

Title: Barcelona: The City and its Historical Foundations

Description:

This course takes an analytical look at the present-day cosmopolitan city of Barcelona politically, economically and socially and looks back through over 2000 years of history to see how it has taken shape. This course will reflect on the definitive events in the history of Barcelona and how they have shaped today's society. Special attention will be focused on its urban development and its reflection in how we interact with the city today. We will determine which historical events most impacted the transformation of this Catalan capital city's physical, architectural and cultural heritage, and discuss the importance of its location in the Mediterranean.

Course Language: English

Total hours: 45 hours

Credits: 3 credits

METHODOLOGY

The course will use a combination of guided lectures, classroom interaction, student presentations and tours of the city.

Evaluation

Attendance to classes and field trips is mandatory; poor attendance will affect the final grade of the student as well as the everyday participation grade.

The final grade consists of four different parts: class participation, a midterm written exam, a final written exam, and a final project. The breakdown of grades is made up as follows:

- 20% Class participation (classroom interaction, field studies, journal, and attendance)
- 25% Midterm written exam
- 25% Final written exam
- 30% Final project (15% Written paper, 15% class presentation)

Class participation

Active class participation includes coming to class prepared, having read the material for that day, answering questions from the professor, asking questions and engaging in group activities. Students are encouraged to express their opinions in class with the professor and the other students.

Attendance Policy:

Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Final project

The final project consists of both a written report and an oral presentation. By the 3rd week of class, students will have chosen a topic linked to the syllabus and must get final approval from the professor for the topic of choice. This early start to the final project provides students with ample time to research their topic, meet with group members (if applicable), and not leave everything for the last minute.

Students are expected to demonstrate original and critical thinking as well as analytical reflection from scholarly research cited properly.

Exams:

Both the midterm and the final exams may contain a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions aimed to test the students' full comprehension of facts and the ability to argue his/her opinions based on class material.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the term students will be able to:

- Explain and interpret how the history of Barcelona economically, politically and socially influenced contemporary society.
- Apply theoretical tools to reflect on how students' home city has been affected by historical influences.
- Produce high-quality academic papers discussing the history of Barcelona and its impact on modern society.

Content:

Session 1
<u>Course Presentation and Syllabus:</u> An introduction to the city of Barcelona: overview, geographical situation and cultural peculiarities.
Session 2
<u>Barcelona in the World:</u> The political and social situation of Barcelona in the world, the role it plays in Catalonia as capital of the autonomous region and also the role it plays in Spain as the second largest city.
Session 3
<u>Catalonia: An autonomous region with its own traditions:</u>

A journey through the most deep-rooted and exclusive traditions of the region and what makes them different to the rest of Spain.

Session 4

A Visit to the Barcelona History Museum and la *Plaza del Rey*:

Presentation of the origins from which the Barcelona History Museum evolved in 1945 and a visual journey from the Roman *Barcino* of the 1st century B.C. to the Barcelona of the 12th century A.D. through its archaeological remains. The remains and relics of the first Christian community in the city will also be looked at.

Session 5

The Origins of Barcelona: *Barcino* and the Romans:

The establishment of the bases for the founding of Barcelona as a city: likewise its connection to the Romans and the development of *Barcino* will be explained.

Session 6

Barcelona in Visigoth Spain

A journey through the history of Barcelona from the arrival of the Visigoths in the fifth century and its years as capital of Hispanic territories until the year 801 when it was conquered by Ludovico Pio of the Carolingian Empire.

Session 7

Causes and Consequences of the Catalan Revolt and the War of the *Segadors*:

The consequences of the tensions deriving from the dynastic union with Castile, initiated by the marriage of Fernando II of Aragón to Isabel I of Castile and which reached its decisive point with the War of the *Segadors* from 1640 -1651.

Session 8

The War of Succession:

The origins of the War of Succession (1706-1714) and the

consequent disappearance of Catalan institutions.

Session 9

The Industrial Revolution and the Economic Resurgence of Barcelona:

The principal factors which contributed to the economic recovery of the city at the beginning of the seventeenth century and which reached a peak with industrialisation in the nineteenth century.

Session 10

A Visit to the Barcelona Maritime Museum

A trip to the maritime museum where the most illustrative collections of Catalan maritime culture are on show, and where there will be an opportunity to learn about the maritime history of the region.

Session 11

The Resurgence of Catalan Culture: *La Reinaxença*:

Characteristics and main stages of this Catalan cultural movement which reached its peak during the second half of the nineteenth century and which sought the renaissance of the Catalan language as a means of communication and expression of its culture.

Session 12

Barcelona and the Universal Exposition of 1888:

General presentation of the urban reforms that the city experienced during the period when Rius i Taulet, the driving force behind the universal exposition of 1888, was mayor.

Session 13

Midterm Exam.

Session 14

Catalan *Modernism* and the Bourgeoisie:

The aesthetic characteristics of this architectural movement which

developed in Catalonia, mainly in Barcelona between 1880-1930, and which forms part of the European current of the time. In Catalonia it acquires its own dimension, the Catalan bourgeoisie being the main promoter.

Session 15

The Modernist Route in Barcelona:

Introduction to the most emblematic modernist buildings in the city and visits to Casa Batlló y Casa Milà (La Pedrera).

Session 16

The International Exposition of 1929 and the Opening Up of Catalan Industry to the International Market:

The organization of a new exposition in Barcelona which leads to the urbanization of the area around Plaza de España, the construction of the pavilions that still stand in the actual trade fair zone and the pretext for building the underground railway (metro).

Session 17

The Failed Popular Olympics and the Outbreak of the Spanish Civil War:

Explanation of the organization of the popular Olympics that were intended to be held in Barcelona but did not take place as, in July 1936, the army initiated a military coup against the Second Republic and the Civil War broke out (1936).

Session 18

The Evolution of the Civil War in Barcelona and a visit to a Bunker:

The situation in Barcelona during the three years of the Civil War (1936-1939) and a visit to the "Bunker de Horta" in Guinardó Park, one of the principal shelters from the war in Barcelona.

Session 19

Barcelona during the Franco Dictatorship:

An overview of the economic and socio-cultural crisis that the city

suffered during the years of dictatorship (1939-1975).

Session 20

The Recovery of Barcelona at the End of the Franco Dictatorship:

The process of re-establishing a democracy in Spain, the Generalitat in Catalonia and the re-emergence of Barcelona as capital of the autonomous region of Catalonia.

Session 21

A Journey through Olympic Barcelona; the Olympic Village and Port:

The preparation of Barcelona for the 1992 Olympic Games: the economic growth and new infrastructure of the city. A visit to the Olympic village and port.

Session 22

Barcelona Today: Infrastructure, Culture and Society:

An overview of the most recent events in the history of the city from the celebration of the Universal Forum of Culture in 2004 to the inauguration of the first high speed train (AVE) in 2008. The different cultural possibilities that Barcelona currently offers will also be commented on.

Session 23

Students' presentations

Session 24

Review

Session 25

FINAL EXAM

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Required readings:

Fernandez Armesto, Felipe. Barcelona. A thousand Years of the City's Past. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Graham, Helen and Jo Labanyi, Eds. Spanish Cultural Studies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Hughes, Robert. Barcelona. London: The Harvill Press Edition, 1999 or New York: First Vintage Books Edition, 1993.

Sorbrer, Josep M., ed. Catalonia a self portrait. Bloomington: Indiana, 1992.

Recommended readings:

Amelang, James S. et al. Twelve walks through Barcelona's past Guidebook, Barcelona: Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1992.

Cirici I Pellicer, Alexandre. Barcelona step by step. Barcelona: Teide, 1992.

Galera, Montserrat et al. Atlas de Barcelona. Siglos XVI-XX. Barcelona: Publicaciones del Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Cataluña y Baleares, 1986.

Lalaguna, Juan. A traveler's history of Spain. New York: Interlink Books, 1994.

McNeill, Donald. Urban Change and the European Left Tales from the New Barcelona. London: Routledge, 1999.

Toibin, Colm. Homage to Barcelona. London: Simon & Schuster, 1990.