

SPAN317E (Sections A & B) Culture and Society in Spain

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Course Information:
Spring 2024
Section A: M & W: 12:00-1:20p
Section B: M & W: 1:30-2:50p

Course Description

Which social, political, cultural and both national and international phenomena define Spain in the 3rd decade of the 21st century? To answer this question, this course aims to present Spanish social and cultural heterogeneity, analyzing the main aspects that vertebrate present-day Spain (for example, its religious/religiosity background, the variety of festivities, the new family types, migratory movements in search of the European dream, the educational and health systems, gender issues, new political trends or the change of the energy model in the face of climatic disruption). Thus, this course will also have a closer look at the realities of the different autonomous communities with all their peculiarities and specificities.

Course Goals and Methodology

The main goal of this course is to increase the students' knowledge and appreciation of Spanish culture and its people. Accordingly, Spain's richness and diversity will be explored through the critical analysis of the most relevant socio-cultural phenomena which constitute its present identity. Through said comprehensive overview of defining themes and topics, students should be able to make the most of their immersion experience. The methodology of the course will be based on an eclectic and complementary academic and experiential approach to culture teaching by virtue of which theory and practice feed one another.

Open discussions of present-day topics (politics, race, gender issues, cultural differences, etc.) is widely encouraged in this type of class.

Learning Objectives

Through this course, students will:

- Understand the latent and patent ideological substrates governing Spanish culture.
- Analyze socialization practices, customs and rituals as they are experiencing them themselves.
- Describe and evaluate candidly and critically the degree of depth, width and breadth of their immersion experience.
- Demonstrate that culture differences can always be handled successfully.

Required Texts

All the required material will be available on the course online platform; new materials can be added every week (newspaper articles, etc.) ('Aula Virtual', BlackboardLearn platform or 'BBL').

Additional bibliographical, audiovisual and online sources:

Brenan, Gerald. *The Spanish Labyrinth*. (new ed. of 2nd revised edition). CUP, 1990.
 Chislett, William. *Spain. What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: OUP, 2013.
 Gies, David (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Spanish Culture*. CUP, 1999.
 Hooper, John. *The New Spaniards*. (2nd edition). Penguin Book, 2006.
 Kamen, Henry. *Imagining Spain: Historical Myth and National Identity*. YUP, 2008.
 Richardson, Bill. *Spanish Studies: An Introduction*. London: Arnold, 2001.
 Stanton, Edward. *Handbook of Spanish Popular Culture*. London/Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999.

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Arteseros, Alfonso. *España en la Memoria: Intereconomía TV*, 2009.
 García de Cortázar, Fernando (coord.) *Memoria de España: RTVE*, 2004.
 Payne, Stanley. *España: Una Historia Única*. Temas de Hoy, 2008.
 Prego, Victoria. *Historia Audiovisual de la Transición: Tiempo*, 2003.

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www.cervantes.es - Instituto Cervantes
www.mecd.gob.es - Spain's Department of Education and Culture
www.rtve.es - Spanish National Public Broadcaster
<http://www.accioncultural.es> - Acción Cultural Española

Course Requirements and Grading

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Participation (18%): The whole course is structured around class discussion based on reading assignments, teacher instruction and in-class debates. Class participation will be graded in accordance to the frequency, quality and relevance of the students' contributions to discussion (see rubric below). Similarly, it should be noted that keeping with the General Course Policies and Behavior Policies listed below will also condition the students' participation grade.
IMPORTANT: Use of laptops/tablets during class time: students have to understand that sometimes during class looking at your laptop is NOT necessary; thus, paying attention to teacher/presentations/videos/other students' comments IS the necessary thing to do. Sitting in back row with laptop open constantly can influence the professor negatively. You are in class to pay attention, participate and learn, not to do other things related to your personal life.
- Handwritten homework/Discussion board participation (5%): The students need to hand in short handwritten homework or participate in our discussion board answering and commenting questions or pieces of news about topics suggested by the professor (every 2-3 weeks). Any of this has a deadline to hand in.
- Mid-term Exam (22%): This test is aimed at evaluating the students' knowledge of the different topics covered until then with a focus on detail. It will hinge around the information from the readings and the material presented and discussed in class and will feature true/false questions, definitions, multiple choice activities, short questions and a longer essay question at the end.

- **Mid-term Project (10%):** The students will have to write/present a short research project whose topic they will have to choose from a list that the professor will provide beforehand; this project needs to include some interviews with locals and/or visiting some organizations/clubs/stores/ NGOs, etc. in Sevilla. Its grade will depend on parameters such as thematic pertinence and coherence, appropriateness of language use, quality of the cross-cultural reflections included and reliability of the sources explored. Handwritten and emailed projects will not be accepted.
- **Group Presentations (15%):** Towards the end of the term, students will be expected to deliver interactive group presentations about one of the topics proposed by the instructor related to cultural traditions/festivities or an aspect of current affairs. Each group will be formed by a maximum of 5 members, each of whom will have to present an aspect of the topic selected (a few minutes per member of the group). Previously, the groups will be required to hand in a neat outline of the overall presentation to the instructor and their classmates. The overall grade will be based on each student's presentation along with the overall quality of the group performance.
- **Final Exam (30%):** This test will measure the students' ability to critically react to the material covered in class, with a focus on establishing thematic links among topics. The structure of this final test will be similar to the Mid-Term Exam; guidelines will be announced beforehand.

Rubric for Assessing Participation¹:

	Exemplary (90%- 100%)	Proficient (80%-90%)	Developing (70%-80%)	Unacceptable (>70%)
Frequency of participation in class	Student initiates contributions more than once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution at least in half of the recitations	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input.
Quality of comments	Comments always insightful & constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments mostly insightful & constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion & personal taste, e.g., "I love it", "I hate it", "It's bad" etc.

¹ Source: Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence. Carnegie Mellon University

Listening Skills	Student listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks, i.e., student hears what others say & contributes to the dialogue.	Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.	Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.	Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc.
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¹ Source: Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence. Carnegie Mellon University

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.*

Attendance and Punctuality

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, you will fail the course

COVID-19

If an absence is related to COVID-19 the procedure to follow will be in accordance to the current legislation in the region of Andalucía, Spain.

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, or have any other medical condition you deem may affect your class performance, you must stop by the International Center to speak to Coordinator to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it. The deadline is February 22nd. **Marta Carrillo** 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

Unit 1: Introduction: Understanding Spain.

Unit 2: Dictatorship, transition to Democracy, monarchy, political parties, social agents. Cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity: autonomous communities. Health and education.

Unit 3: Spanish Society and its evolution into the 21st century: demography and the economy. The 'empty Spain'. Immigration and current challenges.

Unit 4: Social changes: family types, civil unions, homosexual marriage.

Unit 5: Faith and Religion: popular religiosity, main confessions. Catholicism in Spain: beliefs and popular rites.

Unit 6: Festivities and cultural diversity. Fall, winter, spring and summer celebrations: Christmas, Carnival, 'Fallas', May Crosses, Pilgrimages, Easter, 'San Juan', Moors and Christians.

Unit 7: Bullfighting: its components and rituals. Meaning and controversies. The running of the bulls: 'San Fermín' in Pamplona and similar celebrations.

Unit 8: Flamenco: origins, features and evolution. Main singers, guitarists and dancers.

Unit 9: Eating and drinking habits in Spain: cultural diversity once again. Socializing in Spain. 'Tapas', wine, beer and their social component. Sports: practice, 'soccer' addiction and important achievements.

Unit 10: Spain, Europe and its main challenges for the 21st century. Stereotyping and Cultural Shock. Final conclusions.

CLASS SCHEDULE (date is first day of academic week)

Jan. 24th (one class): Unit 1: Introduction to the course. Understanding Spain, understanding other cultures. Your level of knowledge about Spain/stereotyping.

Jan. 29th: Unit 2 (I): Some background about the road to democracy in Spain. Geographical and cultural diversity in Spain.

Feb. 5th: Unit 2 (II): Some important historical background. Unit 3: The evolution of Spanish society (I).

Feb. 12th: Unit 3: The evolution of Spanish society (II). Start preparation for the Mid-term assignment/project.

Feb. 19th: Unit 4: Spain, a country with profound social changes in short periods of time.

Feb. 26th (one class): Unit 5 (I): Faith and religiosity in Spain. A quick look at its historical past.

March 4th: Unit 5 (II): Peculiarities of Spanish Catholicism; rites, festivals and festivities.

March 11th: Review for Mid-term exam. **MID-TERM exam for Sections A and B: Wednesday, March 13th.**

March 18th: Unit 6: Main festivities and its cultural background and significance. Secular and Religious: *Semana Santa* and *Feria de Abril* in Sevilla and their importance for 'sevillan@s'. *Las Fallas* in Valencia.

MID-TERM projects DUE (through the BlackboardLearn platform, sections A & B): Wed., March 20th before midnight).

April 1st: Unit 7: Bullfighting; origins and significance. Other questionable traditions involving animals.

April 8th: Unit 8: Flamenco, its origins, evolution and present-day varieties. Dancing *Sevillanas*. **Group Presentations (I).**

April 22nd: Unit 9: Eating, drinking and sports and their cultural importance. Socializing in Spain; politeness issues. **Group Presentations (II).**

April 29th (one class): Unit 10 (I): Important current issues in Spanish socio-political context. Comparisons with your own country/culture. **Group Presentations (III, if necessary).**

May 6th (3 classes): Unit 10 (II): Future challenges (aging society, migration, climate disruption, the youth, etc.) and **final conclusions** on stereotyping and cultural empathy. Review for final exam.

FINAL EXAM

Final exam schedule is **May 13th-16th**. The exact date will be published as soon as possible in February.

This program is subject to some minor changes.