SPAN 343
CULTURAL REALITIES OF SPAIN

COURSE OBJECTIVES

All educational experience abroad is, for any student, a period of cultural adaptation that is complex and meaningful, and therefore worthy of deeper analysis. Through this course, we aim to help the foreign student by guiding them through critical reflections that help with the adaptation and integration into Spanish culture. It is important to analyze Spanish reality in all its aspects: social, occupational, religious, economic, cultural and leisure activities to better understand changes and clashes that students may experience throughout their stay in Spain.

STRUCTURE

Our priority is to encourage student participation in class through interactive activities and reflection on various issues, and to address and analyze the assigned readings for each topic.

Each class ends with a section entitled **Noticias de Actualidad** (current events) where the student will need to bring a newspaper article and discuss it with their peers. Students will participate in a debate regarding all possible questions, comments and discussion about the topics in question.

This course develops reflective-critical thinking by assigning weekly **journal** entries that address the topic for each week. The journals must be handed in one or two days before class.

Each journal entry will receive a grade. When a subject is split, they will write one journal entry that will span 2-3 pages.

Spanish Studies Abroad also requires that students in this course participate in an intercambio (language exchange). There will be special activities at the Center to meet your exchange partner.

As with all SSA courses, "Cultural Realities" is taught in Spanish, and students must adhere to the Spanish-only policy.

COURSE MATERIALS

The reading packet will be available for purchase at Copisteria COPI-andalusi (Calle Carlos Canal 3 y 5). Newspapers will also be used as working and reference material.

EVALUATION

1. Participation	50%
2. Journal	30%
3. Current Events	20%

Students will also be evaluated on their participation and contribution to the class.

AGENDA

- **Week 1**: Introduction to the course
  - Activity: "Your cultural diversity" + Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI) in the computer room.
- **Week 2**: How to learn to live in a new culture
  - Activities: "Strategies for learning about other cultures" and "Iceberg: The visible and invisible aspects of a culture."
  - Lecture: "Means of Communication"
- **Week 3**: Living with Spaniards: the social interaction of the student with the family or in the student residence.
  - Lecture: "The traditional family is a model only present in half of Andalusian households" (Diaro de Sevilla); "Women in Andalusia stay in the home more than in the rest of Spain" (ABC); "More than half of Spaniards live at home with their parents until they are 34 years" (ABC); "The crisis hits for those at 40-years-old and still in their parents house".
  - Journal activity: Questionnaire about "Family in Spain Today"
- **Week 4**: The different stages of culture shock
  - Lecture: "In-Country Culture Strategies Part II: Adjusting".
  - Activities: "Student comments in regards to their level of adaptation"; "Personal ups and downs during your stay in Spain".
- **Weeks 5 and 6**: Time, Space and Values: daily life and cultural differences
  - Lecture: "The complicated Spanish schedule" and selection of Cultural contents.
  - Journal activity for Weeks 5-6: "The journal- understanding intercultural communication" (in the notebook). Length of entry: 2-3 pages. To hand in week 6.

- Activity: "Three concepts that will change your lifestyle;" and "Culture Face to Face: Houseguest, and Do you want to have dinner?"

- **Week 7**: Only in Spanish: Development and linguistic competency of a second language.
  - Activities: "Strategies for the use of the language" and "I promise to…"
- **Week 8**: Exchanges and Spanish youth: values, concerns and new types of leisure. Lectures: "The shorter childhood, the longer adolescence" (El Pais);
  "The youth get increasingly drunk every time" (ABC)
  "Drinking happens Thursday nights in the historical center" (Diario de Sevilla), "The language of youth".
- **Week 9 and 10**: Academic and professional experiences outside of SSA Education Abroad: the University of Seville, internships and volunteer opportunities.
  - Journal activity: Length of the entry: 2-3 pages. To hand in week 10.
  - Lectures: Chart: "New Spanish Education System"; "The future belongs to designers, cooks and technicians"; "Universities: What to consider when choosing a university"; "What is the Bologna Process and what affect does it have on students?"; "The Bologna Process."
- **Week 11**: Are we more intercultural beings? Strategies to understand and accept the cultural differences.
  - Lecture: "Interculturality"
  - Journal activity: "The report format D-I-E" (Describe, Interpret, Evaluate). The students must describe some aspect of Spanish culture that is still causing discomfort, conflict or difficulty. The D-I-E process is used to analyze and understand the culture.
  - Activity: "Study of values by country"
- **Week 12**: Cultural integration and Re-entry Culture Shock
  - Journal Activity: "The top ten challenges for students to overcome when returning to the United States.
- **Week 13**: Course closure.
  - Activities: Rereading of the "Goals essay"; course evaluations; 2nd GPI (In the computer room).