



**SAIIE**

*"Your Life Experience; Your Education"*



## **Perspectives on Contemporary Span: Culture and Society**

**Course Code:** SPA 353

**Prerequisites:** 5 semesters of college-level Spanish.

**Language of Instruction:** Spanish

**Subject:** Spanish language

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Credits:** 3

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## **A. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

The course objective is for students to acquire, in a clear and simple way, references to the distinct aspects of Spanish culture, history and civilization in order to enrich in this way their knowledge of the language.

This course provides knowledge about diverse aspects of Spanish society, the traditional aspects as well as the more current aspects. The intention of the course is that the students can understand, have an interest and do research about the sociocultural reality of a country, where they are going to live and coexist with its inhabitants.

Daily class attendance, selected reading, notes, articles given out by the teacher and the students day to day experiences in Spain will all contribute to the overall objective of the course.

Students will have to carry out different tasks or work assigned by the teacher on specific dates throughout the semester; the grading of these will count towards the final grade for the course.

## **B. COURSE PLAN**

Introduction:

- Course description and first impressions of Spain.
- What do you know about Spain and the Spanish?
- Some interesting aspects about the city of Seville.
- The geographic medium of Spain.
- Location and the bordering countries of the Iberian Peninsula.
- Seas and rivers.
- Climate.

Reading 1. Spain (La piel de toro): “Localización” “Costas y Ríos” “Clima y paisajes”.

**History:** Origins and formation of the Spanish state.

Reading 2. The population: “Spain is different” “Diversidad de lenguas”

Reading 3. Independent communities.

Reading 4. The origins and formation of the Spanish State: “Apuntes de historia de España hasta el siglo XV” “La España Romana: esplendor y decadencia” “Al- Andalus” “Del Reino al Imperio español”

Reading 5. Contemporary Spain: “República, Monarquía y Dictadura” “La Transición española” “Consolidación de la democracia” “La transición y la inserción en la Europa democrática”.

Reading 6. Political life: “la organización política en España” “El sistema electoral” “La administración general del estado”

Reading 7. Spain in the world: “España en la Unión Europea” “La situación del español en el mundo”:

Reading 8: Products “made in Spain”: “El turismo” “La moda” “La gastronomía”

**Products “Made in Spain”:**

- Tourism
- Spanish cuisine: Typical dishes and drinks.
- Spanish fashion.

Reading 9:

**Beliefs in Spain Beliefs in Spain. Activity: What do the Spanish think about religion and the Spanish Church? Are the Spanish practicing Catholics?**

- Religions.
- Superstitions.
- Religious festivals: La Semana Santa (Holy Week/ Easter)

Reading 10: Evolution of Spanish society.

**Society:**

- The role of women in society: their evolution in this century.

**Activity: What do the majority of Spaniards think about gender equality? Do you think that a lot of domestic violence exists in Spain?**

Reading 11: The family: “El estado civil” “La nueva estructura familiar”

**The Family:**

- The civil state.
- The new family structure.
- Spanish homes.
- Parents and children: the emancipation.

**Activity: Why don't young Spanish people leave their parents home?**

**Education:**

- School and University education system. Comparison with the USA:
- Problems once finished with university.

Reading 12: From migration to immigration in only 50 years.

**Foreigners and the Spanish:**

Migration movements. **Activity: What do Spaniards think about immigrants? Is Spain a racist country when it comes to foreigners?**

Gypsies: a minority. **Activity: What is the opinion of the majority of Spaniards about gypsies?**

- The two main opinions of gypsy.
- Values and beliefs of gypsy culture.

**Leisure:**

Readings:

13. Spanish festivals
14. Music and folklore
15. Distribution of time: "El ocio diario" "Los fines de semana"
16. Spanish homes
17. Time to eat!

Some of the topics taught in class may vary depending on the current Spanish situation at the time that the topics are being taught in class.

**C. ATTENDANCE AND EXAMS**

- Class attendance is mandatory given that the student is expected to participate actively in class expressing opinions, experiences and doubts. The number of absences will affect the final grade. If any student has more than 3 unjustified absences, their final grade will be reduced by 10%.
- As for punctuality, five minutes after class has started students can not interrupt by entering, and this will count as an absence.
- It is not possible to change the date of any exam except for with medical justification; therefore, no other excuses will be valid such as travel excuses.
- There will be three exams throughout the course which will not be accumulative. Each exam will be made up of a series of questions to be answered in brief and that will cover all the information presented and discussed in class since the previous exam.
- Each exam will count for 25% of the final grade.
- The students should participate actively in class contributing ideas, evaluations and criticism about the explored topics and the obligatory reading in class.
- Students will have to write a final paper and do a corresponding oral presentation in class about a topic related to an aspect of Spain which will be able to be freely chosen by the student. Alternatively, the paper and presentation can be based on some of the topics of those proposed by the teacher in class.

## **EXAMS**

1<sup>st</sup> exam (25%)

2<sup>nd</sup> exam (25%)

3<sup>rd</sup> exam (25%)

Attendance, participation: 10%.

Reading the selected chapters, news articles, doing the assigned tasks and having a good attitude in class will all be assessed positively under “participation”.

## **D. FINAL PAPER**

Final paper/ presentation \_\_\_\_15%

The final paper must be printed out as a Word document, 1.5 spaced and Arial font size 12. The document should be 4 or 5 pages long with an extra page where students will reference the bibliography used in the development of the piece of work.

For the oral presentation anything can be used to make the presentation interesting and clear for the students. The students can ask questions, make comments and express opinions related to the topic that the student is trying to talk about in the presentation.

## **E. GRADING**

97-100 A+      77-79 C+

93-96 A        73-76 C

90-92 A-       70-72 C

87-89 B+       67-69 D+

83-86 B        63-66 D

80-82 B-       60-62 D

Less than 60 F

## **F. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Material: there is an assortment of reading that each student will obtain at the beginning of the course. Also the teacher will provide the students with suitable study material like news articles, texts, videos etc.

### READING SELECTION:

Amalia balea y Pilar Ramos: Viva la Cultura en España. En CLAVE-Ele, 2007:

1. Spain (La piel de toro): "Localización" "Costas y Ríos" "Clima y paisajes".
2. The population: "Spain is different" "Diversidad de lenguas"
3. Independent communities:
4. The origins and the formation of the Spanish state: "Apuntes de historia de España hasta el siglo XV" "La España Romana: esplendor y decadencia" "Al- Andalus" "Del Reino al Imperio español"
5. Contemporary Spain: "República, Monarquía y Dictadura" "La Transición española" "Consolidación de la democracia"
6. Politic life: "la organización política en España" El sistema electoral" "La administración general del estado"
7. Spain in the world: "España en la Unión Europea" "La situación del español en el mundo"
8. Products"made in Spain": "El turismo" "La moda" "La gastronomía"
9. Evolution of Spanish society.
10. The family: "El estado civil" "La nueva estructura familiar"
11. Work: "Inmigración: en busca de un futuro"
12. Leisure: "De fiestas por España"
13. Music and folklore
14. Distribution of time: "El ocio diario" "Los fines de semana"
15. Spanish homes
16. Time to eat! (A la mesa!)
17. Beliefs in Spain

Dolores Soler-Espiauba: Contenidos culturales en la enseñanza del español como 2/L.  
ARCO/LIBRO, S.L.2006

From migration to immigration in only 50 years. Transition and incorporation in democratic Europe.