WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN … LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW:
According to the UNM Latin American Studies (LAS) (2013) website, “those who graduate with a major or minor in Latin American Studies have a solid foundation in language skills, cultural competency, and general knowledge of the region. Graduates are prepared for careers in business, education, public service, or for further graduate/professional training.” LAS further explains that, “Those who graduate at the M.A. level or above may use the degree to pursue further graduate training or as an entry point for careers in government service, legal advocacy, community development, public health, K-12 and postsecondary teaching, international business, travel and tourism, or inter-American organizations, among others. Individuals who attain a Ph.D. in LAS are uniquely positioned for interdisciplinary faculty positions in fields such as art history, literature, or museum studies.”

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS:
A bachelor’s degree is the minimum formal education required; it is preparation for entering a variety of occupations that require excellent writing skills, competency in research, and strong interpersonal skills. However, depending upon the student’s career interests, some occupations may require a graduate degree (Master’s, Ph.D., J.D.). Consult O*Net for more information on the specific KSAs (Knowledge, Skill, Ability) that are required for this career.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO:
The UNM Latin American Studies Program offers a Bachelor of Arts in Latin American Studies, Masters of Arts in Latin American Studies, and a Ph.D. in Latin American Studies. You can find further information on the UNM Latin American Studies’ website.

INDUSTRIES & TARGET EMPLOYERS:
A variety of employers specifically recruit UNM students and alumni. Consult UNM’s Lobo Career Connection for a complete list of employers and current job postings. Speak with a Career Development Facilitator at the UNM Office of Career Services for help with identifying employers or additional resources for your occupation of choice. The UNM Latin American Studies program has a Guide to Job Opportunities to LAS Graduates.

Government
- Public affairs, cultural affairs, Foreign Service officer, census work or surveying, public opinion pollster, policy analyst, regional/urban planner, community development, AmeriCorps or Peace Corps volunteer, embassies

Education/Student Affairs
- K-12 teaching/administration, college preparation, counseling/advising, adult/GED education, missionary, University/college teaching/administration, research, advising/counseling, multicultural affairs, residence life, Greek affairs, student activities, admissions officer, affirmative action officer, librarian, archivist, curator

Business/Industry
- Multicultural communication specialist, public relations, employment counselor, management, human resources, training and development, sales representative, advertising, consulting, marketing, entrepreneur, customer service, non-profit director, grants specialist, foundation representative, fundraising director, campaign planner

Communications
- Public opinion analyst, research/technical advisor, public relations, editor, publishing, writing, journalism

Human Services
- Public relations, human resources, community organizer, case worker, social worker, counselor, mental health services, rehabilitation

Public Health
- Health education/counseling, research, occupational health and safety, community health workers, nurse, physician, physician assistant

Law/Politics
- Law, lobbying, government relations, public policy, research, immigration services, Campaign management, elected/appointed civil servants

Performing/Creative Arts
- Artist management, teacher, marketing, musician, performer, playwright
SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Consider specializing your skill set through a double major or minor in another area.
- Gain professional experience in your area of interest through involvement in internships, student employment, Co-ops, and/or volunteer opportunities.
- Shadow professionals in your field of interest to gain a better understanding of their occupation and to build relationships with professional mentors.
- Build your network and get involved on campus through student organizations and campus events. One related student organization is Student Organization for Latin American Studies. Find more organizations and events at the Student Activities Center website.
- Attend career-related campus events such as career fairs, company information sessions, and or career workshops.
- Students who are interested in graduate school should maintain a high undergraduate GPA and develop relationships with faculty and community leaders.
- Speak with mentors and faculty about career opportunities.
- Job leads can be found on your department’s events, website, list-serv, newsletters, and social media sites.

INFORMATIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL WEBSITES

The University of Texas has many resources on its Latin American Network Information Center website.

- Latin American Studies Association: http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/
- Brazilian Studies Association: http://www.brasa.org/
- Caribbean Studies Association: http://www.caribbeanstudiesassociation.org/
- Conference of Latin American Geographers: http://clagscholar.org/
- Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales: http://www.clacso.org/
- Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs: http://www.claspprograms.org/
- Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales: http://www.flacso.org/
- Guatemalan Scholars Network: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/gsn/
- Latin American Jewish Studies Association: http://www.utexas.edu/cola/orgs/lajsa/
- Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials: http://salalm.org/
- Society for Caribbean Studies: http://www.caribbeanstudies.org.uk/
- Society for Latin American Studies: http://www.slas.org.uk/
- USA Jobs – Federal Government Job Site: https://www.usajobs.gov/
- Idealist.org – Non-profit Job Search Site: http://www.idealist.org/
- American Council of Learned Societies: http://www.acls.org/about/
- Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials: http://www.onetonline.org/

REFERENCES