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Honours in Spanish and Latin American Studies
Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies

1. What is it?
Honours involves two semester-length seminar courses on different topics in Latin American and Spanish culture and society, an advanced language workshop, and a dissertation of 18,000-20,000 words on a topic of interest to the student, prepared with the guidance of a full-time member of staff.

2. Why study Honours?
− It distinguishes your Bachelor’s degree from others in the workplace. Employers increasingly demand Honours.
− Gives you the opportunity to explore in depth what interests you in Spanish and Latin American Studies. Normal undergraduate courses only give you a glimpse.
− If you desire to pursue an academic career, Honours is an essential step to Masters and PhD programs.

What will you learn?
− To hone your skills to read critically, and fully understand, a wide range of Spanish-language written and cultural texts
− To independently research and evaluate Spanish and Latin American culture using appropriate critical and theoretical approaches,
− To deepen your knowledge of selected aspects of Spanish and Latin American cultures and societies,
− To be able to formulate your own opinions on these cultural texts and social issues and communicate them effectively both in English and Spanish.

2. What are the prerequisites?
48 senior credit points in Spanish (as a major) with a credit average (of 70% or more) or better and prior permission of the department.

Entry Requirements for Honours and Unit Descriptions of Honours Seminar and Thesis Units can be found in the Subject Area section for the Department of European Studies in the Arts and Social Sciences Undergraduate Handbook. Please also see the Sydney Courses Honours page for more information.

3. Examples of dissertations
− Tintin and the Secret of Satire, 2008 (Annick Pellegrin; joint with French)
− Virtual Powerlessness: Mexico’s Kidnapping Crisis, 2009 (Steven Bunce)
− Indigenas del Sur: Un estudio comparativo sobre las politicas indigenas en Australia y Chile, 2009 (Jeremy Dornan)
Enrolment

In the first instance you should discuss your intention to apply for Honours with the Honours Coordinator.

Once you have been accepted into the Honours program by the Honours Coordinator (or Coordinators for Joint Honours) please go to Sydney Courses and locate your Degree with Honours (e.g. Bachelor of Arts Honours). Click on ‘Apply’ on the right-hand side.

Please note: although there is a note below ‘Apply’ that indicates that the information is for prospective students, current students are also deemed ‘prospective students’ for Honours and therefore need to apply through Sydney Student.

Student testimonies

Steven Bunce completed an honours project called “Virtual Powerlessness: Mexico’s Kidnapping Crisis”, for which he was awarded a mark of 90%, gaining him first class honours and producing work that was highly praised by the two examiners, who recommended its publication. Steven worked in in Geneva in a gender and development program then began his PhD on social stratification in Bogotá, Colombia, which he is now finalising at the same time as working within the UNHCR in Colombia.

“Honours in the Spanish and Latin American Studies Department helped me channel my post-exchange nostalgia into what was easily my most productive and fulfilling academic year. The courses I did as part of the program were binary busting!” – Steven

Géraldine Annick Pellegrin completed an honours project called “Tintin and the Secret of Satire”. Thanks to her good results and the fact that she was accepted to take part in a conference, her application for a PhD was successful and she was granted a scholarship. She then completed a PhD thesis is on a variety of Franco-Belgian and Latin American comics. She has subsequently published in a range of journals and obtained an academic position as lecturer at an overseas university.

“I got the chance to do an in-depth study of a comic I have always loved without having to leave the Spanish department. Instead, all the knowledge that I had already acquired helped me greatly in better analysing the text. Moreover, with the advanced language classes and the advanced coursework, I was given the tools for a greater understanding of the language and cultures of Latin America. With the one-on-one guidance from my supervisors I knew that I was not alone and that there was always someone to help me keep my argument balanced” – Annick
Jeremy Dornan completed an honours project called “Indígenas del sur: Un estudio comparativo sobre las políticas indígenas en Australia y Chile”. On the strength of his strong performance, he was offered a graduate position in the Federal Government’s Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, which he began in February 2010.

“My honours year was a challenging yet rewarding experience. The course work pushed me to think about and question previously held assumptions. In addition, my thesis allowed me to develop my research skills and prepare me for the workforce and possible future studies.” – Jeremy