Spanish (SPAN) 2500 Latin American Culture (4 units) CSU

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish 2002 with a grade of ‘C’ or better

Advisory: None

Prerequisite knowledge and skills: Before entering the course, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate proficiency in the four skills: listening, comprehension, speaking, and reading as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign languages for the range of Intermediate Low to Intermediate Mid,
2. Understand most Spanish when spoken at a slower than normal pace, and some Spanish when spoken at a normal pace,
3. Ask and answer questions, on topics beyond the most immediate needs and can be understood by sympathetic interlocutors,
4. Write short paragraphs in Spanish about familiar topics relying on practiced material,
5. Read simple material such as short stories, advertisements, newspaper articles and comprehend most of it with few misunderstandings

Total Hours: 64 Total Hours

Catalog Description: This is a course about culture that allows the student to study and research topics of special importance to the Hispanic world from its beginning to the present day. Written and oral presentations are required. Class taught in Spanish

Type of Class/Course: Degree Credit


Additional Required Materials: None

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, a successful student will be able to:

1. Summarize the main historical events that shaped Latin American culture and civilization from the precolonial period to the present time,
2. Identify the major geographical features of Latin America, and
3. List the principal historical figures in Latin America and give their major political and/or cultural contributions.

Course Scope and Content:

Unit I The Great Pre-Colombian Civilizations I
A. Mesoamerica
B. The Olmec
C. Mesoamerica’s Classic Period (300-650/900+ AD)
D. Teotihuacan
E. Maya’s Classic Period (300-900+ AD)
F. Mesoamerica’s Post Classic Period (650/900+-1519)
G. The Enigmatic Toltec
H. The Legend of Quetzalcoatl

Unit II  The Great Pre-Colombian Civilizations II
A. The Lords of Tenochtitlan
B. South America before Columbus
C. Peru before the Incas
D. The Children of the Sun

Unit III  Europe During America's Discovery
A. The Renaissance Spirit
B. Favorable Conditions
C. The Sea and its Mysteries
D. Portugal and the Imagination of a Prince
E. Ivory, Slaves and Spaniards
F. Spain in the Late Fifteenth Century
G. A Man named Colombo
H. The First image of the American Indian

Unit IV  The Conquest of Hispanic America
A. The Newspaper of the Island (1492-1519)
B. Hernán Cortés and the Conquest of México (1519-1521)
C. The Conquest of Perú (1524-1533)
D. The Conquest of the Southern Cone of South America
E. Myths that Created Realities

Unit V  The Colonial System
A. Controversies Surrounding the Indigenous Population
B. The Imperial Monarchy
C. The Commercial Monopoly
D. Gold and Silver from the Indies
E. From the “Encomienda” to the Hacienda
F. Slavery
G. The Church in America

Unit VI  Society, Life and Culture of the Colonial World
A. Some Hispanic Americans Were More Equal than Others
B. Imperial Monarchy
C. Intellectual Life
D. Erudition and Scientific Studies
E. Arts: From Renaissance to Baroque
F. The Letters
Unit VII  Nineteenth Century: Independence and its Consequences
   A. Preface to the Storm
   B. Napoleon in Spain: The Spark that Started the Fire
   C. Mexico
   D. Central America
   E. Caribbean Area
   F. South America
   G. “The Liberator”
   H. Jose de San Martin
   I. The Final Chapter
   J. A Problematic Peace
   K. Consequences of Independence

Unit VIII  Latin America from a Bird's Eye View
   A. Terminology
   B. Physical Dimensions and Geographic Contrasts
   C. The Human Map
   D. Mexico
   E. Central America
   F. Caribbean Area
   G. South America
   H. But is there really a Latin America?

Unit IX  Twentieth Century: The Latin American Horizon
   A. Political-Economic Horizon
   B. The World of Latin American Values
   C. Social Classes
   D. Religious Feeling
   E. Woman in Latin America
   F. Drug Trafficking

Unit X  Hispanics in the United States
   A. Hispanic Presence in the United States
   B. Who is Hispanic?
   C. Family and the Neighborhood
   D. Religion
   E. Music
   F. Mexican-Americans
   G. The Dilemma of the Undocumented
   H. Puerto Ricans
   I. Cubans
   J. A Note on Latino Literature
   K. Bilingualism and Multiculturalism

Learning Activities Required Outside of Class

The students in the class will spend a minimum of 8 hours per week outside of the regular class time doing the following:

1. Reading
2. Doing Research
3. Preparing Oral Presentations
4. Studying

Methods of Instruction

1. Lecture
2. Group Discussion
3. Individualized Instruction
4. Power Point Presentations
5. Video Lectures
6. Videos

Methods of Evaluation

1. Exams
2. Research Paper Using MLA Guidelines
3. Oral Presentations
4. Participation Cards

Supplemental Data:

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