



We Are Called

The Campaign for Yale Divinity School

A Chair in Latinx Christianity

Endowed chairs serve as the most powerful means for YDS to attract and retain leading scholars and, thereby, meet the changing needs of students and the world they serve after YDS.

As part of our effort to develop a more inclusive and global approach to theology, in 2017 YDS launched a concentrated program of study in Latinx and Latin American Christianity. A track in the Master of Arts in Religion degree path, the program builds on our existing strengths and addresses key demographic and social trends. Students may focus their study on Christianity in Latin America or Latinx Christianity in the United States – or both, for a more hemispheric perspective.

The program has been gaining strength among students. In the three years prior to the formation of our degree program, we averaged 33 Latinx applicants, 20 admitted, and 9 matriculated. In the past three years (Fall 2020-2022), we averaged 42 Latinx applicants, admitted an average of 18, and matriculated an average of 11. We have become more selective and had greater success in recruitment. This past year we admitted 17 and matriculated 14, our highest number of matriculants yet. Now, to keep pace with changes sweeping across



Erika Helgen, Associate Professor of Latinx Christianity.

For 200 years, Yale Divinity School has educated future moral leaders who have championed the knowledge and love of God in service of a better world. Today, as a vital part of one of the world's premier academic institutions, we are fortunate to pursue our work from a solid foundation. The greatest strengths of Yale Divinity School are the quality of our faculty and their ability to attract the best and brightest students, post-doctoral fellows, and practitioners in diverse fields. The most direct way to support distinguished faculty is through the funding of endowed chairs, or professorships.

religion globally, we seek to establish an endowed professorship in Latinx Christianity who will not only serve as a magnet for students but help strengthen our program.

Christianity's center of gravity is shifting toward Latin America, and Latinx communities are where U.S. Christianity is often at its vibrant and dynamic best. Indeed, the Latinx community is now the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, and Latinx religious practices and traditions continue to evolve rapidly across the Americas. Latinx Christianity is diverse – rooted in time and place – and should be viewed and studied not as a cohesive whole but as a panoply of religious thought and practices.

While our program in Latinx and Latin American Christianity signals a presence at the leading edge of theological education, we aim to be even stronger. In what is a very competitive field, we plan to establish an endowed chair to attract and retain a major academic figure in Latinx Christianity. We will seek a major scholar of international acclaim who is committed to our mission, to the promotion of Latinx students, and to practical and public theologies.

We are already privileged to count many of the finest scholars in the world among our faculty, and we remain deeply committed to substantial, ongoing investments in their work. Our program in Latinx and Latin American Christianity is currently led by Associate Professor Erika Helgen. Poised to become one of the major historians of Christianity in Latin America, Helgen recently published her first book, on religious conflicts in Brazil, with Yale University Press. She is now at work on *Catholic Crossroads: The Latin American Roots of Global Catholic Reform*. Adrián Emmanuel Hernández-Acosta was appointed Assistant Professor in Religion and Literature in Fall 2023.

We have the structures in place for a professor in Latinx Christianity to join our current faculty and flourish. With two exceptional young faculty, we now need to hire a scholar with worldwide standing. A new endowed professorship will help us lead in this complex field that addresses so many vital areas of Latinx Christianity, including practical theologies, religious identities, pluralism, and migration, to name a few.



Adrián Emmanuel Hernández-Acosta, Assistant Professor in Religion and Literature

To establish new endowed professorships, Yale requires **\$6 million** in funding. We are seeking a gift of \$6 million to create our proposed chair in Latinx Christianity. We hope you will join us in our effort.

To Learn More

For Humanity is Yale's most ambitious fundraising campaign yet, guided by a mission to improve the world for future generations.

For more information about how you can join the *For Humanity* campaign please contact:

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