

La crónica / A crônica

The newsletter of the Latin American & Latinx Studies Program at The University of Scranton

Director's Note

Yamile Silva, PhD



Dear LALS Community,

As we conclude another enriching academic year, I am delighted to share with you our new issue of *La crónica/A crônica*, the newsletter of the Latin American & Latinx Studies Program at The University of Scranton. This past year has been remarkable for our program, filled with academic achievements, cultural events, and meaningful community engagement.

Our students continue to inspire us with their dedication to understanding the complex histories, cultures, and contemporary challenges of Latin America and Latinx communities. This year, we celebrated our graduating senior, Jaznie Belfont, who highlighted in this issue, has demonstrated exceptional scholarship and commitment to social justice. Her contributions to our campus community and beyond fill us with pride. I would like to acknowledge our faculty's tireless efforts in creating transformative learning experiences. Dr. Michael Allison's courses on Latin American Politics and his community-based learning initiatives exemplify our program's commitment to both academic excellence and social impact. His expert testimony in over 120 asylum cases demonstrates how our scholarship extends beyond the classroom to address urgent humanitarian needs.

The University's study abroad programs continue to thrive, providing students like Luca Morelli with immersive experiences that deepen their linguistic skills and cultural understanding. These international experiences are foundational to our mission of fostering global citizenship. (Continues on Next Page)



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The Latin American Film Series has brought our community together again this academic year, exploring diverse themes such as environmental issues and music and culture. I am grateful to everyone who participated in these enriching cultural events.

As we look ahead to Summer and Fall 2025, we invite you to explore our course offerings and participate in upcoming events. The LALS Program remains committed to creating spaces for critical dialogue, intercultural understanding, and solidarity across borders.

Thank you for your continued support of our program. Together, we are building a more inclusive community at The University of Scranton and beyond.

¡Adelante!

Yamile Silva, PhD
Director, Latin American & Latinx
Studies Program

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Faculty Spotlight

LALS Associate Faculty

Yamile Silva, PhD

LALS Program Director
Professor, Spanish

Michael Allison, PhD

Professor and Chair,
Political Science

Susan Méndez, PhD

Professor, English &
Theatre

Janice Voltzow, PhD

Professor and Chair,
Biology

Dr. Michael Allison, Political Science Chair



LALS Affiliate Faculty

Ovidiu Cocieru, PhD

Assistant Professor,
Management, Marketing,
and Entrepreneurship

Will Cohen, PhD

Professor, Theology and
Religious Studies

Habib Zanzana, PhD

Professor, Spanish and
Arabic

Within the Latin American and Latinx Studies Concentration, Dr. Allison taught a course on Latin American Politics in the Fall 2025 semester. Additionally, Dr. Allison taught the course Politics, Religion, and Public Service, which is a Community-Based Learning course with an immigration focus. Students are required to complete at least 15 hours of volunteer work related to immigration. For example, Dr. Allison led a group of students and other volunteers on Jesuit Refugee Services Advocacy Day in which they met virtually with staffers of different members of Congress to promote humane immigration policy.

Students also completed presentations on immigrant and refugee populations in their hometowns with states such as Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Massachusetts represented. Students in this class also assisted Dr. Allison in preparing expert witness testimony in multiple asylum cases. As an expert in El Salvador and Guatemala, Dr. Allison has testified in a total of over 120 asylum cases.

LALS Staff

Donna Rupp

Department
Secretary

Luca Morelli '26

2024-2025 Work-
study Student

Senior Spotlight: Latin American and Latinx Studies Concentrator Jaznie Belfont

Hometown: Bogotá, Colombia. **Major:** Political Science **Minor:** French
Concentrations: Legal Studies, Latin American and Latinx Studies

Campus Involvement: Honors Program, Resident Assistant, United Cultures Organization club cabinet member, Association of Latin American Student, Black Student Union

Post-Graduation Plans: Volunteer at the Jesuit Volunteer Core as a paralegal at Make the Road New York for a year before going to law school.

“Being part of the Latin American Studies concentration helped me feel more comfortable and a sense of belonging during my time at the University since I was able to take classes my native language of Spanish. I also made lasting friendships with others who joined the concentration. ”

Thesis: “My honors thesis is about how the legacy of violence in Colombia shaped the perspective of Colombians, which affected their behavior in the referendum elections of 2016. ”

*Felicidades.
parabéns.
congratulations.
LALS
graduates!*



LALS Study Abroad Spotlight: Luca Morelli '26 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Major: Political Science

Minors: Philosophy and Spanish

Concentration: Latin American and Latinx Studies

“My experience studying abroad for a semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina was incredible. After studying Spanish for years, I became fluent while I was abroad. I took a variety of courses focusing on Argentine culture, history, literature, and politics. These courses all counted towards my LALS concentration and greatly enriched my cultural learning.”



“Beyond academics, I created and maintained connections with people across the world who share my interest in Latin America. I also traveled within Argentina to Iguazú Falls, Mendoza Province, and Salta Province in the Andean region. Additionally, I traveled to Uruguay and Peru where I visited Machu Picchu.”





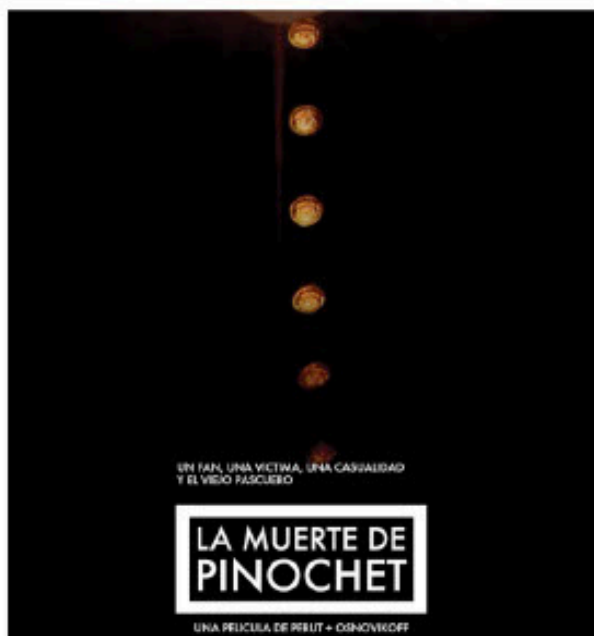
Latin American Film Series

Fall 2024

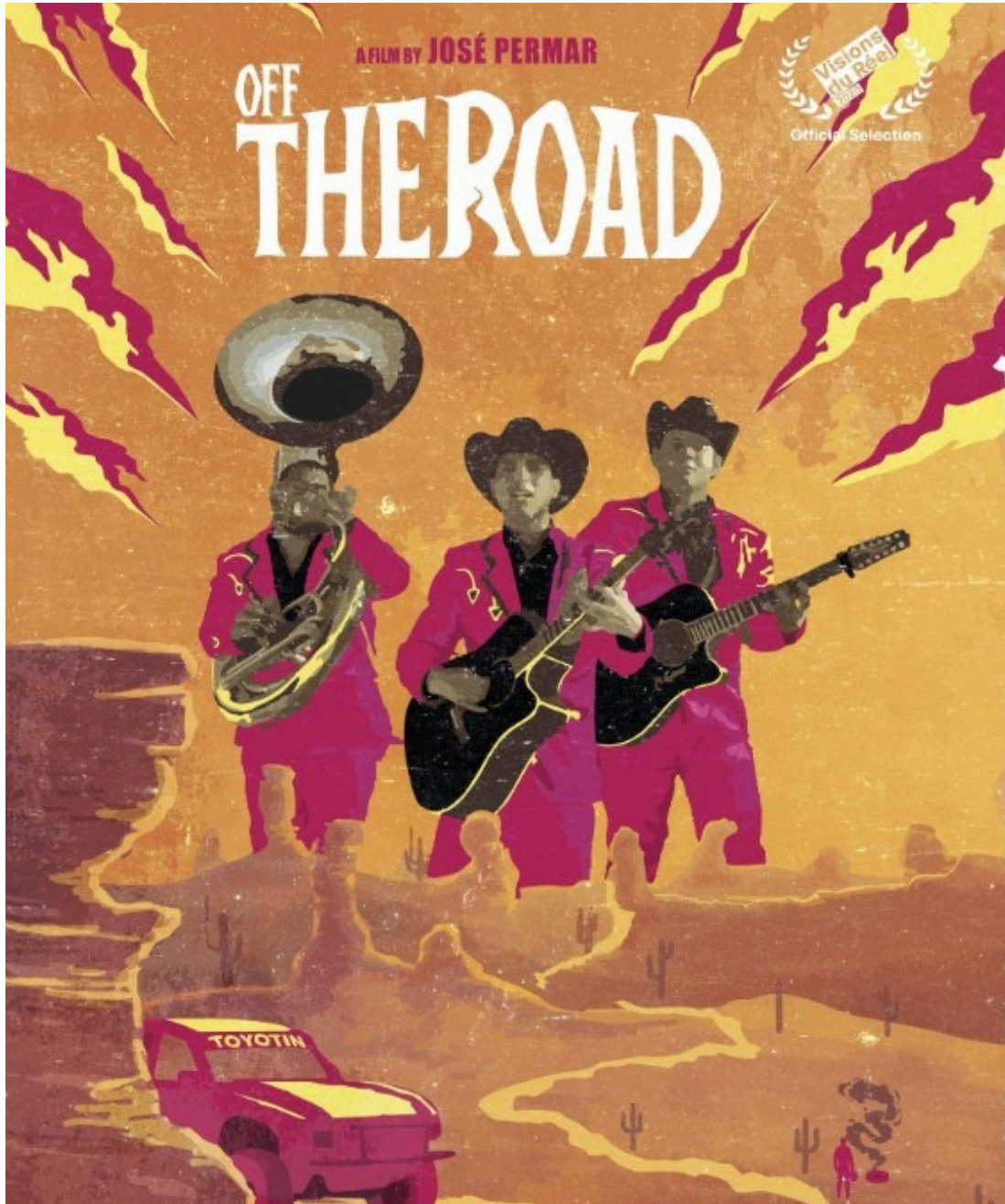
History and Politics in Latin America

September 17th,
5:00pm BRN 228

November 5th,
5:00pm BRN 228



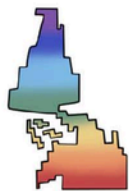
Latin American Film Series Spring 2025



**Brennan
Hall 228**

**Off The Road
February
20th 5:00pm**

**Diaspora
Drums
April 29th
5:00pm**



LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINX STUDIES

Summer and Fall 2025 Courses

Summer

LIT 205 - Modern Latin-American Literature in Translation (CL, D),

Y. Silva (web-based)

A survey in English of modern and contemporary Latin American writers.

Fall

MGT 474 – Managing a Multicultural Workforce (D, EPW), Day/Time/Instructor TBA

This course addresses the skills and knowledge managers must develop to deal with an increasingly culturally diverse workforce. Specific topics to be covered include diversity in ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability. The course will help students interact and work with people different from themselves and to understand their own cultural values, biases and behaviors.

PS 323 – Central America (D, S), M. Allison, MWF 12:00-12:50

This course provides an overview of contemporary Central American politics. Special attention is given to the revolutionary upheavals in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. This course also explores current challenges to the region's economic and political development such as crime, free trade and relations with the United States.

SPAN 311 - Spanish Conversation (CF, D), *Two sections offered:*

TR 10:00-11:15 (Y. Silva) or MWF 12:00-12:50 (E. Zanzana)

(Prerequisites: SPAN 211-SPAN 212 or equivalent, as determined by placement exam) Reading-based conversation stressing development of self-expression in Spanish. Taught in Spanish.

Includes activities inside and/or outside the classroom that involve Language Learning Center (language lab) resources.

SPAN 320 – Introduction to Literary Studies (CL), Day/Time/Instructor TBA

(Prerequisites: SPAN 311-SPAN 312) “An introduction to the principal genres of literature (poetry, short story, essay, drama and novel) through analysis of representative works written in Spanish. Required prerequisite for all upper-division literature courses. Taught in Spanish.

SPAN 331 - Survey of Spanish-American Literature (CL, D), E. Zanzana, MW 3:00-4:15

(Prerequisite: SPAN 320) A survey of Spanish-American literature from the 16th century to the present, with representative readings from each of the principal cultural areas. Taught in Spanish.

T/RS 250 – Latin American Liberation Theology and Beyond (P, D), W. Cohen, TR 2:30-3:45

(Prerequisites: T/RS 121, T/RS 122) The objective of the course is to explore the development of theology within Latin America after the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Special attention is given the theological, social and political settings of Catholicism in Latin America.

Dr. Yamile Silva, Director of Latin American/Latinx Studies, O'Hara 316

Office hours: Monday 10:30-1:30 in the Gail and Francis Slattery Center
for Ignatian Humanities 3rd floor or by appointment

Email: yamile.silva@scranton.edu