

**Annual Study Center Review
CIEE Study Center Summer Language and Culture Program in Seville, Spain
Summer
2007**

CIEE Program Director: Catharine Scruggs, Program Director, Western Europe,
cscruggs@ciee.org

CIEE Resident Director: Mariteresa Frain

CIEE Resident Coordinators: Session I: Nancy Merchant; Session II: Olga Merino;
Session III: Luisa Rodriguez

CIEE Academic Consortium Board Program Evaluation: www.ciee.org

CIEE Academic Consortium Board Monitor: Valerie Eastman, Scripps College

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 goals of the Summer Language and Culture program are to develop students' Spanish language skills and to expose them to Spanish culture through a brief but intense immersion experience. These goals are achieved through courses in Spanish language and culture, a conversational exchange program, a homestay program, and local visits and excursions.

These goals were met during summer 2007.

New & Noteworthy Features

Academic

The program has multiple sessions that run from late May until late July.

The following courses were offered during the first session:

Beginning Spanish Language

Intermediate Spanish Language

Advanced Spanish Language (two groups)

Politics and Economics in the European Union (taught in English)

Three Cultures in Spain: Jews, Christians and Muslims (taught in Spanish)

The following courses were offered during the second session:

Beginning Spanish Language

Intermediate Spanish Language

Advanced Spanish Language

Spanish Culture and Society (taught in English)

Social Justice and Human Rights: The Cases of Spain and the European Union (taught in English)

Three Cultures in Spain: Jews, Christians and Muslims (taught in English)

The following classes were offered during third session:

Intermediate Spanish

Politics and Economics in the European Union (taught in English)

Spanish Culture and Society (taught in Spanish)

Short Stories in Spain and Latin America (taught in Spanish)

Social Justice and Human Rights: The Cases of Morocco. (taught in English)

The legacy of Al-Andalus in Andalusia and Morocco (taught in English)

Social Justice and Human Rights: The Cases of Spain and the EU was a new class. Apart from learning the theoretical bases of human rights in class, students were able to experience the topic first hand by participating in a volunteer project. The course was taught by the same professor that teaches a course on this subject during the academic year. The course enrolled nine students and was well evaluated.

Social Justice and Human Rights: The Cases of Morocco was also a new class this summer. This class gave students the opportunity to learn about human rights and travel to Morocco to see this country's social situation first hand. The course was taught by the professor who teaches the same course in the Liberal Arts program during the academic year.

Out of Classroom Activities

All classes offered during the three summer sessions have out of class activities incorporated into the curriculum. As each session class is three weeks long, all students participate in at least one cultural activity related to the subject area each week.

During the first session, the activities included:

Pabellon de Marruecos

Church tour in Seville

Italica

Open air market in Seville

Movie: "La Caja"

Fine Arts Museum

Theater production

Casa Pilatos

El Rocio pilgrimage

Natural park Doñana

Marmoles Temple

Mosque/Church of the Savior

Medina

Palacio of Lebrija

Cordoba

Alcazar and city walls

Golden and Silver Towers/Atarazanas

Barrio Santa Cruz and the Jewish Quarter

Mudejar Churches

Hospital de la Caridad

During the second session, the activities included:

Archeological Museum
Italica
Córdoba
Alcázar
Archivo General de Indias
Cathedral
Fine Arts Museum
Museum of Traditions and Crafts
Parliament of Andalusia
Market on la calle Feria
Roman temple on calle Mármoles
Archaological Museum
Ibn Adabás Mosque
Almohad Alcázar
Carmona
Palacio de la Buhaira
Torre del Oro
Torre de la Plata
Giralda
Barrio Santa Cruz
Cathedral
Mudejar Churches of Seville
Atarazanas
Exhibition "Seville in its history"
Puerto de Santa María, Cádiz
Excursion to Morocco (June 21-24): Asilah, Rabat, Fez and Chefchaouen

During the third session, the activities included:

Fundación Focus-Abengoa.
Trip to Jerez. Bodega González-Byass.
Triana Market
Andalusia Parliament
Roman Seville
Mezquita de Ibn Adabás
Alcázar
Barrio Santa Cruz.
Judería
Cathedral
Hospital de la Caridad
Museo de Bellas Artes
Walk around the Sevilla 1929 Expo
Museo de Artes y Costumbres Populares
Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporáneo
Torre del Oro and Museo Naval
Museo Militar
Calle Feria Market
Pantenón de los Sevillanos Ilustres de Sevilla (Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer)
Santa Inés Convent

A one-week trip to Morocco
Calle Mármoles Temple
Lebrija Palace
Seville Medina
Trip to Jeréz and the Puerto de Santa María
Atarazanas and Almohad City Walls
Gothic-Mudéjar churches
Trip to Carmona
Trip to Granada

Non-Academic Features

Cultural Activities/Field Trips

During each session, CIEE organized an array of activities as detailed above.

Session I

Students went on a day trip to Aracena and an overnight to Malaga and Antequera.

While students enjoyed the visit to Aracena, some complained about the visit to Malaga. As students enjoyed the hiking option on the trips, these will be included in future trips. Staff will reorganize the itinerary for the Malaga city visit based upon student feedback.

Session II

Students went on a day trip to Cadiz and an overnight to Granada. Students evaluated these trips positively.

Session III

Students went on a day trip to Córdoba and an overnight to Extremadura. Given the high temperatures during this time of year in Seville, these trips will be offered during Session I in the future.

Several intercambio (language exchange) get togethers were organized each session during orientation. It was very difficult getting comparable numbers of Spanish students to show up given that these coincide with the university exam period and then vacations. Students also could ask for an intercambio from the CIEE database after the meetings. However, securing one on one intercambios for summer participants still remains a serious challenge.

Sports

Weekly basketball and volleyball matches were held throughout the summer.

Baloncesto – Between five and 11 CIEE students participated. Participation of Spaniards was constant, once University exams were finished in the middle of June. Approximately, 11 Spaniards attended each week.

Voleibol – Between one and ten CIEE students attended weekly. Participation of Spaniards was low, perhaps because volleyball is not a very popular recreational sport in Spain. On average there were only 1 or 2 Spaniards in attendance each week.

Housing

All students were housed in Spanish homestays in Seville. A special effort was made based upon comments from last year to have students living closer to the CIEE Study Center. Approximately 30% of all summer participants were doubled up in homestays. Special efforts will be made next spring to find even more homes closer to the CIEE Study Center to lower this percentage. Of greatest concern are a couple of reports of hosts being unaware of medical conditions or dietary restrictions of students. The housing coordinator is aware of this important issue, and will guarantee that information related to these types of issues is communicated to hosts without fail.

Evaluations of homestay experiences were quite good. Students generally made a very positive connection with the host, although communication barrier are also noted as a common frustration.

Community Engagement and Integration

The nine students enrolled in the Social Justice and Human Rights: The Cases of Spain and the EU course each participated in a volunteer project as part of that course. Students worked in a hospital, a nursing home and a daycare in a marginalized neighborhood.

Overall students were extremely positive with 100% of the students recommending the future collaboration with the organizations.

In all cases, the students work with a coordinator or supervisor and the comments were generally positive with regards to the support they received from the coordinator or supervisor on behalf of the organization/institution.

Language can be a particularly challenging element of the volunteer project and typically is among the student's primary concerns upon starting the project or the cause of frustration experienced during the project, although, surprisingly, it is much less of an issue in the post-program evaluations. It must be said that the students' language level is as much of a deciding factor in his/her final placement as preference and availability.

Time is the biggest challenge facing the effective realization of the volunteer projects during the summer intensive sessions for several reasons: the duration of the course/volunteer project; the season of the year; and the hours of operation of the organizations. Fifteen days of class in which to realize a volunteer project leaves little time for the students to have a meaningful contribution in the form of their volunteer service and there are few organizations willing to take on students for such a short amount of time. This greatly limits the range of choice available to the student. Furthermore, summer is difficult as most organizations dealing with children scale back or cut entirely their programs for the duration of the summer break, further limiting the range of possible volunteering. And finally, the summer months mean that many organizations only operate in the morning which is yet another restriction in the students' available options.

Students in the summer sessions had very realistic expectations for their volunteer projects and were generally quite open, flexible and receptive to all options.

Challenges & Future Directions

Academic Challenges

Students attending the summer sessions come with zero to advanced Spanish language skills. This presents many different challenges when managed as a single program.

Non-Academic Challenges

Internet access

A 10-computer computer lab and free wifi connection were available in the Palacio. Students were also provided with 10 hours of internet at a local cybercafé. Internet is not available in most homestays, but in the future students may be able to contract their own in-home internet access through new service.

Student Integration into Community

During the first summer session, the CIEE activities coordinator set up a luncheon with students living in a residence hall. Five students had lunch with a group of sixty Spanish students in their residence hall. The CIEE students were very happy with the experience. In the future this interaction will be continued.

The main point of integration for summer, however, is through the homestay placement. Given the short duration of the program, participant language level, weekend trips, the timing of university exams, and to some extent the hot weather in the afternoon, it is truly difficult for students to participate in activities which would lead to a deeper integration into the local community.

Future Directions

In the future, staff will implement the language commitment with the more advanced Spanish speakers and provide the beginning students with the proper linguistic support they need to progress reasonably in the language during their stay in Seville.

Special efforts will be made to secure more homestays closer to the Palacio to prevent having to doubling students up during the summer sessions.

Itineraries for field trips and excursions will be sent to students in advance of the sign up date. One volunteer day will be coordinated for each session.