



HISPANIC STUDIES

ACTIVITIES

LANGUAGE AREA

Interviews with native Spanish speakers

Students will interview Spanish speakers to practice their language skills. Students will also focus on the different accents present in Spain and will practice variations of socio-linguistic Spanish. During the interviews, students will have to use certain vocabulary and grammatical expressions which will be evaluated during class time.

Visit to Casa de América

Students will attend different conferences related to the Hispanic world. The objective of the visit is for them to understand the sociocultural relations between Spain and America.

Visit to the Madrid Stock Exchange

The Madrid Stock Exchange represents the center of the financial markets in Spain. There will be an explanation of the functioning of the stock exchange, companies that operate, etc.

Visit to Mahou Beer factory

We will visit the most important beer factories in Spain. Students will see the production process which will be explained by representatives of the company. During the visit, students will also receive information related to all aspects of the business, its origins, growth, and development into one of the most technological and modern beer factories in Spain. This visit is especially interesting for those students who are improving their business Spanish since they will have the opportunity to increase their business vocabulary, and will get the chance to ask questions and talk to business representatives from the company.

Attend a short story telling

Students will attend a short story telling in Alcalá told by professional story tellers. The objective is for students to test their understanding and listening of the Spanish language. This activity is programmed only for the course Español Superior.

Visit to El Pardo and Valle de los Caídos

We will visit two of the most important places related to General Francisco Franco, dictator of Spain from 1936 to 1975. El Pardo Palace was the official residence of Franco, and El Valle de los Caídos was built as a funerary monument for him.



Visit to the editing room of a newspaper

Students will visit one of the most important newspapers in Spain, El País. It was founded in 1976.

Students will have the chance to see how people work in the editing room, and the room where the paper is printed. Finally they will be able to speak with some of the personnel and learn about the relationships this newspaper has with others such as Le Monde Diplomatique or the New York Times.

Visit to a radio station

In this visit, students will go to a radio station in Alcalá de Henares called Cadena SER, this is the most popular station in Spain.

Students will learn about the internal work done at the station, different rooms like the editing room, recording studio, etc. Also, they will be able to participate actively during the visit since they will speak in a radio program.

Designing and writing of a magazine

Students will design and write a magazine called “Alcalá a tus piés”. This magazine includes articles about culture, history, recommendations, and practical information for students. It is published online in the Institute’s webpage during the Fall and Spring semesters. At the end of the semester, participating students make a presentation of all articles during the Talent Show.

Translation workshop & simultaneous translation

The course instructor and the students will simulate a translation session of an international conference. Students will use the international conference room of the Universidad de Alcalá and all the equipment in order to practice as if they were in a real conference setting. Students will have different roles such as speaker, moderator, translator, participants of the conference, etc. but all will have to be a translator sometime throughout the practice.

LITERATURE AREA

Visit to the National Library

Different writers visit the National Library on certain evenings in order to interact and talk with visitors. During these meetings people can speak with them about their works. Students have the opportunity to know some of these writers and ask them questions related to their books.



Visit to a printing press

The objective of this visit is for students to see a handmade printing press and learn about the complex system used during old times to print books.

Visit to the America Museum

During this visit, students will learn about the historical, social and cultural links between Spain and America. This is one of the most visited museums in Madrid, due to its astounding collection of American art, which includes pieces of pre-colombian art and other pieces from indigenous communities. Students will be exposed to the way these communities used to live as well as their history and culture.

Visit to Corral de Comedias

The Corral de Comedias in Alcalá is one of the oldest theaters in Europe. It was built in 1602. Throughout the visit students can experience the characteristics of the plays, the place where men and women used to sit, the setting of the stage, and the “special effects” used during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Visit to Casa de Cervantes

In Mayor Street, in Alcalá de Henares, is located Cervantes' house. During the visit students can see the way families belonging to the Spanish nobility lived in the 16th century. Rooms can be visited which include original furniture, medical instruments (used by Cervantes' father), as well as an interesting and exclusive collection of Don Quixote books.

Attend a play in Alcalá

Students will attend a play, whose author is part of or is related to the content of the course. The play will help students understand better the characteristics of the play and the author, and the influence of the social, historical, political and economic context in which it was written and represented.

Staging and acting in a play

Students will participate in a play, they will have to rehearse periodically, create working groups, help with the staging, lights, costumes, etc. The objective is for students to be introduced into stage acting.

Visit to the Residencia de Estudiantes (students' residence)

Literature students will visit this residence in Madrid where some important writers like Federico García Lorca, painters like Salvador Dalí, and film makers like Luis Buñuel lived.

Don Quixote Route



Students will visit the most emblematic places in the Community of Castilla-La Mancha where Don Quijote's adventures took place. The town, Puerto Lápice, is visited. In this town there is a lodging from the 17th century which is mentioned in the book. In Campo de Criptana students will visit some windmills, and will finish the visit going to the Belmonte castle.

FILM AREA

Attend film presentations

Students will go to view different Spanish films in order to appreciate the type of movies done in Spain currently.

CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION AREA

Visit to the Spanish Congress and Senate

During this visit, students will learn about these two government institutions and Spanish political system, and their relationship with the European institutions.

The Congress (Spanish Parliament) and the Senate (Senado) house Spanish democracy. During both visits students will be informed about some of the last historical events that have taken place in them like the approval of the current Spanish Constitution in 1978 or the coup d'état of 1981.

Visit to Toledo

Toledo –declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986- is a unique city for art lovers, where people from different cultures (Roman, Visigothic, Muslim, Gothic, Mudejar, Renaissance, Barocco...) settled. Toledo is also known as the “City of the three Cultures” during the Middle Ages when Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived together. Of this period dates the so called Translation School, created under the reign of Alphonse X, also known as the Wise.

Students will visit Greco's most impressive painting “The Burial of Count of Orgaz”, as well as the cathedral and the synagogue.

Medieval Castle Route

This one day trip has the objective of visiting different medieval castles of Spain. The historical circumstances of Spain during the Middle Ages, due to long wars between Christians and Muslims and among the different Muslim kingdoms, produced as a result a very large number of defensive military buildings and fortresses, which were built from the 8th to the 15th century.



ART AREA

Visit to the Prado Museum

The Prado Museum is one of the most important museums in the world. It houses some of the most impressive art collections from medieval times to the 19th century. Students will be able to see and admire some of the best Spanish and European paintings from painters such as El Bosco, Tiziano, Rubens, Velázquez, Zurbarán, Murillo, Goya, etc.

Visit to Cuenca

Cuenca is one of the most beautiful medieval cities of Spain, declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1996. Cuenca was a fortress and Muslim city which after the reconquest began a long and successful period due to the development of the textile industry and the commerce of wool.

During this period different Gothic and Renaissance buildings were built, many of them can still be admired in the old part of the city. After the Independence War in the 19th century, Cuenca went through a period of decadence. Today it is a tourist center due to its monuments and museums like the Modern Art Museum and its Renaissance palaces.

Visit to El Escorial

The monastery of El Escorial represents one of the best historical and cultural examples of King Phillip II's power during the 16th century. The building is known for its austerity and grandiosity.

Visit to the Arqueological Museum (Alcalá & Madrid)

The visit to the arqueological museum in Alcalá allows students to get a closer view of the different historical periods of Alcalá and its surrounding areas. From pre-historical times to Roman, Visigothic, Muslim settlements, and the final reconquest by Christian kings.

Students visiting the arqueological museum in Madrid will have the chance to see objects and utensils from different time periods and civilizations, such as Egiptian, Asian, European, etc. It is especially important to see the reproduction of paintings from the Cave of Altamira (one of the most important upper Paleolithic cave paintings in the world) as well as its collection of Iberian art and Roman mosaics found in different regions in Spain.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AREA

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