

**Annual Study Center Review  
CIEE Study Center at the Universitat de les Illes Balears  
Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
Summer  
2008**

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Each summer, program directors write a Study Center Review for each CIEE Study Center program commenting on the previous academic year. The program director writes the review based on input from the CIEE Academic Consortium Board members, resident directors, sending institutions, and student evaluations. Each report is made public on the CIEE website at [www.ciee.org](http://www.ciee.org).

### **Program Goals**

The goals of the summer program are for students to begin learning or further developing spoken and written Spanish language skills while studying the socioeconomic and cultural impact of tourism in the Balearic Islands, or the history and culture of Mallorca and the Mediterranean. These goals are accomplished through daily interaction in Palma's academic and social milieu, living with Spanish-speaking families, class-related excursions in the Balearic Islands, and participation in a UIB tourism-related research project.

The goals of the program were met during summer 2008.

### **New and Noteworthy**

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#### **Academic**

#### **Spanish Language**

#### **Community Language Commitment**

This summer, students represented all levels of Spanish, from beginning to advanced. Since the summer courses are intense, especially beginning level students communicated with staff in English after class in order to share their experience, concerns, and frustrations. The housing coordinator and language professors used only Spanish with the students. The Resident Director and the professors of the content courses alternated English and Spanish with beginners and intermediate (depending on the student and the situation), and used only Spanish with advanced students. Among themselves, CIEE students spoke in English. Some intermediate and all advanced students were motivated and spoke only Spanish during CIEE activities. Three of the summer students met regularly with a language exchange partner. Three Guardian Angels (Spanish students) collaborated with CIEE in orientation and activities throughout the summer. Two of the Guardian Angels knew English and spoke it with the lower level students as needed.

## **Spanish Language Courses**

CIEE offered three language courses (in parenthesis, number of students in each level): Beginning Spanish II (7), Intermediate Spanish (6), and Advanced Spanish (4). Two professors taught the language classes and were both highly evaluated. Students taking Advanced Spanish commented that the class was very difficult, but they learned a great deal. Attendance was excellent.

The teaching methodology applied in CIEE Palma language classes requires using only Spanish in the class. Some students were used to different methodologies and complained that it was impossible for them to learn Spanish if grammar was not explained in English. These students kept complaining until the end of the summer program, and were never convinced that they were learning adequately by being exposed to Spanish at all times. Next summer the resident staff will do a better job of introducing this methodology in orientation (in English). Other than this complaint, students' reaction to courses were positive.

Individual tutoring was offered to those students who experienced more problems with Spanish. On the side, an open tutoring session was offered the day before every exam. Some students complained that the tutor did not know English and that a policy at their university gave them the right to have a tutor who would teach them in English.

Every summer Spanish courses placement is challenging because, after taking the placement test, a few students are placed in a level they don't want to be in. Two intermediate level students requested to be in the beginning level since the class was taught only in Spanish. Two beginning level students had already taken beginning and were not going to receive beginning Spanish credits at their home institutions. The two intermediate students were allowed to be in beginning; but the two beginning students decided to stay in beginning level after they realized they were actually in the appropriate level given their proficiency.

## **Subject Area Courses**

### **CIEE Courses**

Globalization, Human Migration and Tourism in the Balearic Islands were offered in English for the third time by the same professor. This is a creative and dynamic professor who every summer incorporates new elements into the class. Some students commented that it was their best class ever. Some students complained that they were expecting a more business focussed approach to tourism. About half of the students taking this class were from business-related majors. This topic has been already discussed with the professor and next summer he will include more chapters related to the business side of tourism.

This summer, Palma in the Mediterranean was taught by only one of the two professors from summer 2007. (This professor received very high marks during 2007.) The class incorporated a wider perspective of the cultures of the Mediterranean.

Evaluations of the two professors of the subject area courses were positive; many students commented on the enthusiasm and approachability of the professors.

### **Out of classroom activities**

Language classes were complemented with four activities outside the classroom. Students actively participated in these visits and the environment was educational and entertaining at the same time. Three activities were the same as previous year: cooking Spanish dishes, watching a movie by Almodóvar, and visiting the three cultures of the past in Palma (Jewish quarter, Arab

Baths, and Christian Palace of the kings of Mallorca). This summer the Spanish class visited a family owned winery where one of the owners explained in Spanish the process of producing wine; students could visit the vineyards and almond trees orchard, two of the most important local products of Mallorca. They visited the oldest glass factory of Mallorca, and some students made or blew their own glass craft. Finally, they visited an old monastery where the philosopher Raimundo Llull created a school in the Middle Ages.

Two study field trips provided a practical addition to each of the CIEE culture classes.

*Globalization:* Students visited a beach tourist area, and a little town in the center of the Island. Students had to conduct interviews, take pictures, observe signs, etc, and afterwards, the class discussed topics related to the visits.

*Palma in the Mediterranean:* one visit was to the Cathedral and the museum of history. A new visit this summer was to the old state farmhouse La Granja which nowadays exhibits a representation of traditional ways of life, crafts and gastronomy of the island.

Students commented that they enjoyed these visits and they helped them put into practice what they had learned in class. Both professors took advantage also of the CIEE activities and excursions to other locations around the island. The program was well rounded in the sense that every visit was interrelated to the content of a class.

### **Non-Academic**

During the summer, the CIEE office and classes were moved to a university building in the city. Since students don't take regular classes in the summer, it was not necessary to go to the university campus outside the city. This move had a very positive impact on the program: classes, homestays and activities were all closer to each other. Whenever students had time in between classes, they would go into the shopping district, the historic center, or back to their homes. After classes, it was very easy for the students to take a bus to any other part of the island, from the beaches to small towns in the center of the island. Some students were only interested in going to the beach in the afternoons, but some other students explored the rural part of the island by train or bus. The fact that the classes were taught in the same building where CIEE is located made it easy to meet with the professors on a daily basis throughout the program. This had a positive impact in the organization of the program.

This was the first summer in which students were able to obtain bus cards (that allow them to take all buses in Palma for a reduced rate). On the fourth day on site, the RD and students went in person to the office of the bus company with a letter signed by the university, and cards were handed out immediately. Also, students received computer cards and were able to use the computer lab at the UIB building downtown. The ease of dealing with these two issues, which had been problematic in the past, created a positive environment among the students.

### **CIEE Orientation**

On the first day, students who arrived at lunch time joined a group lunch at the hotel. Students who arrived just for the orientation welcome session received a lunch bag with sandwiches. On the second day, the logistics of the meeting with the homestays worked really well. Families were introduced one after the other to each one of the students in a beautiful hotel meeting room. They then departed to their new home. Each student received a map of the surroundings of their home, with the address of at least two other students living around their area. On the third day, the placement exam took place at the university campus, so students could visit the

campus for one day before moving into the city university building. Three UIB students participated in orientation and CIEE events throughout the summer.

### **Cultural Activities/Field Trips**

Cultural activities and field trips were linked to the language and subject area classes by providing the list of excursions to the professors so they would plan exercises related to the visits. Most of the activities included the participation of other Spanish students.

- Guided tour to Gothic Bellver Castle
- Cabrera Island National Park by boat
- Modernist Town of Sóller by Train, and Soller's Harbour and Beach by Tram
- Drach Caves
- Towns of Valldemossa, Deià & Fornalutx
  
- Biking Palma Bay, from the Cathedral to the Beaches of Arenal
- "Games and pambolis" at Café Barroco
- Saint John's Bonfires
- Other Activities with Spanish students including: Films, Dinner Out, Shopping, Going to the Beach

During the farewell, there was a photography contest that allowed students to share their experiences over the summer.

### **Housing**

All students live in homestays, one student per family.

Some students spent a lot of time with the homestays and developed a nice relationship even given the short time they spent in Mallorca. Two students lived further than the others from the university building where classes were held. Both students were neighbors. These students received a stipend to be able to take the bus (frequency: every 5 minutes) to the university (10 minute ride) every morning. These students were satisfied with their homestays and location.

There were a few incidents of students not abiding by homestay rules during the summer. Staff intervened and the situations improved. There were also some challenges adapting to the Mediterranean diet.

Overall, students were content with their homestays.

### **Challenges and Future Directions**

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#### **Non-Academic Challenges**

The dynamics of the group was positive, especially because students got along well. None of the students missed any of the activities or excursions, and this created a positive and constructive environment. Some students were less interested, but the general feeling of the group was participative. A few students were interested in meeting locals and getting to know the culture first hand. They were introduced to other students, and established good relationships.

#### **Future Directions**

Next summer, CIEE will continue working with the same professors as this past summer. The program structure will change to two three-and-a-half-week sessions. A new marine biology

class will be offered by a university professor, and this will also mean adding new out of classroom activities. The Globalization course will incorporate more sessions related to the business aspects of tourism. Advanced language class will have more writing and fewer examinations. During the second session an internship in a local hotel will be offered.