

**LATIN AMERICAN, CARIBBEAN, AND LATINX STUDIES PROGRAM
OPERATING CODE**

Last reviewed: 10-21-2023

PREAMBLE

This Operating Code is meant to serve as a guiding document for the functioning of the Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies Program (LACLAS). However, it is understood that these guidelines will not cover every situation or describe the best course of action in every case, in which case best judgment should prevail.

I. LEADERSHIP

A. Director.

1. The Director of the program constitutes the executive arm of the program. The Director is in charge of mentoring potential and current LACLAS students, promoting the program on and beyond campus, developing and approving budgets, organizing and conducting program meetings, preparing reports, and managing the day-to-day program operations.
2. The Dean of Faculty (DOF) appoints the Director after soliciting nominations from the LACLAS-affiliated faculty.
3. The Director appointment has traditionally been a 2-year initial appointment with the possibility of renewal for another two years.
4. Current practice from the DOF includes providing a 0.5-course release per year (3 or 4 credits) and a small one-time stipend.

B. Advisory Board.

1. The Advisory Board acts as a consultative body to the program and participates in routine decision-making related to the program in conjunction with the Director.
2. The Advisory Board is constituted of 2-3 faculty members chosen by affiliated faculty at large (see Section II. C).
3. The selection of the members of the Advisory Board usually takes place during the first affiliated-faculty meeting in the fall semester. Before the meeting, the Director solicits volunteers to fill the vacant position(s). During the meeting, the candidates are presented to the affiliated faculty at large, and a vote follows.

4. Members of the Advisory Board are expected to serve a 2-year period with the possibility of reappointment.
5. The Director and the members of the Advisory Board will hold regular meetings throughout the semester to discuss any issues pertaining to the program.
6. The time commitment required from the members of the Advisory Board varies greatly but usually does not exceed 3.-4 hours a month.

II. FACULTY

A. Affiliated faculty members represent the backbone of the program. They bring a diverse set of interests and keep our program vibrant.

B. Affiliated faculty members of the program have the right to participate in decisions concerning the overall program, its minor, and its leadership.

C. Tenure-track, tenured, and long-term NTT faculty members who wish to participate as affiliated faculty of the program during a given academic year should satisfy **at least one** of the following requirements:

1. They have taught an LA-coded course, a LACLAS cross-listed course, or a course that can fulfill a requirement for the LACLAS minor in the past three years.
2. They have participated as guest speakers in LA 377-Colloquium in Latin American and Latinx Studies in the past three years.
3. They have been members of the Advisory Board in the past three years.

D. Visiting faculty and other faculty on terminal contracts who wish to participate as affiliated faculty of the program during a given academic year should be scheduled to teach an LA-coded course, a LACLAS cross-listed course, or a course that can fulfill a requirement for the minor at any point during their contract.

E. Each year, the Director, in consultation with the Advisory Board, will review the membership of affiliated faculty and identify candidates from the incoming cohort of faculty.

F. Affiliated faculty members are expected to participate in the program meetings of affiliated faculty at large, typically scheduled once a semester.

G. Faculty interested in maintaining close ties with the program that do not participate as affiliated faculty can be added to the LACLAS Interest Group mailing list, which includes faculty, staff, and students interested in participating in LACLAS-sponsored activities and events.

III. STAFF

- A. Staff members include the program's Administrative Assistant and a Student Assistant hired on a per-semester basis.
- B. LACLAS Administrative Assistant currently also serves the Black Studies, Media and Film Studies, and the Self-Determined Majors Programs.
- C. The Administrative Assistant works closely with the Director and the program's affiliated faculty on issues related to the budget, planning and coordination of events, scheduling of courses, printing and collecting student evaluations, and other pertinent administrative tasks.
- D. Each semester, the Director has the possibility to hire a Student Assistant. The responsibilities of the Student Assistant usually include providing support at LACLAS-sponsored events, designing and distributing promotional materials, outreach to students, and other clerical work. See Appendix B for a sample job ad.

IV. COMMUNICATION AND PROGRAM MEETINGS

- A. The LACLAS program maintains two active mailing lists. One includes the affiliated faculty of the program (LACLASlist@skidmore.edu). The other one includes Skidmore faculty, staff, and students interested in receiving information about LACLAS-related events and other relevant information (LACLASinterestgroup@skidmore.edu).
- B. Any affiliated faculty of the program can choose to send emails for the Director to forward and send emails directly to the affiliated-faculty mailing list.
- C. Both mailing lists should be used thoughtfully not to overwhelm the receivers and keep messages on topic.
- D. The Director should intervene if inappropriate messages are sent to the mailing list. Courses of action include: reminding users about appropriate behavior, banning the offender from sending additional messages to the mailing list, deleting the offender from the mailing list, or bringing the issue to the attention of appropriate administrative leaders, among others. The Director can also send a follow-up email addressing the issue and describing the corrective measures taken without identifying the individual or violating privacy concerns.
- E. The Director, with the support of the Administrative Assistant, will normally organize at least one meeting per semester of all affiliated faculty of the program.
- F. It is recommended that the meeting in the fall semester is scheduled close to the beginning of the classes (third week). This meeting serves to welcome new affiliated faculty, present a summary of the plans for the semester, and elect members of the Advisory Board if appropriate.

G. Minutes for all affiliated faculty meetings should be taken, shared with participants, and archived.

V. MINOR

A. As described in the Catalog, students wishing to complete a minor in LACLAS must complete a minimum of 19 credits (five to six courses) from a list of designated LACLAS courses.

B. When Advising students, the Director and affiliated faculty should keep in mind the following policies:

1. Students should take at least two 300-level courses.
2. Students cannot fulfill the minor requirements with more than two courses in a single discipline or the student's major.
3. Up to 4 credit hours of Spanish, French, or Portuguese language at the 208 level or above may count toward the minor.
4. Students can fulfill minor requirements with pre-approved courses taken abroad.
5. There are no limits to the number of S/U-graded courses that can be used to fulfill the minor's requirements beyond the limits determined by the College and individual course policies regarding S/U grading.

C. When Advising students, it is recommended to check the current Catalog for updates in the requirements.

D. Each student's selection of courses to fulfill the minor requirements will be approved by the Director, who serves as the advisor to all minors.

E. Students completing the LACLAS minor should discuss with the Director the most appropriate way to complete the Senior Capstone requirement in each case. Students can fulfill this requirement with a relevant 3-4 credit independent study, internship, or approved course.

F. The ideal course to fulfill the Senior Capstone requirement is an advanced 300-level LA-coded course or LACLAS cross-listed course with a significant research or creative component, in which students integrate previous experiences and many aspects of their LACLAS education.

G. Changes to the minor can be proposed by affiliated faculty, members of the Advisory Board, or the Director. Once a change has been proposed, the Director will create opportunities for its discussion among affiliated faculty, whether synchronous (meetings) or asynchronous (email exchange). If a majority of affiliated faculty support the change, the Director will start the

process to make the change official following the procedures established by Curriculum Committee. The procedure usually starts by proposing the change on Curriculog.

VI. COURSES

A. LACLAS faculty offer two types of courses:

1. LA-coded courses. LA-coded courses are based in our program. For an updated list of LA-coded courses check the current Catalog.

2. LACLAS cross-listed courses. LACLAS cross-listed courses are based in other departments and programs and are approved by our program for LACLAS-related content.

3. In this Operating Code, “LACLAS courses” refers to both LA-coded and cross-listed courses unless otherwise noted.

B. Every fall, LACLAS offers “LA 377 Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies Colloquium.” In this course, students explore issues affecting Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx communities by focusing on a specific theme. The Director coordinates the course. Each offering includes guest lectures by many affiliated faculty and experts from other institutions. Usually, the Director sends a call for volunteers as guest lecturers at the end of the spring semester and a reminder in the summer. External guests are also encouraged.

C. All faculty at Skidmore can propose a course to be cross-listed with LACLAS. Faculty who desire to cross-list a course with LACLAS should contact the Director and send the title and description of the course to initiate the process. The Director may request additional information, including a finalized syllabus, before approving the course.

D. LACLAS generally cross-list courses in which more than 50% of the course deals with issues and content related to Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinx U.S.

E. LACLAS can approve courses for partial credit for the minor if at least 30% of the course deals with issues and content related to Latin America, the Caribbean, or Latinx U.S.

F. Once a course has been approved for cross-listing, the Director contacts the Office of the Registrar to inform them and then reviews the corresponding Master Schedule to ensure the change has been made.

VII. SPONSORED AND CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

A. LACLAS sponsors and co-sponsors numerous events each semester.

B. The sponsoring and co-sponsoring of events should prioritize requests that bring attention to issues that affect Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx communities and highlight the work of their members. Requests by affiliated faculty are also prioritized.

C. Due to the limited program's budget, LACLAS usually can only offer a small monetary contribution to each individual request. However, our program's support can include other forms, for example, promoting the event, helping with the logistics, reaching out to other sources of funding or potential co-sponsors, etc.

VIII. STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

A. LACLAS recommends that students whose academic programs permit spend at least one semester abroad. Currently, there are LACLAS-approved study-abroad opportunities in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Turks and Caicos.

B. Off-Campus Study & Exchanges (OCSE) regularly sends the Director a list of LACLAS-approved off-campus study programs for review. OCSE also requests approval of such programs

C. LACLAS, in partnership with Skidmore's Office of Community Services, has offered students the opportunity to volunteer in Guatemala during spring break. The Alternative Spring Break in Guatemala is a weeklong opportunity in which participants travel to Antigua to participate in various service-learning within local communities. Students had to enroll in a preparation class (LA 305) before departure. A faculty member accompanies the group to Guatemala to continue conversations on-site and to build connections for students with academic and community partners. The group normally organizes a presentation to the campus upon return.

IX. ACADEMIC YEAR TASKS

A. The Chair/Program Director Handbook includes a list of tasks to be completed each year. The Director, with the support of the Administrative Assistant, should regularly review these required tasks to ensure their completion.

B. Other recurrent tasks not included in the Chair/Program Director Handbook include compiling and promoting the list of LACLAS courses offered each semester, organizing a welcome reception in the fall, convening at least one meeting of all affiliated faculty per semester, coordinating programming (including the program's participation in Academic Showcase, Exploremore, and other college-wide events).

C. Each semester, the Director will collect information about LACLAS courses that will be offered the following semester. The Director will solicit this information from affiliated faculty and check the Master Schedule.

D. The Director will promote LACLAS-course offerings through email and print posters. These tasks normally take place once the Master Schedule has been published and preferably before student advising begins.

E. The Director and the Administrative Assistant will ensure student evaluations for LA-coded courses are printed (long form), distributed, and collected. Due to its unique nature, LA 377 LACLAS Colloquium does not participate in college-wide student evaluations.

F. It is recommended that the Director and the Advisory Board review and update as needed the present Operating Code in the second half of the spring semester.

X. BUDGET

A. At the end of the fall semester, the Office of the DOF sends an Operating Budget worksheet and issues a call for Capital Budget, Minor Projects, and New Initiatives requests. The Operating Budget and all requests are usually due at the beginning of the spring semester. The Director, with the support of the Administrative Assistant, should ensure the submission of the yearly Operating Budget and any other requests to the Office of DOF by the established deadlines.

XI. RECORDS

A. The Director, with the support of the Administrative Assistant, will oversee the archival of relevant files.

B. The Chair/Program Director Handbook requires that all departments and programs retain records of:

- Search materials (Search plans, job advertisements, etc.)
- Minutes (department meetings, committee meetings)
- Assessment documents
- Triennial Reports
- External Review materials
- Faculty Workload Tracking (workload credits, overloads, course releases)
- Course syllabi
- Personnel records (confidential)
- Evaluations of student learning (“long forms”)

C. In addition, it is recommended to ensure the retention/archival of the following files:

- Syllabi of LA-coded and LACLAS-approved courses, including the Colloquim.
- List of LACLAS courses offered each semester.
- Promotional materials for the minor, LACLAS courses, and other academic opportunities.
- Information regarding LACLAS-sponsored and co-sponsored events (communication, flyers, posters, etc.).
- Information related to curricular changes.

- Information regarding LACLAS-approved study abroad programs.
- Updates to LACLAS website.
- Access information to social media accounts and policies.

Appendix A. Link to relevant forms.

1. Minor declaration form: https://www.skidmore.edu/registrar/documents/dec_minor.pdf

2. Chair/Program Director Handbooks: <https://www.skidmore.edu/dof-vpaa/handbooks/handbooks.php>

Appendix B. Sample Job Ad for Hiring a Student Assistant.

Job Description

Assist the director of the Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies (LACLAS) program with:

- outreach to students,
- planning and creating brochures, posters, and other materials
- maintenance of LACLAS social media accounts
- support at LACLAS-sponsored events
- other tasks that might include administrative support (photocopying) and research

Job Requirements

Skidmore student who is ideally a LACLAS minor, and/or has taken LACLAS courses at Skidmore. It would be helpful if the student can read/speak/write Spanish.

Hours

3.0 to 6.0 hours per week