

## SPANISH

Kelly Roehl, Tomson Hall 331  
507-786-3230  
roehl1@stolaf.edu  
wp.stolaf.edu/spanish/

### Spanish (Romance Languages)

The Spanish Program at St. Olaf approaches language as more than just a mode of communication. More than 485 million people in the world use Spanish as a first language, including more than 50 million in the United States. Spanish is the vehicle of cultures, beliefs, and experiences of wide-ranging, transnational communities. Studying Spanish at St. Olaf empowers students on multiple paths to enter a variety of professions and engage ethically in the multilingual society of the United States and beyond.

We welcome and seek to nourish students from all linguistic backgrounds and with diverse lived experiences. In our program, students examine critically and reflect on cultures, languages, histories, and literatures of the Spanish-speaking world. Beyond the classroom, students can share meals and spaces, enjoy events organized by student organizations that uplift Latin American and U.S. Latinx experiences, and take part in Spanish Program celebrations. There are also opportunities for community engagement and participation in the larger Latinx communities beyond campus.

We invite you to become a part of the “Familia Ñ” at St. Olaf!

### Overview of the Major

In courses for the Spanish major, students gain understanding of the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world (Spain, Latin America, and the Latinx/a/o United States) through the study of literature, non-literary texts, culture, language, and linguistics. At the same time, they develop communication, critical thinking, and analytical skills.

Level II courses are divided into two levels. In SPAN 250 or SPAN 251, the gateway course for all majors, students develop academic reading and writing skills in Spanish through textual analysis of cultural documents and literature. 270-level courses introduce students to a variety of ways to explore the Spanish-speaking world further through literature, linguistics, culture, and contemporary issues.

Level III courses build upon the analytical skills and knowledge of the Spanish-speaking world acquired by students in 270-level courses. These courses examine particular topics, genres, or critical or theoretical issues through textual analysis or analysis of linguistic data. Some of these courses focus on comparative analysis across geographical areas of the Spanish-speaking world.

### Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major

#### Special Programs

To encourage students to speak Spanish outside the classroom, the department organizes a weekly Spanish conversation table and sponsors the *Casa Hispánica*, a residence where Spanish is the language of daily interaction. In addition, faculty teaching Spanish collaborate with colleagues in other disciplines in developing and teaching courses with a Language Across the Curriculum credit. These

courses enable students who have completed the fourth semester of college Spanish to apply and develop their proficiency in Spanish across the curriculum.

St. Olaf also operates its own January terms in Puerto Rico and Spain and affiliates with long-established consortia — CIEE and IES — that administer semester study abroad programs in Spain and South America, as well as study away programs in the United States.

St. Olaf's Spanish Education program has been discontinued. Students interested in obtaining a K-12 Spanish teaching license are encouraged to complete an undergraduate major in Spanish and then apply to a graduate program that offers a Master's degree combined with teaching certification in Spanish.

## Requirements

### Requirements for the Major

Code	Title	Credits
SPAN 250	Family and Gender Roles in Spain: 1900 to Present	1.00
or SPAN 251	Gender and Race in Modern Latin America	
Students may take either SPAN 250 or 251, but cannot take both.		
SPAN 275	Exploring Hispanic Literature	1.00
SPAN 276	Spanish as a First and Second Language	1.00
Two level III Spanish courses taught at St. Olaf		2.00
Three additional Spanish electives above SPAN 250 or 251		3.00
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>8</b>

A maximum of two courses from abroad programs, other U.S. institutions, and any combination of the above may be counted toward the major. Courses from abroad or other U.S. institutions count as 270-level electives. Transfer credit should be approved by the department in advance.

*\*By completing this major, the student also satisfies the OLE Core Writing in the Major requirement.*

## Courses

### SPAN 111: Introduction to Spanish Language and the Spanish-Speaking World I

Students begin learning Spanish in an intercultural context. The course introduces the Spanish-speaking world through exploration of topics, for example: the geography of the Spanish speaking world; Mexico, our neighbor; and ecotourism. In-class speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities are complemented by attendance at two required culture tables. Open only to students who place into Spanish 111. Offered fall semester only. Does not count toward Spanish major.

**SPAN 112: Introduction to Spanish Language and the Spanish-Speaking World II**

Students continue learning Spanish in an intercultural context. The course continues to examine the Spanish-speaking world through exploration of topics, for example: cities and urban life; housing; and the historical roots of culinary traditions and food production. In-class speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities are complemented by attendance at two required culture tables. Offered each semester and January Term. Does not count toward Spanish major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 111 or placement into SPAN 112.

**SPAN 231: Intercultural Connections in Global World: U.S. & Spanish-Speaking World**

Through exploring the material and human diversity of the Spanish-speaking world and important connections among the United States, the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America, and Spain, students develop increasingly complex skills for analyzing and communicating in Spanish. An examination of geography, environmental challenges and solutions, development, demographic changes, and ethnic diversity highlights the intersection of cultural, economic, and environmental realities. Required attendance at three conversation tables. This intermediate I-level Spanish course is offered each semester and during January Term. Does not count toward Spanish major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 112 or placement into SPAN 231.

**SPAN 232: Latinx Experiences in the United States**

Students explore the diverse cultural histories and identities of Mexican-Americans, Cuban-Americans, and Puerto Ricans (among other Latinx groups) by considering how ethnicity, race, language, gender, and social class manifest themselves in U.S. histories of citizenry, immigration, economy, and education through generations of Latinxs. Class activities foster analysis of historical and autobiographical texts to reflect on how power and privilege intersect and shape students' own experiences. Attendance at cultural events required. This intermediate II-level Spanish course is offered every semester and during January Term. Does not count toward Spanish major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 231 or placement.

**SPAN 240: Politics and Environment in Puerto Rico (study abroad)**

This academic civic engagement course explores the culture of Puerto Rico, including its politics, national identity, folklore, and the environment. Students travel to Puerto Rico (a territory of the U.S.A.), where they read and analyze authentic materials in Spanish and participate in talks and discussions with local professors, college students, and community leaders. Among the topics explored are colonialism, religion, citizenship, tourism, gentrification, natural disasters, race, and sustainability. Offered periodically during January Term. Apply through Smith Center for Global Engagement. Does not count toward Spanish major. Counts toward Latin American studies major and concentration and environmental studies major and concentration.

**Prerequisites:** SPAN 232 or SPAN 233 or placement into SPAN 250.

**SPAN 250: Family and Gender Roles in Spain: 1900 to Present**

Students explore the topic of family and gender roles in Spanish society by analyzing cultural documents (literary and non-literary texts, including at least one substantive literary work). This cultural analysis provides for the development of critical reading and writing skills (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and argumentation). Taught in Spanish. Offered each semester. Also counts toward gender and sexuality studies and Latin American studies majors and family studies and gender and sexuality studies concentrations. This course is equivalent to SPAN 251 and students can earn credit from only one of them.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 232 or placement into SPAN 250 or SPAN 251.

**SPAN 251: Gender and Race in Modern Latin America**

Students explore diverse experiences of modern Latin America through the lenses of gender and race, which provide a productive framework for examining economic, class, and other key aspects of Latin American society. Students will work with a variety of sources, both literary and non-literary, including articles, images, documents, and at least one substantive literary work. This cultural analysis provides for the development of critical reading and writing skills (e.g., description, narration, exposition, and argumentation). Taught in Spanish. Offered each semester. Also counts toward women's and gender studies, gender and sexuality studies, race and ethnic studies, and Latin American studies majors and race and ethnic studies, management studies, gender and sexuality studies, and women's and gender studies concentrations. This course is equivalent to SPAN 250 and students can earn credit from only one of them.

**Prerequisites:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 or permission of the instructor.

**SPAN 270: Spain's Cultural and Linguistic Legacy (study abroad)**

This topics course explores a Spanish peninsular cultural, literary, and/or linguistic theme from a base in Spain through analysis and discussion of texts, guest lectures, excursions to appropriate cultural sites, field research, and related experiential activities. Sample topics include: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in Spain; Food, Migration, and Identity; and Spain's Multilingual and Multicultural Landscape. Taught in Spanish. Offered alternate years during January Term. Apply through Smith Center for Global Engagement. Also counts toward the Latin American studies major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251.

**SPAN 271: Cultures of Spain**

Students examine the diverse elements that have shaped Spanish culture through an exploration of political, social, economic, religious, and artistic topics. They develop critical analysis skills through reading, discussion, and written and/or oral projects. This course includes the study of selected literary and non-literary texts, including at least one substantive literary work. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered periodically. Also counts toward Latin American studies major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 or permission of the instructor.

**SPAN 272: Cultures of Latin America**

Students examine the diverse elements that have shaped Latin American culture through an exploration of political, social, economic, religious, and artistic topics. They develop critical analysis skills through reading, discussion, and written and/or oral projects. The course features the study of selected literary and non-literary texts, including at least one substantive literary work. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered periodically. Also counts toward Latin American studies major.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 or permission of the instructor.

**SPAN 273: Cultures of the Latinx/a/o U.S.**

Students examine the diverse elements that have shaped the cultures of U.S. Hispanics and Latinx through an exploration of political, social, economic, religious, and artistic topics. They develop critical analysis through reading, discussion, and written and/or oral projects. Students examine processes of identity and inclusion, and its connections to historical narratives. Students analyze materials through an intersectional lens of race, colorism, language, generational differences, class, gender, and sexuality. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered periodically. Also counts toward race and ethnic studies major and concentration.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251.

**SPAN 274: Contemporary Issues in the Spanish-Speaking World**

Students analyze selected contemporary issues in the Spanish-Speaking world. Using readings from the press, academic sources, and governmental as well as non-governmental documents, students read, discuss, and write about issues at an advanced level of linguistic and analytical sophistication. The course includes study of at least one substantive literary work. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Also counts toward Latin American studies major and business and management studies concentration.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 or permission of the instructor.

**SPAN 275: Exploring Hispanic Literature**

In this introduction to literary terminology and to principles of literary analysis across genres, literary texts (including poetry, short stories, theater, and novel) are studied in their socio-historical context. In different semesters, the focus may be literature of the Mexican Revolution, urban and rural life, or another topic chosen by the instructor. Taught in Spanish. Offered each semester.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251.

**SPAN 276: Spanish as a First and Second Language**

Students explore the processes involved in the acquisition of Spanish as a first and second language and the variation present in the language of both native and non-native speakers of Spanish from Spain, Latin America, and the U.S. Hispanic linguistics are studied with special attention paid to socio-cultural as well as structural aspects. The course includes the study of at least one substantive literary work. Taught in Spanish. Offered each semester. Also counts toward race and ethnic studies major and applied linguistics and race and ethnic studies concentrations.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251.

**SPAN 294: Academic Internship****SPAN 298: Independent Study****SPAN 311: Language in Society**

What is the role of language in our society? What is the impact of bilingualism in the U.S.? Students explore such questions from current Spanish socio-linguistics research. Through analysis of data, students examine issues of language contact, variation and change, language and gender, language and power, and/or language planning. May be repeated if topic is different. This course includes the study of at least one substantive literary work. Taught in Spanish. Offered alternate years. Also counts toward race and ethnic studies major and applied linguistics and race and ethnic studies concentrations.

**Prerequisites:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 and SPAN 276.

**SPAN 312: Voices of the Spanish-Speaking World**

Students examine political, economic, religious and/or social issues through textual analysis of literary and/or non-literary works representing diverse voices of the Spanish-speaking world (e.g. indigenous people, women, non-Castilian nationalities in Spain, or Afro-Hispanic groups). The course includes study of at least one substantive literary work. Sample topics include: Women and Repression or The Afro-Hispanic Struggle for Identity. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered annually.

**Prerequisites:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 and at least one 270-level course.

**SPAN 313: Literature and Society in Spain**

Students explore one or more periods, genres, or topics of Spanish literature from its beginnings to the 21st century. Selected literary works are analyzed within their socio-historical and cultural contexts and in reference to pertinent critical or theoretical issues. Sample topics include: Sin and the Church in Medieval Literature, The Stage as Political Propaganda in Imperial Spain, and Federico García Lorca: Voices of the Oppressed. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered annually.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 275.

**SPAN 314: Literature and Society in Latin America**

Students explore one or more periods, genres, or topics from Pre-Columbian times to the 21st century. Selected literary works are analyzed within their socio-historical and cultural contexts and in reference to pertinent critical or theoretical issues. Sample topics include: The Shaping of Latin America; Personalism and Politics; Love and Magical Realism; and Literary Representations of Kitchens, Cooking, and Eating in Latin America. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish. Offered annually.

**Prerequisite:** SPAN 275.

**SPAN 394: Academic Internship****SPAN 398: Independent Research****SPAN 399: Seminar in Spanish Studies**

Students examine important issues in the Spanish-speaking world related to language, literature, history, or culture. Emphasis is given to close reading, discussion, analysis, and interpretation of selected sources, including the application of appropriate theoretical or disciplinary approaches. Topics vary according to the areas of expertise and professional interests of departmental faculty. May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Spanish.

**Prerequisites:** SPAN 250 or SPAN 251 and at least one 270-level course.

## Faculty

**Department Chair, 2024-2025****Ariel T. Strichartz**

Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish  
contemporary Latin American theater and narrative; Argentine theater;  
literary food studies; memory studies

**Catalina Ahumada Escobar**

Visiting Assistant Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish

**Maggie A. Broner**

National Endowment for the Humanities Professor of Romance Language  
Hispanic linguistics; culture; second language acquisition

**Kris A. Cropsey**

Instructor of Romance Languages - Spanish  
Hispanic linguistics; sociolinguistics; second language acquisition;  
teacher education

**Marit K. Hanson**

Assistant Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish

**Jessica Haugland**

Visiting Instructor of Romance Languages - Spanish

**Kristina Medina-Vilarriño**

Associate Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish; O.C. and Patricia  
Boldt Distinguished Teaching Professor of the Humanities  
Caribbean Studies; 20th- and 21st-century Latin American studies;  
contemporary Latino studies; race and ethnic studies

**León Narváez**

Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish  
Hispanic culture, language, and literature; migration and other  
interdisciplinary studies

**Jonathan P. O'Conner** (on sabbatical 2024-25)

Associate Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish  
Peninsular early modern/golden age literature and cultures; cultural  
and intellectual histories; humanism; colonial Latin America

**Katherine (Katie) Obidimalor**

Visiting Instructor of Romance Languages - Spanish

**Mariana Reyes Payán**

Assistant Professor of Romance Languages - Spanish  
20th- and 21st-century Mexican literature and cultural production;  
Mexican borders and migration studies

**Mar Valdecantos**

Adjunct Instructor of Spanish