The Basques, the Catalans, and Spain
San Sebastián, Barcelona, Spain

Term Offered:
Spring 2015

Approximate Dates of Instruction:
March 29, 2015 to June 7, 2015

Application Deadline:
October 31, 2014

INFO SESSION Thursday, October 16, 2014, from 3:30pm to 5:00pm in the CHID Lounge

This program studies two groups that are currently agitating for independence in Spain: the Basques and the Catalans. We will mainly be in Spain to study the Basques, but to provide a comparative perspective for our study of the Basques we will first spend ten days studying the Catalan situation in Barcelona, the center of Catalan nationalism. We will spend the rest of the quarter in the Basque city of San Sebastián.

The Basque and Catalan cultures promulgate identities that threaten the unity of the Spanish nation. Both cultures have their own native languages and histories, dating back to long before the birth of modern Spain; both are prosperous industrial and commercial peoples that boast vibrant metropolises (Bilbao and San Sebastián in the Basque country, Barcelona in Catalonia); both have had to struggle against repression of their historical languages and identities by the centralized Spanish state. During the 40-year dictatorship of Franco, which ended in 1975, the Basque and Catalan cultures and languages were officially repressed, but the death of Franco and the ensuing re-integration of Spain into modern Europe sparked movements of cultural and linguistic renewal among these groups.

Barcelona, in the region of Catalonia, is the second largest city in Spain, with impressive Medieval architecture and Mediterranean beaches, and many buildings designed by Gaudi. The Catalan language, which is related to both French and Spanish, is the official language of Catalonia, although Spanish is widely spoken as well. During our stay in Barcelona there will be readings and lectures on the Catalan political situation in relation to Spain, tours of the city’s cultural attractions, and Spanish classes. We will seek to become as well informed as we can about the history and culture of the Catalans, and their reasons for considering separation from Spain.
For the rest of the quarter we will move to San Sebastián in the Basque Country. The ancient Basque people of northern Spain and southern France have managed to maintain an independent identity for millenia, an identity rooted in their unique language, Euskera, which is unrelated to any other European language. San Sebastián is one of the most charming smaller cities in Europe, world famous for its cuisine and its beaches. It is a modern, green city, with a wonderfully relaxed European lifestyle, 47 kilometers of bike track, and thirty minutes by city bus from the French border. There will be Spanish classes and classes on Basque history and culture and on the theory of group identities.

We will use San Sebastián as a base for several excursions around the Basque country: to Gernika, subject of the famous painting by Picasso commemorating the city's destruction by Nazi aerial bombardment; to the nearby French Basque country; to the historic town of Estella in Navarre, with its history of independence that dates back to the Middle Ages; to Bilbao, historically the center of shipbuilding, banking, and industry, and today home of the world famous Bilbao Guggenheim museum; and several typical Basque towns, where the Basque language remains dominant.

The program emphasizes learning Spanish for everyday communication during your stay in Spain. Both in Barcelona and San Sebastian students will be taking Spanish classes in small groups according to their levels. Even though both cities have their own languages, Spanish is commonly used and they are excellent places to practice Spanish.

Courses:
- CHID 471A: Conflict of Identities: The Basques and Catalans in the Spanish State (5 credits, I&S)
- CHID 471B: What is a Nation? (5 credits, I&S)
- SPAN 199/299: Spanish Language Skills (5 credits)

Fulfills Requirements:
- CHID Cultural and Historical Engagement
- CHID Power & Difference
- I&S Credit

Total Program Fees: $6900

*Note that the fees stated above do not include some additional costs, including, but not limited to: airfare, Study Abroad Insurance (about $42/month), and personal spending money. Remember that these costs will differ by program. Be sure to read our Fees, Financing, and Withdrawal information for details about the fee structure and payment schedule.

APPLICATIONS ARE CLOSED FOR THIS PROGRAM. VIEW MORE DETAILS AT THE UW STUDY ABROAD WEBSITE.

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