

## **Spring 2018 Capstone**

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## **Beyond Study Abroad: Journeying through Spain and Latin America**

This course is an attempt to reflect on the Spanish-

for discussions on work, relationships, our place in society and, indeed, the world.

**Book List:**

*Rosinante to the Road Again*, John Dos Passos (Spain) Chapters I-IV

will be deducted for every late paper turned in within the week of the assignment. (40%)

Mixed Media project: Students will create a mixed media project that will reflect their impressions of their study-abroad experience. It should last no more than **5-7 minutes** and will be viewed and presented in class. Students who exceed that time frame will be deducted points for each excessive minute. (10%)

Class Structure: There will be a weekly poetry/literary reading and reflection during the first 10-15 minutes. This will be followed by a 30-minute lecture on readings followed by a class discussion on the readings. There will be time for a short 10-minute break. The second 70 minutes will be divided into small group and larger class discussions generated from the 1-page reflection assignments. The professor will take the last 10 minutes of the class to review the following week's assignment. Films viewed in class will be discussed during the same session, time permitting.

Finally, all students should understand the importance of academic integrity. Further, it is expected that all students

Reflection prompts: At what point did the BC program give you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the host country's world? Did you feel accepted? If not, what were the barriers? How did the culture in which you were raised contribute to feelings of acceptance? What elements of Dos Passos's wanderings resonate with your experience? Were you ever motivated to determine what the essence was of the people whose country you shared? Why or why not?

### **Week 3**

**January 30 -**

Christopher Columbus's conquest of Latin America. They hire local actors to play the parts of the indigenous tribes, families and leaders who first to received Columbus and the Spanish conquistadors. Unexpectedly, Sebastián and Costa find their lives increasingly intertwined with those local members of their film, including conflicts arising from strikes directed at privatizing the town's water. Conflicts between career expectations and personal obligations intervene. Alongside the reevaluation of Columbus's legacy, Bollaín's explores what happens to relationships when people open themselves up to unexpected situations. Each individual must confront their own humanity, their own choices, their own limits.

Reflection prompts: How did Costa and Sebastián's career aims conflict with their personal reactions to the Bolivian peasants' demand for the non-privatizations of water? Who did you think would ultimately respond to the human conflicts presented in the film? Were you surprised at Costa and Sebastian's responses? Were you in a situation in which your friendship or potential career aims were jeopardized? How did you react?

## **Week 5**

**February 13, Careers and Friendships in Leonardo Padura's *The Man Who Loved Dogs* (Only Read Chapters indicated in**

inconvenient truths. How did each person grapple with those truths in light of their own careers? What was the ultimate price that each paid?

## **Week 6**

### **February 20 – Career and Friendships**

**Please read Paris Review's Interview with Dos Passos and be ready to discuss in class:** <http://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2015/01/14/good-hearted-naivete/>

Read Elizabeth Thompson Goizueta essay in exhibition catalog *Rafael Soriano: The Artist as Mystic (posted on Canvas)*. There will be a discussion on Leonardo Padura's book and Rafael Soriano exhibition essay. Discussions will address revolutions and twentieth-century political and personal repercussions.

Reflection prompts: What were the political and personal repercussions for the protagonists of the Marxist agenda in Spain, Mexico and Cuba in Padura's novel? With respect to the artist Rafael Soriano, what were the effects of life under a repressive regime? What were the costs on his career, on his friendships? What was his ultimate response?

**First paper due, February 27** - What is friendship, how do we define it? On what is friendship based? Do friendships force us to readjust our thinking, our moral attitudes, and our expectations for life? What were the personal repercussions among the protagonists that we have seen: Soriano, Dos and Hem (observing from the outside), Iván, Ramón and Trotsky (participating from the inside)? What happens when friendships get entangled in exterior events? Were there reassessments in terms of their careers and personal lives between the characters that we have studied?

Keep in mind the books and personalities that we have been examining. What resonated when you were reading Padura's, Hemingway's and Dos's books? How does friendship ultimately square with your worldview, especially for all of you in early adulthood? Look to all three books, *The Man Who Loved Dogs*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Rosinante to the Road Again*, and look at how political events affected Trotsky, Hemingway and Dos Passos, to see how their characters' interactions were affected. Be specific about your observations in the books: there should be original analysis on what you have read and what you think with respect to those protagonists' relationships. Discuss the themes of disillusionment and loss, hope and fidelity.

## **Weeks 7, 9, 10 - Our place in Society**

### **Week 7**

**February 27 – Papers due. Guest speaker – Our place in Society: Career Center/Guest speaker**

How did the student's experience abroad affect life choices? Name five careers that you would have considered before study abroad. Name five careers that you would consider now.

As students face graduation and their own place in society, what are the pushes and pulls that influence that decision? How do factors in one's own culture play into deciding one's place in that society? How did the study-abroad experience as a foreigner in another country affect one's feelings of placement in society? How do we feel towards the issues of immigration, education, and employment, with respect to the Latino/a in our society?

**Week 8 - Spring Break** March 5-9

**Week 9**

**March 13** -- Prof. Eve Spangler will lecture on the water rights in the context of the Israel/Palestine conflict or open discussion on revolutions in twentieth century Spain and

Reflection prompts: How did the social and political upheavals affect these students' worldviews? What were the personal costs? How does one's place in society constrict or expand ones' opportunities for advancement? At what point is society's approval more important than one's moral compass? Is it always recognizable?

### **Week 13**

**April 10 - *Of Love and Shadows*, Isabel Allende**

Poetry meditation: Pablo Neruda



most basically, bravery but more importantly, empathy. The ability to empathize with the other is the single most important factor affecting change in the world.

Reflection prompt: How does the student meet the challenge of integrating those experiences and relationships when they return to this world? What is it like to return to the home country and see it as an “outsider” must see it? As an insider looking out, what are the challenges that arise in assimilating those experiences?

**Second Paper due April 24; please send electronically no later than April 24 at midnight.**

Paper topic: select either Isabel Allende’s *Of Love and Shadow* or Julia Alvarez’s *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*. Use the books as points of departure to examine the themes of the “other” and our place in society. Feel free to incorporate the films, guest-lectures as well as any of the poetry on which we have reflected. How do we relate to others in society? How did the study-abroad experience affect our considerations of the “other” in our society? How did it affect our sense of who we are as sacred and what our place is in this world? Was the ability to empathize with the “other” heightened by the study