

SPAN 350 – SPANISH CULTURAL STUDIES (4 credits)

Course Outline

The study of Spanish Culture by a student living in Spain is very different to that by one living outside it. Students will be “seeing” as well as “learning about” a country, which it is expected, is a very different one to the one they have been used to.

This course seeks to provide the student with the knowledge and information about Spanish culture that will aid in the understanding and indeed the enjoyment of this most diverse and colourful culture, its beauty, its challenges and what Hooper describes as its “extraordinary paradoxes”.

On top of this it is the purpose of this course to bring the student on a journey backwards into the causes, both the historical and socio-economic of the phenomena they will be observing.

Of fundamental importance in understanding the nature of this course is that students keep two things in mind.

1 – This is an interdisciplinary course. Material will be drawn from a variety of disciplines including history, sociology, gender studies, literature and philosophy.

2 – The focus of this course is to highlight not only Spanish culture and internal differences but also to compare each aspect of Spanish culture to that of other countries both historically and on a contemporary basis. Extensive reference will be made to the non-Western cultures which have made Spain what it is today and the direct influence of non-Christian civilisations.

In Part 2 for example the “Convivencia” illustrates the importance of Muslim and Jewish culture. SPAN 350 will also ask the most controversial question of all: Did Spain miss out on the effects of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment and if so, to what extent and in what way has this influenced modern Spain.

In dealing with regional tensions, examples will be taken from other European countries such as Belgium and Northern Ireland to emphasise the comparative nature of the issue.

Part 3 of the course will address the changing role of women in Spanish society and a comparison will be drawn between the rate of progress in the advancement of women’s rights in Spain and that of at least two other countries. The changing perceptions of gender roles will be evaluated with the view to assessing the degree these correlate with actual changes.

Part 5 of the course will investigate the role of immigration in Spanish society. Not only shall we assess the impact of immigration on the wider Spanish culture but also the impact of the changing patterns of immigration especially the effect of Eastern European immigrants.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to be self-conscious in their pursuit of sources of information and knowledge for this course. It will be considered self-evident in this course that at a third level learning institution students need not be told to visit the library and seek out for themselves books and articles relating to subjects covered in class.

Students shall be required to submit a weekly report of at least two pages on the material they have been requested to read. Their understanding of this material will also be assessed during lectures. These reports will be considered part of the attendance and participation criteria for grading purposes. A specific research project must be completed during the semester. Students will submit an oral proposal outlining the subject they desire to cover, the reason for its relevance and significance and the sources from which it is proposed information will be used.

Two examinations will be set, both of which will be of one and a half hours duration and will be taken at the university.

Students must attend and participate in all classes. A record shall be kept of this and an appropriate proportion of the final grade made to reflect success and conscientiousness in this.

Assessment

First Mid-Term Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Research Project	25%
Attendance and Participation	25%

Required Text

The New Spaniards. John Hooper
Packet of readings.

Tentative schedule

Part 1 Roots.

Class 1: Introduction to class procedure.

Method and material to be covered, discussion of syllabus and clarification of expectations.

Reading: Americo Castro, The Spanish People, The Texas Quarterly (1961)

Class 2: Situation, Climate and Topography.

Spanish history and culture, a look into the distant past.

Reading: “In Praise of Spain”, Isidore of Seville, History of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi. Stanley G Payne, A History of Spain: Ancient Hispania.

Class 3: Conquest, “Convivencia” and Reconquest. Immigration and Religion.

The Inquisition – Cultural trauma or “black legend”.

Reading: Benjamin R. Gampel, Jews Christians, and Muslims in Medieval Iberia: Convivencia through the Eyes of Sephardic Jews.

Dwayne E. Carpenter, Social Perception and Literary Portrayal: Jews and Muslims in Medieval Spanish Literature.

The Reformation, The Renaissance and The Enlightenment. Spain’s loss or Spain’s salvation?

Class 4: The Second Republic: Great idealistic enterprise or catalyst to civil war?

Reading: Enrique Montero: Reform Idealised, The Intellectual and Ideological Origins of the Second Republic.

Stanley G. Payne, Spain’s First Democracy Pages 370-384

Class 5: Images of Civil War

“Land and Freedom”

Homage to Catalonia (Orwell)

“For whom the bell tolls” (Hemingway)

Part 2 Modernity

Class 6: Hooper Part One “The making of the new Spain”

The Falangist Ascendancy, from Dictatorship to Democracy. Hooper Pages 13-58.

Class 7: The 1978 Constitution and the Socialists under Gonzalez.

Spain’s peaceful transition: “Job well done” or “Job half-done”?

Reading: Spanish Cultural Studies, Helen Graham and Jo Lebanyi Pages 315-320

Class 8: Monarchy, Army and Church.

Reading Hooper Pages 85-105, 105-126, 126-149.

Class 9: The Family in Spain

Reading: The late Emancipation of Spanish Youth, Almudena Moreno Minguez.
Montserrat Solsona, René Houle and Carlos Simó: Separation and Divorce in Spain.

Class 10: Family and Fertility.

Reading: Dr. Gerardo Meil Landwerlin (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid): Family Policy and Fertility Trends.

Same sex unions, and single parenthood: A threat to one of Spain's historically stabilising institutions, or progress?

Church influence, mass protests and the "battle of numbers in the media".

Part 3 Women and Gender

Class 11: Citizens and Housewives.

Reading: Pamela Radcliff (University of California, San Diego), The Problem of Female Citizenship in Spain's Transition to Democracy.

Elvira Antón, Gendered Images: Constructions of Masculinity and Femininity in Television and society.

Class 12: Women. Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Violence.

Reading: Hooper Pages 149-176.

Newspaper articles and latest statistics from packet of Readings

Class 13: Rosa Montero. The Silent Revolution: The Social and Cultural Advances of Women in Democratic Spain.

Anny Brooksbank Jones- Women, Work and the Family: A Critical Perspective.

Class 14: Feminism in Spain.

Gender inequality, "new roles" v "two roles".

Alternative Sexuality.

Homosexuality, Gay marriage and sexual orientation in Spanish cinema.

Reading: Margaret Andrews, Anny Brooksbank Jones, Re-registering Spanish Feminisms.

Alberto Mira, Laws of Silence: homosexual identity and visibility in contemporary Spanish Culture.

Part 4 Work and Play.

Class 15: Extremes and Contradictions. Spaniards at home, work and play.

Reading: Ian Gibson "Fire in the Blood"

The Cult of Excess. Hedonism in the Capital. Hooper 196- 208.

Drugs, Law and Disorder. Hooper 217-229

Class 16: The Spanish "Fiesta".

Easter Week.

Reading: List of "Fiestas" from packet of readings.

Edward F. Stanton, Culture and Customs of Spain Pages 47-91

Class 17: Spain and animals: Culture or Concern

The Bullfight.

"Running" with the Bulls.

Reading: Hooper 357-371.

Ernest Hemmingway "The Undefeated".

Edward F. Stanton, Culture and Customs of Spain Pages 67-70.

Part 5. Culture and Concerns.

Class 18: “La Movida” dead or alive?

Spanish Literature. From Don Quijote to the Generation of ‘98

Spanish Philosophy: Ortega y Gasset.

Reading: Núria Triana Toribio: A Punk called Pedro. La Movida in the films of Pedro Almodóvar
Mark Allinson, The Construction of Youth in Spain in the 1980s and 1990s.

Class 19: Spanish Art and Architecture.

Gernika and Picasso, the captivation of an essence.

The “Valley of the Fallen” and Franco

Class 20: Immigration.

The Economist Special Report on Immigration.

Hooper 272-289

David Corkill, Race, immigration and multiculturalism in Spain

Class 21: Regional Tensions.

Reading: Hooper Chapter 26, Centrifugal Forces. Chapters 27- 30.

Antonio Elorza: Some Perspectives on the Nation-State and Autonomies in Spain.

Clare Mar-Molinero: The Politics of Language

Jesús María Lasagabaster: The Promotion of Cultural Production in Basque Country