

The Value of Latin American & Caribbean Studies

LACS (Latin American & Caribbean Studies)
in the New Economy

Latin America & the Caribbean



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The New Economy

Is changing rapidly

Employees will need to reinvent themselves several times: adaptability and versatility

1. Employers are looking for the same qualities: adaptability, versatility AND
2. The capacity for critical thinking
3. Good team working and collaboration skills
4. Empathy – the ability to connect with a team
5. Good communication skills, both written and oral
6. The ability to relate to a multi-national, global environment



Foto
Alberto Martínez R.

Latin American Studies

Latin American and Caribbean Studies is an inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary study of the region of the world we call Latin America and the Caribbean.

Latin America is traditionally the Spanish speaking Republics (minus Puerto Rico) with Brazil and Haiti.

We add “Caribbean” to take into account the English and Dutch speaking Islands that are not part of Latin America.

Can 20-plus countries share a single history? Obviously not.



Strengths of LACS

Latin American & Caribbean studies has several key strengths that can help prepare students for the new economy.

1. Critical Thinking
2. Inter-disciplinarity
3. “H”-style skills
4. Global Awareness
5. Good communication
6. Versatility
7. Business skills for Latam
8. Hemispheric solidarity



Critical Thinking

Latin American & Caribbean studies focuses heavily on reading, analysis and writing.

This develops the highly desirable skill of *critical thinking*.

Several sources indicate that employers are increasingly looking for critical thinking skills rather than just narrow technical skills which may be outdated by next year.

Communication & Writing Skills

Email from a professor in the College of Business

April 4, 2018

With my colleague _____ at Georgetown, we are working on another book _____. We need another graduate student to help us with some research and writing. **Since business students are trained but LACC students are educated (...and have good written communication skills)**, might you have a smart, motivated graduate student in LACC (although the book is not on Latin America) whom we could hire for part-time work? Kindly let me know.



Inter-disciplinarity

Latin America and Caribbean studies therefore, unlike the academic discipline, is inherently *inter-* and *multi-disciplinary*.

In order to get a good grasp of the realities of Latin America and the Caribbean, it is necessary to look at them from multiple angles:

using economics, history, sociology, anthropology, political science, international relations, literature, art, music and geography, race, gender, etc.

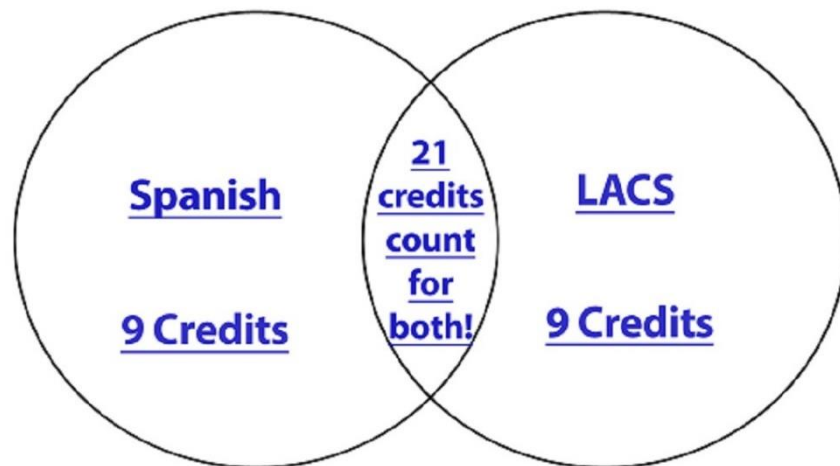
Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs



Calling all Spanish Language and LACS undergrads!

Graduate with a double-major BA in BOTH Spanish and Latin American and Caribbean Studies in four years.



Talk to Academic Advisor Manuel Nino at (305) 348-4580 or contact LACC's Academic Office (305) 348-2894)



Versatility

Latin America and Caribbean studies therefore, is by its very nature, very versatile.

It can be combined with almost any other area, including business, and especially with languages, history or sociology.

LACS students learn to view social and cultural realities from multiple perspectives, using multiple theories and methods.



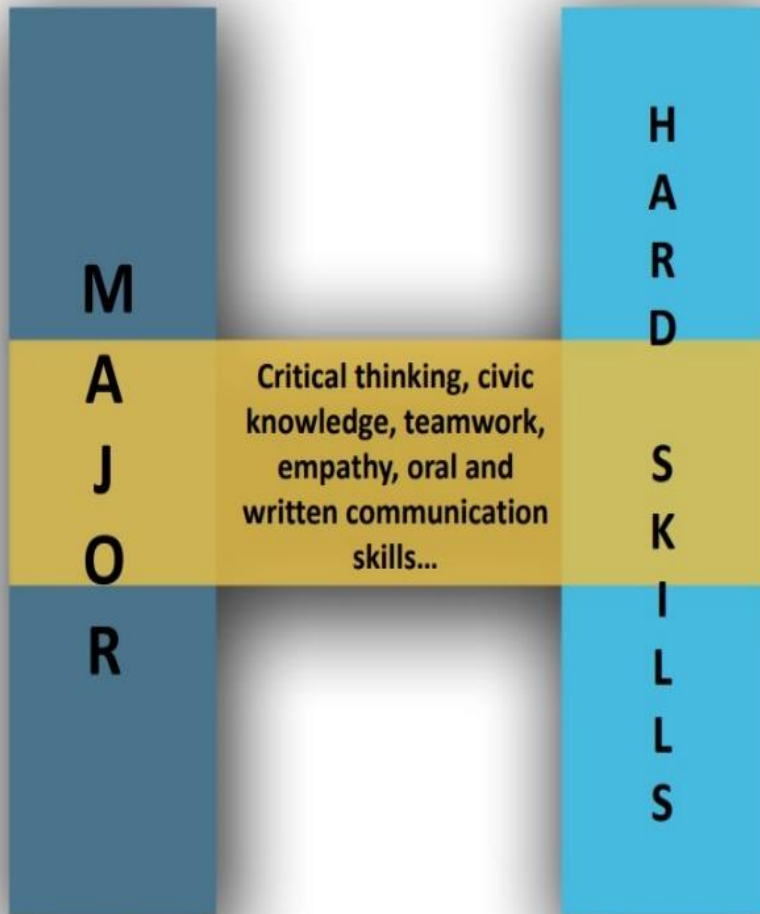
H-Style learning

LACS is uniquely suited to provide “H” training to college students.

A student can major in a B.A. in LACS and select a concentration of courses that will develop his or her cultural and historical perspective, nurture critical thinking and communication skills (both oral and written), as well as foreign language skills in the LACS program

At the same time developing his or her professional competency and hard skills in the concentration courses in Biology, Journalism, Health, Business, or Law.

UNIVERSITY 2.0



- ***Need to enhance understanding of the H-shaped student***

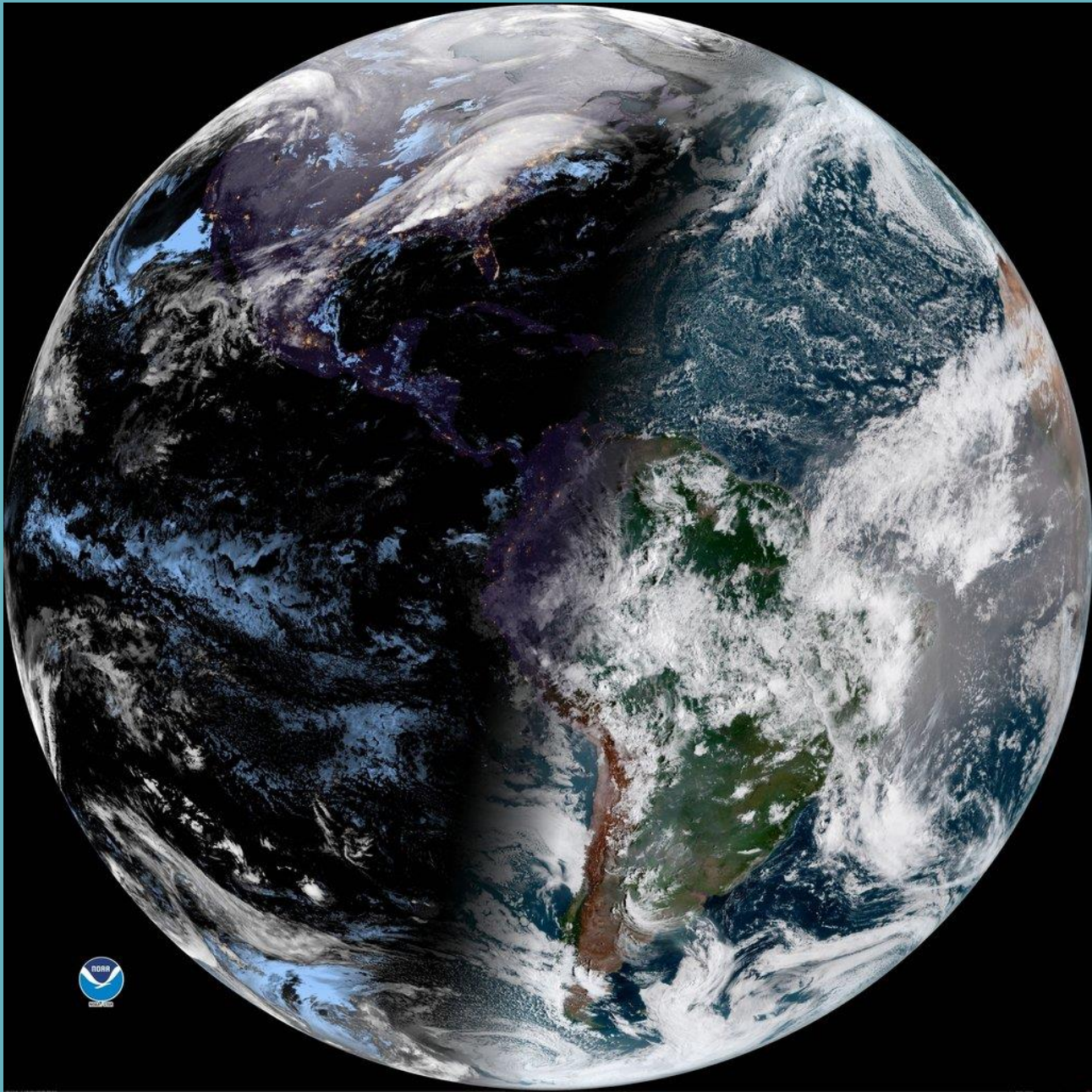
- ✓ First vertical is the disciplinary/multidisciplinary competency (a major, certificate, etc.)
- ✓ Horizontal line depicts the skills – critical thinking, civic knowledge, teamwork, empathy, oral and written communication
- ✓ Second vertical line is a “hard skill” – coding, data analysis, spreadsheet construction, basic cybersecurity (i.e. last mile skills)

Global Awareness

It is no secret that since 9/11, the War on Terror, and the economic crisis of 2008, we are experiencing a pendulum swing in attitudes from 'cosmopolitanism' to nationalism.

Many academic institutions feel that it is important to encourage students toward a global view

Learning about other cultures helps to develop a "binocular," three-dimensional view that enables one to see with greater "cultural" perception



Hemispheric Solidarity

Students who get the opportunity to learn Spanish or Portuguese and travel in Latin America, or to participate in study abroad programs develop a greater empathy with Latin American and Caribbean culture

Latin American studies programs are uniquely suited to stimulate such reflective critical study, and also to create empathetic bridges of solidarity between U.S. and Latin American peoples.



Conclusion

In today's rapidly evolving high-tech and global economy, education must provide new pathways to satisfying careers for young adults.

Students will need to reinvent themselves more than once over a lifetime.

Graduates will need to think fast, and be versatile and adaptable.

Florida is uniquely positioned to produce young professionals with excellent credentials for careers oriented toward the rest of the hemisphere.

LACS interdisciplinary programs can be a key educational and training nexus for facilitating extensive commercial, academic and professional networks throughout the Americas.