

## **SPAN 315-1: Introduction to Spanish Culture (15546)**

M/W 2:25-3:40 PM BBH 228

Instructor: Brandon P. Bisbey

Office: LWH 2042

Phone: 773-442-4622

E-mail: [b-bisbey@neu.edu](mailto:b-bisbey@neu.edu)

Office hours: T/R 2:00-4:00 PM or by appt.

**Course prerequisite:** SPAN 253.

### **Catalog Course description:**

This course offers students an introduction to Spanish culture from its roots in pre-Roman times to the present, through the contextualized study of representative cultural texts, including literature, music, painting and film. Topics include the legacy of the Roman Empire, Muslim, Jewish and Christian coexistence during the Middle Ages, the Spanish Golden Age, Bourbon Spain, the Second Republic, Spain under Franco, and contemporary issues. Taught in Spanish.

### **Detailed Course description:**

How does a country come to define itself? What diverse elements merge to form a national and cultural identity? This course will study the development and construction of Iberian culture and civilization from pre-Roman times to the present. It will focus on history, geography, art, literature, and other cultural manifestations. Specifically, we will examine the cultural threads of distinct identities that have been woven together throughout history to visibly influence the design of contemporary Spanish society.

Far from viewing peninsular culture as a seamless, cohesive entity, we will consider the conflicts between dominant and marginalized groups such as Castilians/non-Castilians, and Christians/Jews/Arabs as crucial forces in the shaping of Spanish identity.

Our analysis will question the extent to which the concept of "Spanish" culture has been shaped as a reaction against a foreign "other", whether or not that "other" dwells outside or inside the geographical space we refer to today as Spain.

### **Course objectives:**

1. To provide students with a critical overview of the main historical, social, political, and cultural achievements of the Iberian Peninsula.
2. To provide students with a context in which they can gain a critical understanding of the past in order to better understand the contemporary cultures of Spain.

3. To expose students to the cultural diversity and richness of the Hispanic world. While considered a nation, Spain represents a true mosaic that may be the sum of its parts but is still composed of very definite and distinguishable parts.

#### **Some expected learning outcomes:**

1. Students will improve their critical thinking skills by exploring how different perspectives and cultures come together to create a civilization.
2. Students will improve their research skills by seeking, evaluating, and synthesizing library and other database resources to support their presentations and learning on the subject through outside, scholarly sources.

#### **Departmental Portfolio Requirement:**

The Department of World Languages and Cultures requires declared majors in designated courses (including this one) to upload one or more assignments to an electronic portfolio. Portfolios will be used for program assessment and are routinely used by students entering the job market to showcase potential employers the work they have done in college. The university course management system Desire2Learn contains an online portfolio feature for this purpose. Students have automatic access via NEIUPort for each course for which they are enrolled. Internet based course materials and documents are posted by instructors in the D2L system and students can submit their assignments to the portfolio for assessment by instructors and evaluation by potential employers.

#### **Course materials:**

1. Pereira-Muro, Carmen. 2003. Culturas de España. Houghton Mifflin Co.
2. Online course materials via Blackboard.

#### **Supplementary reading (highly recommended but not required):**

Fernando Operé & Carrie Douglas. 2008. España y los españoles de hoy: Historia, Sociedad y Cultura. Prentice Hall.

Pedro Muñoz & Marcelino Marcos. 2008. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed. España: Ayer y hoy. Pearson Custom Publishing.

John Hooper. 2006. The New Spaniards. Penguin.

Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi (eds.). 1996. Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jo Labanyi (ed.). 2002. Constructing Identity in Twentieth-Century Spain: Theoretical Debates and Cultural Practice. Oxford: Oxford UP.

David Gies (ed.). 1999. The Cambridge Companion to Modern Spanish Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Henry Kamen. 2008. Imagining Spain: Historical Myth and National Identity. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale UP.

Henry Kamen. 2007. The Disinherited: Exile and the Making of Spanish Culture, 1492-1975. New York, New York: Harper.

Peter Pierson. The History of Spain. 2008. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Edward Stanton. Culture and Customs of Spain. 2008. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group.

Raymond Carr. Spain: A History. 2001. Oxford: Oxford UP.

### **Method of instruction:**

For every class or learning module, you will be assigned readings from Culturas de España, usually one chapter per week. You should read assigned chapters prior to coming to class. Class discussions will revolve around the “Textos y contextos” section of each chapter and the questions at the end of the chapter (“repasso y síntesis”).

### **Assessment criteria:**

Participation: 15%  
Quizzes: 10%  
Exam #1: 15 %  
Exam #2: 20 %  
Exam #3: 20 %  
Oral presentation : 20%

### **Grading scale:**

A: 90-100%   B: 80-89%   C: 70-79%   D: 60-69%   F: below 60%

### **Attendance:**

Students are allowed **four absences** for the semester. **Each absence after the fourth will deduct 2.5 points from the final course grade.** Students with special attendance policies determined by NEIU must give the instructor a week's notice if they will be absent from class.

### **Participation:**

Attendance and participation are not synonymous. It is possible to attend a class without participating. Your active participation and interaction with your fellow students and the instructor are crucial to your success in the course. Students need to come to class prepared and ready to participate in order to meet the goals of the class. Participation will be assessed by self-evaluation two times during the course of the semester.

**Quizzes:** At the beginning of every class, there will be a very brief quiz to test comprehension of the day's readings. ***These quizzes will be administered during the first 5 minutes of class, and cannot be made up.*** However, the lowest three quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

### **Exams:**

There will be three take-home essay exams. They will cover information about important historical events, key historical figures, concepts, geographical terms, visual images and literary selections discussed in the textbook. The dates for these exams are listed below.

### **Oral presentation:**

Each member of the class will be required to give a 10-minute presentation about one of the topics listed on the syllabus. Topics will be assigned randomly in order to accommodate such a large group of students. Oral presentations will begin the fifth week of the semester in order to accommodate such a large group of students.

### **Policies:**

1. Plagiarism: Students are expected to do their own work and to follow the University's policies regarding academic integrity. Cheating on a test or copying another student's homework, and turning in someone else's work as your own are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in an act of academic dishonesty in this class will fail the course. (Please do your own work, and do it to the best of your ability!)

2. Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations regarding academic adjustments and the use of auxiliary aids in class. Students should first contact the University's Accessibility Center, which oversees any special accommodations.

3. Under extenuating circumstances, the University does allow its instructors to assign a final grade of Incomplete but *not* as a substitute for a failing grade in the course. If you are failing the course by the drop date, you should drop the course and not assume you can ask for an Incomplete. Incompletes are given when a student who is passing the course cannot complete a final assignment due to some extenuating circumstance such as a death in the family or sudden illness. Make sure you understand the policy before asking for an Incomplete. See the University Catalogue for additional information.

4. Students are expected to be familiar with NEIU's Conduct Code and to follow its rules.

5. **No text messaging or emailing** will be allowed in class. **Cell phones must be turned off or on silent and kept in your backpacks or pockets during class.** Laptops may only be used to take notes.

#### 6. Web Link to Emergency Information

It is recognized that a safe university environment is a shared responsibility of faculty, staff, and students, all of whom are expected to familiarize themselves with and cooperate with emergency procedures. Web links to Campus Safety: Emergency Procedures and Safety Information can be found on NEIUport on the MyNEIU tab or as follows:

(a) For the Main campus:

[http://www.neiu.edu/~neiutemp/Emergency\\_Procedures/MainCampus/](http://www.neiu.edu/~neiutemp/Emergency_Procedures/MainCampus/)

### **Prontuario (Sujeto a cambio; Revisar Bb para actualizaciones)**

#### **Semana 1**

27 de agosto—Introducción a SPAN-315 / presentaciones.

29 de agosto—capítulo introductorio.

Sugerencia: Estudie Ud. bien los mapas en este capítulo y trate de aprender los nombres de las principales ciudades españolas, de las comunidades autónomas y de los ríos. Prepárese para discutir en clase las preguntas que aparecen en la sección denominada "repaso y síntesis" (página 21).

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## Semana 2

6 de septiembre---capítulo introductorio

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## Semana 3

10 de septiembre--- capítulo 1: **La formación de España**

12 de septiembre---capítulo 1: **La formación de España**

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## Semana 4

17 de septiembre- capítulo 2: **La España medieval** (p. 44-59); Orientación en la biblioteca

19 de septiembre— capítulo 2: **La España medieval** (p. 60-77)

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## Semana 5

24 de septiembre— capítulo 3: **Hacia la unidad de España....** (p.78-87)

26 de septiembre— capítulo 3: **Hacia la unidad de España....** (p.88-99)

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## Semana 6

01 de octubre—repaso, distribución de Examen #1 (en Bb)

03 de octubre— preguntas sobre Examen

### presentaciones:

1. ¿Cómo distinguir entre el arte románico y el arte gótico? ¿Y el plateresco?
  2. Los judíos sefarditas: su lengua y su cultura
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## Semana 7

08 de octubre— capítulo 4: **El imperio español** (p.100-112) Entregar Examen #1 (en Bb)

10 de octubre--- capítulo 4: **El imperio español** (p.113-124)

**presentaciones:**

1. La Alhambra (Granada)
  2. La obra artística de El Greco
  3. 3. La situación de la mujer en la España del s. XVI y una mujeres sobresalientes de la época
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**Semana 8**

15 de octubre— capítulo 5: **El siglo XVII** (p.125-137)

17 de octubre--- capítulo 5: **El siglo XVII** (p.137-149)

**presentaciones:**

1. El estilo barroco: ¿qué es? ¿Cuáles son sus características?
  2. <Las hilanderas> y <Los borrachos> de Velázquez
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**Semana 9**

22 de octubre— capítulo 6: **El siglo XVIII** (p.151-163); Entregar primera evaluación de participación (en Bb)

24 de octubre--- capítulo 6: **El siglo XVIII** (p.164-174)

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**Semana 10**

29 de octubre—repasso, distribución de **Examen #2** (en Bb)

31 de octubre--- preguntas sobre examen,

**presentaciones:**

1. la arquitectura neoclásica en Madrid (Palacio de Oriente, etc.)
  2. la *pintura* de Francisco de Goya
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**Semana 11**

05 de noviembre--- capítulo 7: **El siglo XIX** (p.175-188), entregar **Examen #2** (en Bb)  
07 de noviembre--- capítulo 7: **El siglo XIX** (p.188-200)

**presentaciones:**

1. Antoni Gaudí
  2. Los grabados de Francisco de Goya
  3. La situación de la mujer en el siglo XIX en España y las primeras manifestaciones de movimientos feministas
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**Semana 12**

12 de noviembre-- capítulo 8: **Del siglo XX al siglo XXI** (p. 203-215)

14 de noviembre— capítulo 8: **Del siglo XX al siglo XXI** (p. 216-232)

**presentaciones:**

1. La obra artística de Salvador Dalí
  2. La obra artística de Pablo Picasso
  3. La obra artística de Joan Miró
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**Semana 13**

19 de noviembre- capítulo 11: **La sociedad española contemporánea** (p. 285-294)

21 de noviembre--- capítulo 11: **La sociedad española contemporánea** (p. 295-309)

**presentaciones:**

1. Grupos marginados: los gitanos
  2. El terrorismo (ETA)
  3. Los inmigrantes en España
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**Semana 14**

26 de noviembre-- capítulo 12: **La cultura contemporánea** (p. 310-321)

28 de noviembre--- capítulo 12: **La cultura contemporánea** (p. 322-332)

**presentaciones:**

1. Cultura popular: la tauromaquia (el toreo)



2. Cultura popular: San Fermín, la Tomatina, etc.
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### **Semana 15**

03 de diciembre--- presentaciones

#### **presentaciones:**

1. Cultura popular: el flamenco
2. El cine de Pedro Almodóvar (temas principales, etc.)
3. Fiestas de la Semana Santa
4. Cultura de masas: el fútbol

05 de diciembre--- repaso, distribución de Examen #3 (en Bb)

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### **Semana 16**

10 de diciembre—preguntas sobre examen; entregar Segundo evaluación de participación (en Bb)

13 de diciembre—entregar Examen #3 (en Bb)