SPAN319E Spanish Culture and History through Film

Professor: Alberto Egea Fernández-Montesinos
Office: Building 2, 4th floor, office 23
Email: albertoegea@upo.es
Office Hours: Tues12:00-14:00

Course information:
Spring 2020
Tuesday
9:00-11:50

Course Description
The course presents a general introduction to the main aspects of Spanish Culture and History through the cinematographic representations of various films and texts. The class covers the most important social, political, and economic aspects of Spanish life from the beginning of the twentieth century until today, with special emphasis on current affairs. Analysis of audiovisial material and textual sources will help to illustrate the connections and discontinuities of various periods of recent Spanish reality, among them: the Civil War, the Franco dictatorship, the new Democratic period, and the current postmodern Spain.

Classes will be structured considering the central topics which have marked the history of the nation: the conflict between urban and rural environments, the role of women in society, youth problems, education, film as ideological propaganda, traditional religiosity vs. sexual liberation, and cultural and national diversity. We will study the way in which these feature films offer multiple visions of Spanish identity, and how they build alternative models to the ones constructed by Hollywood. Besides exploring topics and contents, the class will also cover general aspects of film aesthetics and narrative devices used by the film makers such as camera angles, use of sound track and lighting, framing and filmic discourse.

We will study both renowned directors such as Pedro Almodóvar and Fernando Trueba, as well as the most recent Spanish creators Montxo Armendáriz, Chus Gutiérrez, and Benito Zambrano. Some of the questions to explore during the semester will be the following: what events, names, and social issues have shaped Contemporary Spain? Which national identity issues are constructed in Spanish films? What are the main problems of Spaniards as presented in these films? What similarities and differences exist between Spanish and American societies?

Course Goals and Methodology
The goals of this course are:

- To explore the main historical and cultural issues of contemporary Spain.
- To understand how filmic discourse represents and, at the same time, undermines culture and reality.
- To familiarize students with the main film directors, movie techniques, and aesthetic concerns of recent decades in Spain.
- To relate current social and national problems in Spain to its historical roots in recent History.
A variety of methodologies will be used, including lecture/presentation, discussions, debates, student presentations, and cooperative group work. The course includes both texts and films to be analyzed by students. Students are expected to read and reflect on the reading/audio+visual material and also to complete the handouts for each specific text and film before the class period. Films will be screened during class and require active work with questions and references to be completed before, during and after the screening.

Students will be given reading and filmic material to study during the semester and will be required to complete hours of preparatory work on which they may be tested in order to understand their level of knowledge and understanding in key areas. Course participants will be required to complete pre- and post-course tests, a class oral presentation, ICT activities by mobile phone, tablet or computer, exams and a final project.

Learning Objectives
Through this course, students will:

- Be able to explain the main Historical events of Contemporary Spain
- Define basic concepts from the field of cultural theory.
- Outline the main Spanish cultural events from the 20th century to the present.
- Recognize significant social developments in Spanish contemporary period.
- Identify and critically explore the cultural foundations of the Spanish nation.
- Describe and classify basic concepts related to film aesthetics/form.
- Evaluate film under a critical perspective encompassing the political/ideological.
- Enhance inter-cultural awareness towards similarities and differences between Spanish and U.S. history and culture.

Required Texts
There will be a COURSE PACK with the compulsory reading assignments available at the copy center in the Celestino Mutis Building (Building #17) on campus. Students should buy the one for this course and professor (Span 319E Professor Alberto Egea). Supplementary materials may be provided during the course. Power point presentations, extra readings, study guides for every reading and film handouts for the screenings will be available on Blackboard (virtual platform).

Films
Films will be screened in class and are available at the Centro Universitario Internacional library. Students may also obtain copies of the movies from the professor by bringing a laptop to class.

2. **La lengua de las mariposas**, José Luis Cuerda. 1999. (96’).
3. **La niña de tus ojos**, Fernando Trueba. 1998. (121’).
5. **El calentito**, Chus Gutierrez. 2005. (90’).

**Content Warnings**

The films of the course may contain explicit content that some viewers may find disturbing, scenes of a sexual nature, adult language, violence, etc.

**Additional texts**

- **On History and Culture:**

- **On Film:**
• **Grammar books and dictionaries**

• **Diccionarios en línea:**
  - [http://www.vox.es/consultar.html](http://www.vox.es/consultar.html)
  - [http://www.diccionarios.com](http://www.diccionarios.com)
  - [http://www.wordreference.com/](http://www.wordreference.com/)

• **Webs**
  - [http://www.mecd.gob.es/cultura-mecd/areas-cultura/cine.html](http://www.mecd.gob.es/cultura-mecd/areas-cultura/cine.html) - Official website of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, Education and Sports, including a link to a comprehensive Spanish film database.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

Students’ progress will be checked by class participation, in-class quizzes, a response essay, and a final exam. The final grade is broken down as follows: Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Presentation (10%)
- Cell Phone Game (10%)
- Essay (10%)
- Participation (20%)
- Exams [Midterm+Final] (50%)

Essential factors in order to qualify for an A/A+ grade in this course are:

- To comply with reading assignments on a weekly basis.
- To develop analytical and critical skills and present them in class discussions and activities.
- To participate in class voluntarily and to contribute to discussions with informed reactions.
- To show excellent writing and interpretative skills when submitting papers and/or exams.

**Participation**

Students will come prepared to class, reading the daily assignment from the course pack, and completing the screening of the films when necessary. Lively discussions will be encouraged at all times. Classes will be structured around class discussion (focusing on the readings and the films presented) moderated by the professor. Class participation will therefore be graded in accordance to both the students’ previous readings and reflection about the assigned texts and films, and also their contribution to
class discussion daily with relevant comments. (N.B.: ‘being there’ does not = ‘participation’).

Active participation includes, but it is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Asking and answering questions in class;
2. Volunteering to answer questions and to engage in discussions;
3. Questioning information presented and discussed;
4. Engaging in class discussions and dialogues with class mates;
5. Participating in peer critiques with your class groups; and
6. Grappling with course content on a personal-level.

Rubric for Assessing Participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of participation in class</th>
<th>Exemplary (90%-100%)</th>
<th>Proficient (80%-90%)</th>
<th>Developing (70%-80%)</th>
<th>Unacceptable (&gt;70%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students initiates contributions more than once in each recitation.</td>
<td>Student initiates contribution once in each recitation.</td>
<td>Student initiates contribution at least in half of the recitations</td>
<td>Student does not initiate contribution &amp; needs instructor to solicit input.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments always insightful &amp; constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions &amp; specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.</td>
<td>Comments mostly insightful &amp; constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.</td>
<td>Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.</td>
<td>Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion &amp; personal taste, e.g., “I love it”, “I hate it”, “It’s bad” etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others’ remarks, i.e., student hears what others say &amp; contributes to the dialogue.</td>
<td>Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect &amp; build on others’ remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.</td>
<td>Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.</td>
<td>Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.</td>
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Cell Phone Game

Students will be able to review the content of each section with a mobile phone quiz conducted on each section. We will review the main points of the previous week during the first minutes of each section. The program we will use is Kahoot, a game-based learning platform which requires the use of a cell phone, a tablet or laptop computer. Students will have to log in to the site https://kahoot.it/#/ and introduce the code

1 Source: Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence. Carnegie Mellon University
provided by the professor. Questions will be presented on the main screen of the classroom and students will have to answer them on their personal devices. This will serve a double objective: to refresh the main contents covered in the previous section and to provide a quiz grade for each student. Students will need to verify their wifi connectivity with Olavide Computer Center (CIC) in building 9 [https://www.upo.es/cic/servicios/catalogo-servicios/conexion-redes-inalambricas/].

**Oral presentation**

Students will work in pairs to comply with this assignment. Each pair of students will be asked to present on a topic of their choice (see possible topics below) for a specific class period (*see schedule down below*). Presentations will be scheduled from session 2 onwards, at a pace of one or two presentations (2 to 4 students) per session. In session 1, the students and the professor will discuss and agree on the calendar of presentations for the whole semester.

To arrange the presentation, students should bring a well rehearsed presentation and a couple of questions (either about the content or a reflection about the topic) for the students in the class. Every group is expected to produce a clear, concise and illustrative power point/Prezi presentation. The presentation should contain key words (no whole sentences) since reading from the screen is not permitted (only flash cards are allowed, no full sheets of paper). Students can include extra material (images, Youtube videos, website links...), and also games and activities to make their presentations more attractive. Time limit for each presentation is 15 minutes (around 7 minutes for each student). Make sure not to exceed your allotted time. Topics are open but could include:

- Women rights in Spain
- The Outraged Movement
- Gay rights
- Minorities in Spain
- ‘Botellona’ and drug use
- Art and artists in contemporary Spain
- Life under Franco
- Feminine Section / Censorship during Franco
- Propaganda and ‘Españolada’ during the Dictatorship
- García Lorca and other contemporary authors
- Memoria Histórica
- Andalusian Culture: Flamenco, Bullfighting…
- Analysis of a movie sequence
- Spain Today: chose a topic on Economy, Culture or Society
- Catalonia´s aim for independence
- Free Health Care in Spain vs. US system
- US-Spain Relations
- The Spanish-American War
Students should consult the documents which will help them in the activity located in the Presentation section on Blackboard: “Advice on Giving a Good PowerPoint Presentation” and “Making PowerPoint Slides”.

The professor will be available to solve any doubts on the presentations during office hours. The presentation will be graded on these sections:

(a) Content (25%): Subject knowledge, materials used, resources, terminology, images, creativity, and interaction.
(b) Organization (25%): Structure, transitions, introduction and index, visual aspects, conclusion.
(c) Performance (25%): Timing, tone, eye contact, rhythm, vocal variety, movement, gestures, elaboration, enthusiasm, mechanics).
(d) Power Point document (25%): Clarity, use of images, use of key points instead of complete sentences, lack of typos, size font used, emailing the document to the professor.

A copy of the power point will have to be sent to the professor the same day of the presentation. Failure to do so will lower the grade in 10/100 points.

Essay
For your class essay, you will be able to choose from the following list. The films are available at CUI (Centro Universitario Internacional Library in building 25) in DVD format and students can use the computers at UPO´s library to watch them (ask at circulation desk about computers and laptops for the screening and for reservations check: https://www.upo.es/biblioteca/servicios/inst EQUIP/reservas_pc/). As a second form of screening, students can copy the film in class by bringing their laptops or hard drives to class. Students using this second option should use VCL player (www.videolan.org/vlc/ or www.softonic.com/s/vlc-player) to choose English subtitles (while watching the film, chose the “Subtitles” menu then select the subtitles file). If this option does not work, students can always get the films from CUI´s Library.

Information about each film will be provided in class, but students may also find additional plot information at http://www.imdb.com and http://www.filmaffinity.com.

Students may choose any film but these are a few suggestions:

• La isla mínima. Alberto Rodríguez. 2014. (104´).
• Las 13 rosas. Emilio Martínez Lázaro. 2007. (100´).
• Libertarias. Vicente Aranda. 1996. (125´).
• Ocho apellidos catalanes. Emilio Martínez-Lázaro. 2015. (102´).

The assignment asks you to provide an informed reaction toward a Spanish film from the list above so that you better apprehend and reflect on the representation of the culture where you are now immersed. Films screened in class are NOT eligible for the essay. You should consult with your professor about your film choice before you start writing. Films are available in the university library or through your professor. Our class readings and film screenings so far have helped you to explore issues of Spanish culture and history—in particular, the ways in which film directors have portrayed Spaniards, their social and political circumstances as well as their preoccupations and desires along the 20th and 21st century. Your essay should be around 5 double-spaced pages.

To conduct your response to the film of your own choosing, please address at least the following issues:

1. Introduction and thesis statement:

Please write an enticing introductory paragraph (around 10 lines) in which you identify the title of the film you have watched and provide a discernible thesis statement. (Please see the document “Thesis statement” from the University of North Carolina on Blackboard on how to write a plausible introduction and thesis statement.)

2. Characters, Plot, Setting:

Provide a summary of the film (around 10 lines) in which you address the following questions:

2.1. What is the story about?

2.2. Where does it take place in Spain?

2.3. Who are the characters around whom the story revolves? What are they like?

3. Main theme:

Identify the main theme of the film and any other sub-themes if present—e.g., rural vs. urban life, euthanasia, resistance during the Spanish Civil War, etc.,—and describe briefly how the director establishes this main theme (around 12 lines). Also, contextualize the film in its historical period: when does it happen? What major political
and social events happened during that time in Spain? What cultural references of that period come up in the film? (around 15 lines).

4. Critics’ reaction:

Research how cinema critics (in Spain or elsewhere) reacted to the film. Did the film earn the critics’ approval unanimously? If critics offered differing views of the film, what was the principal point of contention? Incorporate one relevant quote from one of your sources (around 12 lines).

5. Your reaction / analysis:

Offer an account of your own reaction in more than one paragraph (25 lines or more). Analyse the cultural and historical aspects presented in class. Remember to point out an example of cinematographic techniques used by the director to convey some particular message. Please consider the following questions to guide you through your response.

5. 1. What do you feel about the main theme of the film?

5. 2. Do you agree or disagree with how the film presented such theme? Why? Why not?

5. 3. Did the film illuminate any areas of Spanish culture and history in general that you did not know so far, i.e., what have you learnt after watching the film?

5. 4. Cite some significant use of cinematographic techniques (types of shots, angles, colour, movement, use of soundtrack, etc.).

5. 5. Would you recommend this film? Why? Why not?

Minimum requirements:

Remember that not fulfilling one of these minimum requirements will lower your grade in this assignment:

- Length: around 5 double-spaced, typed pages (11-point Calibri font—default font in Word). It’s ok if the length is a little bit more.
- Format: place the following information on the left margin of the first page:
  
  - Your name
  - Your professor’s name
  - Course Title
  - Date

On subsequent pages, please use a heading including your last name and page number on the right-hand side of the page, for instance: Smith 2.

Handwritten and emailed essays will not be accepted. Late turn-ins will lower each essay grade by ½ a point per day.
**DUE DATE:** Please, check the CALENDAR below for the deadline. Assignment grade will be reduced by 2 percentage points (e.g., from a 10% to a 8%) if the assignment is not received by the specified time, and by an additional 2% points for each additional day late.

**Exam**

Exams are aimed at evaluating both the students’ specific knowledge of the topics covered in class and their ability to analyze and provide insightful reflections on the material presented in the readings. Questions will cover the contents of the related section/s of the syllabus (*the final will NOT be cumulative) and focus on establishing thematic links between units. Both exams will have 4 sections:

1. **Short questions** about the historical and cultural aspects covered in the syllabus. These questions will be the same ones, or very similar, to the questions covered in class for the assigned readings and activities. [Up to 40%].
2. **Multiple choice question** as reviewed in the Cell Phone Game Kahoot. [Up to 12%].
3. **Vocabulary words** studied in class. [Up to 12%].
4. **Essay based on film clip/s** screened during the exam (and belonging to one of the movies previously screened in class) in its relationship with the theoretical texts of that section. [Up to 40%].

Sample exams can be found in the course Web-based platform. In addition, there is a power point explaining the structure and contents of the exam. The final exam’s date will be announced in class. Exam dates will not be changed under any circumstances.

Exams and every other assignment will be marked following the Spanish numerical range. Here is a table to illustrate differences in conversion between the Spanish, U.S. and Standard European grading systems:

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**General Course Policies**

**Leaving the classroom:** Leaving the classroom on repeated occasions is disturbing to both your professor and your classmates and may adversely affect your participation grade. Please make use of the 10 minute breaks in between classes to fill up your water bottle, use the restroom, etc.
Punctuality and tardiness: Arriving late to class is disruptive to both the professor and your classmates. Please be punctual as your professor may count your late arrival as half of an absence or simply close the door, not let any late students in and consider it as one full absence.

Communicating with instructor: Please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails. The weekend is not included in this timeframe. If you have an urgent request or question for your professor, be sure to send it during the week.

- Please keep your cell phone turned off during class and do keep it inside your bag (not on your desk), except during our ICT class activities.
- Laptops for note-taking only and ICT class activities.
- Students who wish to copy the films should bring their own laptop to class.

*Non-compliance with any of the above may result in a student to be removed for the remainder of the class period.

Missed or late work: No late work will be accepted and no make-up assignments will be provided, with the exception of an extra credit assignment near the end of the semester. This would potentially increase a student’s final grade by a maximum of 5%. In the occasion of a missed class, students are responsible for asking classmates for notes or information on any likely activities to be developed later in class.

Attendance and Absentee Policy

Attendance is mandatory at all classes. As we understand that you might fall ill or be unable to come to class (e.g. due to a religious holiday, a flight delay, a family wedding/reunion, a graduation, a job interview, etc.) at some point during the semester, you are allowed up to 4 absences. You will be responsible for the material covered and any work missed. You will not need to justify your absences (up to 4) in any way unless you miss an exam, a presentation, a quiz, etc. In this case, you must present a doctor’s note (signed, stamped and dated) to be able to reschedule the exam, etc. It will still count as an absence but you will be allowed to retake the exam, etc. We don’t encourage you to use all 4 days unless you really need them as your participation grade may suffer if you are not in class. If used unwisely and you get sick late in the semester, the following penalties will apply:

- On your 5th absence, 1 point will be taken off of your final Spanish grade
- On your 6th absence, 3 points will be taken off of your final Spanish grade
- On your 7th absence, 5 points will be taken off of your final Spanish grade

For classes that meet once a week, each absence counts as two. For classes that meet daily, the penalties outlined above apply if you go over 6 absences (7th absence=5th absence above). Exams missed due to an excused absence must be made up within a week of returning to classes. Talk to your professor immediately after your return.
Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Pablo de Olavide University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism (which includes copying from the Internet) are clear violations of academic honesty. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person’s intellectual property as his or her own. The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is a failing grade for the assignment/exam and a failing grade for the course. Avoid plagiarism by citing sources properly, using footnotes and a bibliography, and not cutting and pasting information from various websites when writing assignments.

Learning accommodations

If you require special accommodations, you must stop by the International Center to speak to Carmen G. Hernández (the Faculty coordinator: cgheroje@acu.upo.es) to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it. The deadline is February 21st. Carmen will explain the options available to you.

Behavior Policy

Students are expected to show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner at all times. A student’s attitude in class may influence his/her participation grade. The professor has a right to ask a student to leave the classroom if the student is unruly or appears intoxicated. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, that day will count as an absence regardless of how long the student has been in class. Cell phone use is not allowed and animals (except seeing-eye dogs) are not permitted in the classrooms.

Course contents

- Introduction: Constructing History and Representing Culture in FILM
  1. Introduction to Spanish History. Republic and Civil War
  2. The Franco Regime
  3. Introduction to Cinematography and Cultural Differences
  4. Censorship and Propaganda during Franco
  5. Religion and Popular Faith
  6. School, Gender Issues and Sexual Diversity
  7. The Democratic Period
  8. Spain’s cultural icons: Flamenco & Gastronomy
  9. 1990s to 2007: from Boom to Recession
  10. Spain Today: 2008-2018
  11. National Diversity and Catalonia
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 4th</td>
<td><strong>Introduction: Constructing History and Representing Culture in FILM</strong></td>
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<td>Course Presentation: Objectives, Contexts, Contents, and Methodology</td>
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<td>Spanish Film and Spanish Society: from Modernity to the 21st Century</td>
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<td>🎥 Screening: Belle Époque [1st part]</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Spanish History</strong></td>
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<td>Republic and Civil War</td>
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<td>“Introduction” and Sections [1-4, 23-41] from William Chislett. SPAIN: What Everyone Needs to Know</td>
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<td>Advice on Giving a Good PowerPoint Presentation</td>
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<td>🎥 Screening: Belle Époque [2nd part]</td>
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<td>Discussion: Belle Époque</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td><strong>The Franco Regime</strong></td>
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<td>The Franco Regime [42-59] from William Chislett</td>
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<td>Kahoot review</td>
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<td>🎥 Screening: La lengua de las mariposas</td>
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>25th</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Cinematography and Cultural Differences</strong></td>
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<td>“Dimensions of Culture” by Geert Hofstede, “Time Orientations” by Edward T. Hall's, “Communication in Spain” and “Spanish Society &amp; Culture”.</td>
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<td>Introduction to Cinematography:</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQnKGXHbgMA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQnKGXHbgMA</a></td>
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<td>Film Criticism: Basic Film Terms</td>
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<td>Kahoot review</td>
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<td>3rd March</td>
<td><strong>Censorship and Propaganda during Franco</strong></td>
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<td>- Students presentation</td>
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<td>10th March</td>
<td><strong>Midterm exam</strong> [first half of the class]</td>
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<td>- Screening: <em>La niña de tus ojos</em></td>
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<td>17th May</td>
<td><strong>Religion and Popular Faith</strong></td>
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<td>- Discussion: <em>La niña de tus ojos</em></td>
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<td>- Screening: <em>La mala educación</em></td>
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<td>24th May</td>
<td><strong>School, Gender Issues and Sexual Diversity</strong></td>
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<td>- Discussion: <em>La mala educación</em></td>
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**Notes:**
- *La lengua de las mariposas* [2nd part]
- *La niña de tus ojos*
- *La mala educación*
## The Democratic Period

| 31\textsuperscript{st} | The Transition to Democracy and The Socialist Era [74-76, 90-103, 116-123] from William Chislett. \textit{SPAIN: What Everyone Needs to Know}  
Kahoot review  
Screening: \textit{El Calentito}  
Students presentation |

## Spain’s cultural icons: Flamenco & Gastronomy

| April 14\textsuperscript{th} | “Spain and the Mediterranean Diet”  
“Spanish food: Food for thought, eating with your intellect.” “Eating in Spain: Sustenance for the Soul.” “Spain, Land of 10 P.M. Dinners, Asks if It’s Time to Reset Clock.”  
Flamenco: cooperative activity  
Kahoot review  
Screening: \textit{El Calentito}  
Discussion: \textit{El Calentito}  
Students presentation |

## 1990s to 2007: from Boom to Recession

| 21\textsuperscript{st} | Sections [135-137, 140-147, 151-155, 157-159] from William Chislett. \textit{SPAIN: What Everyone Needs to Know}  
Screening: \textit{8 apellidos vascos}  
Students presentation |

## Spain Today: 2008-2018

| May | Sections [163-186] from William Chislett. \textit{SPAIN: What Everyone Needs to Know} |

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*Jigsaw Map of Spain*  
*Hexagon Flamenco*  
*Card Game: Mind Map*
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Kahoot review</td>
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<td>Screening: 8 apellidos vascos</td>
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<td>Current news: National Diversity and Catalonia</td>
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<td>18th-23rd</td>
<td>Final exam TBA</td>
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*This syllabus is subject to change.

**Holidays**

- Thursday, February 27: “Puente.” No classes will be held.
- Friday, February 28: Día de Andalucía.
- Monday, March 2: “Puente.” No classes will be held.
- Sunday, April 5 - Sunday, April 12: Semana Santa (Holy Week).
- Friday, May 1: Labor Day.
- Saturday, April 26 - Sunday, May 2: Feria de Abril (Seville's April Fair).