

# Universidad de Guanajuato 🏠

spanish language



## program snapshot

- Jump into an intense language experience
- Immerse yourself in this vibrant and colorful community
- Change pace with a study trip typically to Mexico City
- Visit museums and nearby sites of historical and cultural interest
- Participate in a *Jornada de servicio* (service day) in the community

## what you'll learn

The Spanish Language summer program is designed to help students maximize their learning by creating critical dialogues across language and culture and widening students' ideas about the themes at hand. The goal is to enable students to leave the program feeling confident about their new knowledge, humble about how much more there is to learn, and passionate about finding ways to continue their learning long after the program ends.

## thoughts from abroad

The Guanajuato summer program asks students to take some risks in their learning. It demands initiative, a willingness to work hard in new ways, and a desire to open oneself up to some of the astounding intellectual, personal, creative, and linguistic possibilities that can come from living in another culture.

Guanajuato provides an intimate and vibrant place in which to take these risks. The opportunity to study in Guanajuato allows students to rethink definitions of community, the relationship between language and culture, and what it means to become a Spanish speaker in this particular moment in history.

— Karen Rodríguez, Resident Director

### About the Resident Director

Dr. Karen Rodríguez has directed study abroad programs in Latin America since 1997. She has taught undergraduate courses for study abroad students in Mexico and Venezuela and has been a faculty member at Bard College's Language and Thinking Institute and Upward Bound's summer institute at Georgetown University. Dr. Rodríguez received her Ph.D. in Cultural Studies from the University of Kent. Her research interests include critical theory, psychoanalysis, and the intersections between writing, culture, and subjectivity. Her graduate studies are in Cultural Studies, Applied Anthropology, and Latin American Studies.

### About Other CIEE Staff

Eduardo Rodríguez has worked for more than a decade in the field of international education. He handles finance and logistics, plans and leads study trips, and provides daily assistance. He is heavily involved in community service and directs the Center's *Jornadas de Servicio*.



## about guanajuato

The CIEE Study Center at the Universidad de Guanajuato is located in the colonial city of Guanajuato, about four hours north of Mexico City. Nestled in a wrinkled valley, Guanajuato boasts a spectacularly colorful and gravity-defying architecture. With a population of 75,000, Guanajuato remains a conservative and provincial city; however, it is intellectually richer and more diverse than one might expect, thanks in large part to the vibrant presence of the Universidad de Guanajuato.

## academics

### Academic Program

The summer program consists of one three-week session. Community-Based Spanish, offered at intermediate and advanced levels, emphasizes language learning through a critical and constant engagement with local community members.

### Academic Culture

The courses are designed for U.S. undergraduates and, for the most part, teaching and learning methods will be familiar to American students. While in-class methods are fairly traditional, the secondary components involve experiential learning methods in order to immerse students in the community. In the afternoon, students explore local sites as part of the course, as well as participate in workshops and other hands-on activities.

### Nature of Classes

Classes are held with CIEE students only and are quite small and dynamic. Students are frequently asked to engage the local community or local cultural venues as part of their coursework.

### Language Environment

As students gain proficiency in Spanish, resident staff encourage them to use their language skills in everyday settings. This fosters a learning community that contributes to both Spanish language proficiency and understanding of Mexican society.

### Grading System

The program is intellectually rigorous, and students should expect to be active participants in all courses. Assessment is based on both written and oral work and enthusiastic participation in the learning process.



## where you'll study

Founded in 1732, the Universidad de Guanajuato ranks among the top institutions of higher education in Mexico. Currently there are 21,000 students; 8,000 of whom are pursuing undergraduate degrees in 46 disciplines. With the University's facilities scattered around Guanajuato, its intellectual and cultural energy is felt throughout the community. All CIEE courses are held in the *Departamento de Lenguas*. Established in 1976, the *Departamento de Lenguas* offers Mexican students classes in languages other than Spanish, and foreign students classes in Spanish.

### living

#### Housing and Meals

Housing and meals are included in the program fee. All students live in a Mexican homestay. Each student has a private room, although some may share households.

The program adheres to a high standard of cultural immersion and expects students to respect and engage the family both affectively and intellectually. Students can expect a more conservative, small-town atmosphere that will require some adjustments on their part. The opportunity to live with a family is a privilege, and it offers students a unique source of cultural learning, language practice, and personal growth.

#### Orientation

A brief, but intense, mandatory orientation helps students integrate into Mexican culture and make the most of their short time

abroad. Students prepare for the move into their homestay; review academic, logistical, health, and safety information; and construct some basic cultural knowledge with which to begin the program. A language placement exam is also administered to place students in the appropriate course. Ongoing support is provided on an individual and group basis throughout the program.

#### Internet

The *Departamento de Lenguas*, where CIEE-designed courses are held, offers free wireless access in the common patio area, providing a comfortable place to work. Printing can be done at local Internet cafés. Wireless access is also increasingly available in public sites and at local cafés downtown. All students must type and print work for all courses and should expect to rely on the cafés for some or all of this access.

### culture

#### Cultural Activities and Field Trips

The program includes one overnight excursion, typically to Mexico City, where they visit the pyramids and world-famous art museums, among other sites.

#### Jornadas de Servicio—Service Option

CIEE students are invited to take part in several *jornadas de servicio*. These are generally modest afternoon community service options that include such activities as conducting an art workshop in a rural school, organizing an environmental education activity in town, or painting a hospital lobby. Participation is open to all, and any necessary supplies, travel, and meals are provided by CIEE.

### costs

#### CIEE Fees

Summer 2009: \$2,800  
Summer 2010: available 12/15/09

The CIEE fees for 2009 include an optional on-site airport meet and greet, full-time leadership and support, tuition, housing and meals, orientation, cultural activities, local excursions, one overnight excursion (typically to Mexico City), a comprehensive student handbook, pre-departure advising, and a CIEE iNext travel card, which provides insurance and other travel benefits.

#### Estimated Additional Costs (Summer 2009)

Transportation (round-trip based on U.S. East Coast departure)	\$ 800
Personal Expenses	\$ 200
Books and Supplies	\$ 30
Local Transportation	\$ 20
<b>Total Estimated Additional Costs</b>	<b>\$ 1,050</b>

Check our website for current fees.

### eligibility

- Overall GPA 2.75
- 2 semesters of college-level Spanish or equivalent

### duration

3 weeks: early July–late July



## coursework

### Program Requirements

All students take Community-Based Spanish at their level with the corresponding workshop.

### Credit

Total recommended credit is 3 semester/4.5 quarter hours.

Contact hours include 45 hours of in-class instruction plus 6 hours of community-based learning.

### Languages of Instruction

Spanish, English

### Faculty

Students are taught by local faculty and CIEE staff.

## courses

### Required CIEE Community-Based Spanish Courses

*These courses are designed for students who wish to progress rapidly in their language skills and engage in intense cultural learning as they immerse themselves in the local community. All students enroll in a formal Spanish language class that meets daily for three hours. Classroom work is then explicitly linked to interactions around town, providing students opportunities to use the target language in a range of authentic native environments and to learn about Mexican culture en route. The homestay offers students another source of insight into the culture, as well as the opportunity to practice Spanish language skills. Each language course includes the following two required components:*

**Spanish Instruction at Appropriate Level (in Spanish):** 45 hours. This course uses local community resources to contextualize language learning within the Guanajuato socio-cultural setting. Texts, assignments, and discussions address such themes as local tradition and current social and political issues. Brief community explorations are incorporated into the daily class. Students work on all skill areas.

**Community-Based Learning Workshop (in English):** 6 hours. Facilitated by the Resident Director, this section invites students to view their learning not only as an individual process, but also as one firmly situated in the community. The relationships between language, culture, and identity are explored. Course assessment takes into account enthusiastic participation, the student's willingness to take risks in one's thinking and learning, and several written assignments. This counts towards the overall grade for the Community-Based Spanish Course.

### SPAN 2201 GUSU

#### Community-Based Intermediate Spanish

This course offers intermediate students the opportunity to refine their existing language skills so that they can communicate at increasingly sophisticated levels, both orally and in writing. Their abilities to converse spontaneously in real-life situations in the community are emphasized, helping them develop fluency. They also carry out short field exercises on targeted themes. Students integrate this community-based learning by writing about their own local experiences, studying more advanced grammatical structures, and reading relevant local texts. Mexican idiomatic expressions are also studied. Work on pronunciation and intonation round out the course.

### SPAN 3201 GUSU

#### Community-Based Advanced Spanish

Designed for advanced students, this course allows students to polish their skills for both professional and academic purposes. The class hones in on the finer points of grammar, more subtle cultural issues related to Mexican Spanish, and effective oral and written communication. Students practice sustaining more complicated conversations on abstract themes as they interact with their host families and others in Guanajuato.





### a student's story

Living in Guanajuato has been excellent. The city itself is beautiful—a colonial gem—and I think the best kept secret in Mexico. The people are very friendly and helpful, even more so when they discover you are here to learn Spanish. There is a very active student scene, and you are likely to find the streets of the *Centro* crowded even on a Monday night.

Mexican culture, in sharp contrast to American culture, is very relaxed. Time here takes on a whole new significance, or maybe it just has less significance. It is rare to see anyone in a hurry, and those in a hurry seem to stand out. I have enjoyed learning about the differences in our respective cultures, and when these differences are examined, one begins to see that nearly everything is shaped by ideas of culture in one way or another. My ideas about things that I used to take as being universal are really linked to the country and society I was raised in.

My teachers are all very friendly and our relationship is informal, which contributes to a relaxed classroom atmosphere. But make no mistake; the classes aren't exactly easy! In fact, they are just the perfect blend of challenge and fun, and I have discovered that since I arrived here, my Spanish has improved ten-fold.

My host family is very nice, and they make sure that I am well fed every single day. In fact, if I don't eat about four meals a day, they think something is wrong with me! They have helped me with my Spanish as well, and it has been nice to have a home to return to with a hot meal after classes. It took some time to adjust to living with them, their habits and routines, but after that initial period, everything was great.

I would highly recommend studying in Guanajuato to any intrepid student. You will fall in love with this city—everyone does. The decision to come here for me was the best one I could have made.

— Peter Caldwell, University of Oregon