

Board Meeting  
May 21, 2009

ESTABLISH THE MASTER OF ARTS IN LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO  
STUDIES, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, CHICAGO

**Action:** Approve the Establishment of the Master of Arts in Latin American and Latino Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Chicago

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

The Chancellor at Chicago with the advice of the Chicago Senate, the Graduate College, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences recommends the establishment of the Master of Arts in Latin American and Latino Studies.

The mission of the proposed Master of Arts in Latin American and Latino Studies is to offer an interdisciplinary perspective to the study of both contemporary Latin American societies and of historical minorities and immigrants of Latin American descent living in the United States. The program emphasizes the histories and experiences of Latin American people as they enter into a transnational dialogue that defines both American and Latin American identities, cultures, economies, and politics in the twenty-first century. It will encourage an interdisciplinary approach that ranges across the social sciences, humanities, cultural studies, and history.

Society needs educators, researchers, and professionals who can understand Latin America and Latinos from a cross-border perspective and are able to think creatively beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. The M.A. in Latin American and

Latino Studies is intended to serve the needs of students who later wish to apply to a Ph.D. program or professional school, educators wishing to gain some expertise in Latin America and Latino studies, as well as professionals working in community organizations or social services agencies. The program will provide students with the foundations for research and policy-oriented careers in local, state, and federal government, international organizations, community-based organizations, and the private sector. In addition, the interdisciplinary focus will contribute well-rounded individuals trained to understand minority and foreign populations from methodological approaches used both in the humanities and social sciences.

The proposed program is composed of 34 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate, made up of core and elective courses, research methods and directed research, and a community research internship. In addition, students must write a Master of Arts paper emphasizing social science or humanities research or policy research. The program's research internship program and other forms of partnership with the community will be a key component of student training, thus strengthening its impact outside the academic community. It will provide much needed policy and research expertise for community-based organizations that serve the Latino community.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.