

**Annual Program Review
CIEE Study Center at the Universidad Carlos III
Madrid, Spain
2006**

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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.

Program Goals

The program allows independent, advanced level students the opportunity to matriculate in a combination of content courses in social sciences, humanities, and engineering. Students also participate in seminars with Spanish students while they continue to improve their language skills and take advantage of the vibrant and rich cultural milieu of Madrid.

Academic Program

The CIEE Madrid program completed its first year of operation in conjunction with a well-established academic program for U.S. students, Cursos Estudios Hispánicos, at the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.

In the fall, students take one required Spanish language course, at least three courses offered through Estudios Hispánicos (taken with other international students), and can matriculate in regular university course offerings in social sciences, humanities, and engineering if they demonstrate an adequate language level. Students who are unable to matriculate in regular courses must take at least one (1 or 2 credit) humanities seminar along with Spanish students.

In spring, when students come with six semesters of college level Spanish, they take one required language course, one course through Estudios Hispánicos, two courses chosen from the regular university departments, and one humanities seminar.

Upon arrival in Madrid, students took a two hour language placement exam. All CIEE students were placed in the advanced language Spanish courses and did not have to take the composition course.

Students were also able to enroll in courses with Spanish students in the humanities seminars and in regular university courses. The opportunity to take humanities seminars was particularly useful for students who enrolled in the fall semester. Students who could not stay until the end of January to complete the regular university course work with Spanish students opted for the humanities seminars. This was particularly useful since the humanities courses are completed before the fall semester ends in December and allow for academic integration with full-time Spanish students from the Carlos III. The humanities seminars are a distinctive feature of this Spanish university and one of a kind

in the national education system. CIEE students enrolled in the following humanities courses with Spanish peers (out of selection of nearly 60 humanities courses offered each semester):

- Fascism through Film/El facismo a través del ojo del cine
- Introduction to Classic Mythology and Influence on Literature and Art/Introducción a la Mitología Clásica y sus ecos en la literatura y el arte.
- Is God Dead? The Crisis of the Divine in Modern Times and Post Modernity/¿Ha muerto Dios? La crisis de Dios en la modernidad y la posmodernidad
- Role of the Actor in Spain from 16th through the 19th Century/El actor en España desde el siglo XVI al siglo XIX.
- Women, Film and Literature in Contemporary Spain/ Estudios de Género: Mujer, cine y literatura en la España Contemporánea (Del S. XIX al S. XXI).
- Construction of Roman Greco Culture in 18th and 19th C. Europe/La construcción de la antigüedad Grecorromana en la Europa de los siglos XVIII y XIX
- Survey of Immigration and Integration in Spain/Aproximaciones a la inmigración y a la integración

In this academic year, only one student, a business major, was able to stay until June for regular university exams. Other students opted for the Cursos Estudios Hispánicos or humanities seminars since they had to return to the US at the end of May. She enrolled in a regular semester course entitled: Foreign Trade Strategies/ Técnicas de comercio exterior. This course required the student to work with two other Spanish students on a 45-page research paper and present their findings on US import trends in Spain at the end of the semester via an oral presentation in front of the class with 38 students. The student also had to complete a final written exam, and commented that a lot of reading was necessary to be able to complete the course successfully. CIEE offers Spanish student tutors but none of the CIEE participants required this.

Several students mentioned that some Cursos Estudios Hispánicos were not challenging in comparison to their home school. Most CIEE students received a B average for their academic work and only one CIEE student was awarded by the university with “Honors” for her superior academic work in the spring semester.

In the spring semester, the Estudios Hispánicos offered two additional 3-credit language courses as electives, Business Spanish and Colloquial Spanish. All students are required to take a Spanish language course and could complement it with one of these two additional offerings with CIEE approval. One CIEE student enrolled in the Business Spanish course and enjoyed the academic rigor, accessibility of the professor and its solid texts.

Non-academic Features

Orientation

Both semesters started with a two day orientation held at a hotel in downtown Madrid near the Sol area. The CIEE staff speaks in Spanish and commits to the language pledge from the beginning, but all information is repeated and is also available in the student manual in English. Students seemed surprised that the orientation was held in Spanish, but this also prepared them when meeting their hosts at the end of orientation

and feeling more at ease with the language. The orientation is timed in such a way so that students can have breaks, enjoy healthy meals, and get to know the city through CIEE organized walking tours, use of public transportation, quick visits to banks, pharmacy, post office, and cultural centers such as Círculo de Bellas Artes, Casa de America, Casa Encendida, etc. CIEE staff also visited quiet, smoke free study areas in Madrid, including a library open on the weekends where student can read and study. Students also visited the Biblioteca Nacional where all the national archives in Spanish are located. On a more social level, students also learned about gender, sexuality and social issues from a local Spanish peer and visited a Madrid neighborhood known for nightclubs and cafes. The academic orientation took place at Carlos III and is organized by the university. Each professor speaks to students in groups where they explain the course expectations, content and final evaluation.

Excursions

The CIEE program sponsors its own activities but also finances students who want to participate with the University excursions and activities, allowing for integration with Spanish peers. CIEE excursions this year included professor guided three-day trips to the north in Asturias and the south, to the Andalusian city of Sevilla, as well as one-day trips to the historic city of Toledo, Alcalá de Henares and El Escorial. Due to the small number of participants, the program collaborated with the CIEE programs in Alcalá and Palma de Mallorca on some trips. The student dynamics were not as successful as hoped so these linking will be minimized in the future.

Students also participated in Carlos III excursions to Barcelona, Salamanca, Valencia and Cadiz. This was a great way for them to meet Spanish students from the university, share hotel rooms, eat together, etc. Some students, however, preferred to have CIEE exclusive excursions because they felt that the quality of lodging facilities, meals, and transportation comfort was of a higher quality. Most CIEE students also participated with the language exchange program through the Carlos III where they could meet with Spanish peers on campus for a coffee and language exchange. CIEE staff will prepare students next year on how to conduct these conversations more effectively and not see this activity as a measuring stick to meet Spaniards. There remain large cultural differences between US and Spain on how a friendship is defined and CIEE students this past year were quickly disappointed due to this cultural difference. Similarly, the short stay in Spain (up to 4 months) is also a challenging reality that bars students from developing a more significant relationship with Spanish peers. CIEE staff did recruit Spanish students from the university to help during orientation and semester activities. CIEE students attended movie nights, a walking tour of historic Madrid, a visit to the grave of St. Valentine, a walk through Retiro park, a cooking class, potluck dinners and a home stay welcome party with Spanish students as some examples of program organized events.

Housing

The CIEE program recruited hosts who are young, energetic and have a keen interest in having American students as housemates. None of the Spanish hosts had accommodated students before in their apartments. To ensure a rewarding experience, CIEE staff had three group meetings throughout the academic year to assist hosts in various areas. Primarily, CIEE staff offered support and advise to hosts on safety and emergency procedures, keeping a balance with student expectations, explaining U.S. cultural norms, the millennial student phenomenon, Carlos III academic expectations,

the CIEE language pledge, culture shock and re-entry preparation, etc. CIEE staff has been able to locate excellent hosts in downtown Madrid.

CIEE staff also changed the housing questionnaire format to get a better sense of student preferences and habits before arriving in Madrid. The CIEE program mission is geared towards independent students, but it is clear that students have different cultural ideas, for example, about the meaning of "independent." Therefore, some questions now are geared towards a better understanding of a students' need for individual space, desire for group experiences, time alone, etc.

Meals

There have been several changes with the meal options this past year. This had been a confusing issue with students complaining that they were receiving conflicting information before departure. Nevertheless, the arrangement settled upon by spring was to offer meals as part of the program fee. In case a student opts to cook all or some of their own meals, the CIEE program will give those students a monthly food stipend to cover for those expenses. In other cases, hosts will offer some or all of the meals to students. In addition, all CIEE participants have direct kitchen access in their home stay apartments where they are allowed to store food and prepare their own meals as necessary. In the fall semester, many students who opted for "no meals" also did not know how to cook, causing a series of problems that required staff intervention. During spring semester, in response to the fall experience, CIEE organized an introductory cooking class with a private chef to teach students basic cooking skills by preparing some easy Spanish recipes. CIEE staff also visited a public market and a food shop with the participants to explain healthy meal concepts, Spanish ideas on food, diets, budgeting accordingly, shop hours, etc. Staff also recommended where to continue cooking classes if participants were interested to learn more. Overall, this arrangement worked well as of the spring semester and will be expanded in the future.

Distance to Getafe Campus

Students in the fall semester raised concerns about the distance between downtown Madrid and the Getafe campus. There were public roadworks in the fall semester that created detours for all busses and rides up to 40 minutes for several weeks. Alternate transportation is by public trains that reach the campus in 15 minutes from the Atocha train station. The distance was explained more clearly in the spring orientation and there were no student concerns about this during that semester. In addition, the new program catalog has been modified to clearly state that distance by public bus can vary between 15 to 20 minutes from the Atocha train station

Race, Gender and Religion Issues

Several communications from sending school advisors as well as visitors raised concerns about racism in Madrid, especially for African American and Latino students. However, this was not a pressing issue for program participants on site. CIEE orientation discusses past student experiences regarding race in Spain and throughout the semester organize RD pizza meetings for all students to discuss, among other cultural themes, race issues in Spain with an invited guest speaker. Women students this past academic year have commented on various catcalls on the street which they describe as a general nuisance, but did not report any personal fear or physical threats. CIEE orientation also dedicates sufficient time to talk about various strategies in dealing with gender issues in the Spanish context. Most women participants say in the end that they just learn to adapt to it despite their initial anxiety. Jewish students were also surprised

to hear Spanish comments that deny the existence of the Holocaust, but did not report any physical fear. The CIEE program also invited a Muslim student from the Universidad Carlos III to speak about her personal experiences as a counterpoint to media reports in Madrid about Islamophobia and harassment against Muslim women who wear veils.

Students

Enrollment		Gender	
Semester	8	Male	4
Academic Year		Female	4

Average Student GPA 3.28

Top Enrollments by Major

Spanish Language & Literature
Latin American Study
International Business
Film & Cinema Study
Accounting

Top Sending Schools

Gordon College
Kenyon College
Tulane University
University of Colorado at Boulder
Villanova University

Future Directions

In the fall of 2006, CIEE will introduce an internship in the areas of arts, community service or teaching English, government and business, media and journalism. Senzeni Steingruber who was part-time housing coordinator last year has joined the CIEE staff full-time to coordinate the internship program.

As mentioned above, all meals are included with the program fee, though students retain the previous flexibility of having some shared meals with hosts and a stipend to cover the rest.