appeal to a broad Latino community and to attract students of Latin America or those who have some connection and/or interest in the region," Lopes said. "This will offer an academic opportunity to pursue this field of study, giving new perspectives about Latin America beyond the often violent nature of the region depicted in mass media."

The new program will prepare students to become instructors in the field of Latin American Studies and related disciplines of social sciences and humanities in secondary schools, colleges and universities.

Lopes said degree candidates will gain a solid academic overview that will help develop the skills, insights and tools necessary for individuals involved in non-governmental organizations, government work, international agencies, business, education and other professional work requiring knowledge of Latin America.

"The degree also provides students with the academic background required to successfully pursue graduate studies," Lopes said.

Prospective majors are strongly encouraged to spend a semester abroad studying in Latin America, Spain or Portugal.

For more information or to meet with an adviser, call 559.278.2848 or visit [Social Sciences Degrees](#).

(University Communications student news assistant Juana Mosqueda and catalog editor April Schulthies contributed to this report.)

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