



Instituto Universitario  
de Investigación en  
Estudios Norteamericanos  
"Benjamin Franklin"

# INTRODUCTION TO SPAIN

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover various topics related to the exciting social, political, economic, historical and cultural challenges and developments in Spain. The course will serve as a well-rounded and intriguing introduction to Spain culture. In the last few decades Spanish society has undergone significant social and cultural changes to be considered in this course through looking at different texts and media, including film, music, dance, literature, art, monuments, museums and the like. As a result, narratives of ethnic and racial identities, narratives of immigration and postmodernism among others will also be studied.

This course will allow students to gain a critical awareness of narratives of cultural and political identities and issues affecting contemporary Spain. We will analyse and historically contextualize a variety of cultural media that deal with how identities are shaped and contested in contemporary Spain. The various topics analysed in this course will ultimately allow students to deepen their understanding of the issues that affect modern Spanish society.

**NOTE:** This course includes different cultural topics (such as bullfighting or nudity) that may hurt the student's sensibilities.

## OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the course, students will have acquired the following competences:

<b>Competence 1.</b>	Ability to analyse and interpret texts and cultural practices through the acquisition of a broad knowledge of significant cultural texts (film, literature, music, dance, photography, cities and museums) produced in contemporary Spain, addressing the aesthetic and thematic concerns of these cultural texts.
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<b>Competence 2.</b>	Development of linguistic ability in Spanish. The course expands our understanding of important issues related to the nation, race or gender, among others, which affect post-Franco Spanish society.
<b>Competence 3.</b>	Ability to express our individual and collective opinions.
<b>Competence 4.</b>	Develop an understanding of Spanish culture and an awareness and sensitivity to foreign cultures.
<b>Competence 5.</b>	Adopt a critical approach to the selection and organization of the material in order to present written and oral arguments in a coherent, structured manner and to contribute to group discussions in Spanish through intellectual stimulation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The theoretical-practical lessons will be mainly based on the information in the class manual and completed with autonomous study on behalf of the students. Moreover, there will be power point presentations and audiovisual material. During the course, there will be a brief research assignment on a book chosen by the instructor.

Finally, there will be 2 exams during the course, a mid-course exam and a final exam, in order to assess if the students have achieved the required competences at the end of the course. The aim is to work on theoretical content and to achieve the development of the previously mentioned skills.

## **PREPARATION**

Students must come to each class fully prepared having read the relevant texts and completed the assigned exercises. Students' work at home is essential as it will allow each student to actively participate and develop a deeper understanding of the content. In most cases this individual preparation will consist of reading the assigned readings contained in the class manual and completing the comprehension and discussion questions.

## **EVALUATION**

This course will be evaluated through a variety of different types of assignments in order to further the development of the target competencies and the students' individual abilities. Consequently, the global evaluation will be based on student in-class participation as well as the completion of the different individual and group assignments such as analytic critiques, research papers, oral presentations, and supplementary extracurricular activities. The following table shows the percentage adjudicated to each assignment:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Participation (homework and attendance)	25%
Research project/Cultural Presentations	40%
Complementary activities	10%
Final exam	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**I Participation:** Active in-class participation is essential to this course. The student must not simply raise his/her questions in class but must individually and spontaneously provide comments and opinions in class discussions. Each student will prepare the readings before class in order to be able to contribute to the class debate. The professor will grade these in-class activities and may suggest research projects based on the themes and ideas raised in class. The percentage of this activity is **25%** of the total mark.

**II Research Project:** Students will complete a research project and give an oral presentation about a film a text or any other source. The objective of this assignment is to analyze another work applying the historical analysis undertaken and developed in class to complement the themes studied. It will permit students to investigate in depth a topic or theme of interest to them. The total percentage of this activity is **40%**.

### **III A. Suggested Complementary Activities.**

There will be complementary, extracurricular activities during the semester. Possibly:

- Visits to Toledo,
- Segovia etc.

These visits will occur outside of class

### **III B. Extra Credit**

Should students have the opportunity to visit other cities or towns on their own time, they will have the opportunity to earn extra credit. Students can write an open reflection to describe their experiences and what they've learned about Spanish culture, customs and people, connecting it to what we've learned in class. *What did you learn about the local place that relates to what you learned in class? What are the similarities/differences to your own town/culture? Does it differ from other places in Spain?* The report should not exceed 5 pages in length.

Students can earn as much as **one percentage point** towards final grade. Students can do **up to three extra credit reports**. The extra-credit complementary activities reports are separate from the REQUIRED complementary extracurricular activities stated previously.

**IV Final Exam:** The final exam will be conducted at the end of the course.

**PLAGIARISM:** If the professor detects any copying or plagiarism on the exams, analytic critiques, and/or research paper and oral presentation the student will receive a total grade of zero (0) and will not be allowed to complete any type of make-up or extra credit work.

**ATTENDANCE**

Class attendance is MANDATORY. If the student is absent for more than the allowed limit (**one class absence in the summer programs and two absences in the fall and spring programs**), the final grade will reflect a decrease of **10 points** for each non-attendance that has not been excused by a doctor's certificate or by your Program Director. It is the individual responsibility of the student to make up any missed content about the subject taught in class the day the student was absent.

<b>CLASS SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>ASSINGMENTS</b>
<b>Intro Class</b> Icebreakers, Syllabus	<b>Homework:</b> Pick-up "Spanish Vignettes" by Norman Berdichevsky in reprografía
Introduction Spain as Crossroads between Europe and Africa. Regional Nationalisms, Languages. People. Maps	<b>maps study – Europe, Spain</b>
Myths/realities of Spain. Geography as Destiny Spain as Crossroads between Europe and Africa cont. Maps	<b>maps study – Europe, Spain</b>
Early history. Impact of Early Settlers and Invaders (Phoenicians, Greeks, Celts). Romanization of the Peninsula.	p.116 to p. 129 Cultural Presentation topic

<p><b>Sports and entertainment</b></p> <p>The Flamenco music: Another identity of Spain</p> <p>Hollywood Stars from Spain, famous entertainers</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b></p> <p>p. 15 to 21 and 29 to 36</p> <p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Sports and entertainment</b></p> <p>The Spanish League. Real Madrid vs Barcelona FC</p> <p>Sports in Spain, Football vs <i>Fútbol, Pelota Vasca</i></p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 22 to 28</p>
<p><b>Sports and entertainment</b></p> <p>Bullfighting: An Essential Part of Spanish Identity</p> <p>- Debate -</p>	<p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Gastronomy</b></p> <p>Typical foods, meal times and cultural aspects</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 47-63</p>
<p><b>Society &amp; Religion</b></p> <p>Catholicism</p> <p>Being Muslim in Spain</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 73-82</p> <p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Society &amp; Religion</b></p> <p>Migration and <i>El Camino de Santiago</i></p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 64-72</p>
<p><b>Society &amp; Religion</b></p> <p>The Migrant Impact in Spain</p> <p>Refugee Crisis</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 83-90 and 91-100</p> <p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Madrid</b></p>	<p><b>Homework:</b></p> <p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>History and Foreign Relations</b></p> <p>Gibraltar</p> <p>Basque Conundrum</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b></p> <p>p.101-105 and 116-128</p> <p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>History and Foreign Relations</b></p> <p>Spain's African "Plazas" The Great Iberian Rivalry (Spain-Portugal)</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 135-147</p>

<p><b>History and Foreign Relations</b> Medieval Multicultural Spain: <i>Las Tres Culturas</i>.</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 148-157 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>History and Foreign Relations</b> The Reconquista and The Expulsion of the Jews and Moors</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 129-135</p>
<p><b>Festivals and Pageants</b> La Feria de Abril, Los Sanfermines, Los Reyes Magos, La Navidad, other traditions</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p.269-278 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Festivals and Pageants</b> Las Fallas, Semana Santa, Carnaval</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b></p>
<p><b>Education y Educación</b> Schools, teaching style, ranking Respect and politeness</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> Study For Monday: p. 181-187 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Seville</b></p>	
<p><b>Culture, Art, Language, Music</b> Don Quixote</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 194-207 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Culture, Art, Language, Music</b> Language diversity and controversies</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 213-216</p>
<p><b>Culture, Art, Language, Music</b> Spain's identity in the works of Antonio Machado &amp; García Lorca.</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 217-224 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>Culture, Art, Language, Music &amp; Literature</b> Spanish painters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Picasso, Dalí, Miró. Antonio Gaudí &amp; the Art Nouveau in Spain.</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p. 233-238</p>
<p><b>The Economy</b> The Rich Fishing Industry imports and exports, prices</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> Cultural Presentation topic</p>

<p><b>The Economy</b> The Euro, European Union/Schengen home ownership</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 245-256</p>
<p><b>The Economy</b> Los Mercadillos, La Huerta Valenciana, los invernaderos de Almería</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>The Economy</b> The financial crisis and its impact</p>	
<p><b>Spanish Art.</b> The three milestones of the Spanish Art: <i>La Mezquita de Córdoba, La Giralda de Sevilla y La Alhambra de Granada.</i> The Spanish Countryside. <i>Campos de Castilla</i> by Antonio Machado.  <i>La Casa de Bernarda Alba</i> by García Lorca.</p>	<p><b>Homework:</b> p 158-163, 175-181 Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>The 20th century.</b> The Spanish Civil War. Are there any Remnants of Franco's Dictatorship? The Propaganda of the War: Posters that are now "Art"</p>	
<p><b>From Dictatorship to Democracy.</b> The 80's: A change in society. La Movida Madrileña. The revival of new artists: Pedro Almodóvar and his controversial films.</p>	<p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>
<p><b>The environment.</b> Spain's Geography: the countryside diversity. The climate and its influence in the Spanish food and gastronomy.</p>	
<p><b>Contemporaneity</b> Social Challenges: Domestic &amp; International Terrorism, Drugs, Crime, Gender issues</p>	<p>Cultural Presentation topic</p>

<b>Barcelona</b>	
<b>Contemporaneity</b> Women, Sexuality, Equal Rights	Cultural Presentation topic
<b>Salamanca</b>	
<b>Reflection</b>	
<b>San Sebastian</b>	Cultural presentation
<b>Cordoba</b>	
<b>Pamplona</b>	Cultural presentation
The Media and Popular Culture/ Europe and the USA	Cultural presentation
<b>Granada</b>	Cultural presentation
<b>Bilbao</b>	Cultural presentation
<b>Final exam</b>	

**NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. The final syllabus will be given to students on the first day of class.**

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Essential Reading\*:**

Spanish Vignettes. An offbeat look into Spain's culture, society and history, by Norman Berdichevsky. Santana Books.

Students can find this book in Reprografía.

### **Recommended Reading:**

Barton, Simon. *A History of Spain*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Beevor, Antony. *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936-1939*. London: Cassell, 1999.

Carr, Raymond. *Modern Spain: 1875-1980*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Graham, Helen, and Jo Labanvi. *Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Williams, Mark. *The Story of Spain*. Malaga: Santana, 2010.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 2010.



**Further Reading:**

Balfour, Sebastian and Paul Preston, eds. *Spain: Dictatorship to Democracy*. London: 1981.

Conversi, Dainel. *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain*. London: 1997.

James, Edward, ed. *Visigothic Spain: New Approaches*. Oxford, 1980.

Keay, S. J. *Roman Spain*. London: 1988.

**WE WILL ONLY SPEAK IN SPANISH (in the fall program)**

In class we are going to speak only in Spanish. The use of English in the classroom would prevent the total immersion of the student in the process of learning Spanish. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that in order to understand and enjoy the class we will ask for an additional effort of terminological adaptation with the sole aim of helping you get used to the specific jargon of the professional field. For a better understanding of the class a medium-high level of Spanish is recommended.