Directed Spanish Study Abroad (DISSTA):
The Spanish Experience
(6 semester credits)

DATES:
July 1– August 5, 2005

LOCATION, HOST, AND DESCRIPTION:
The Spanish Experience is a five-week immersion learning experience spent living and studying in Spain. The formal academic portion of the program takes place for four weeks in the central Castilian city of Valladolid, capital of the region of Castilla y León in the heart of Spain. Valladolid is a bustling city of some 500,000 inhabitants combining the character of an historical enclave and a prosperous urban environment with the dynamism of a modern cosmopolitan hub of commerce and industry. Classes are held at the Centro de Idiomas on the Miguel Delibes campus of the Universidad de Valladolid. The Universidad de Valladolid, one of Europe’s oldest institutions of higher learning, is a modern comprehensive and internationally renowned university with some 30,000 students enrolled in its many programs. The Centro de Idiomas, now located in a modern building of recent construction equipped with the latest foreign language teaching technologies, has a half century of experience offering language, culture, and literature courses to foreign students through its Spanish as a Second Language program. Classes in the Centro are taught by regular UVA faculty members with extensive training and experience in the teaching of foreign languages. In addition to providing intensive practice in all four language skills, The Spanish Experience introduces students to the various facets of contemporary life in Spain as a means of gaining a basic understanding of past and present Spanish society. Apart from taking classes, students attending the Spanish as a Foreign Language program have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of cultural and academic activities organized by the university throughout the summer months.
MADRID TRIP:
Following the academic program in Valladolid, an optional five-day group cultural excursion to Madrid may be arranged contingent upon a sufficient number of participants. The trip involves organized visits in Madrid and to nearby sites of particular historical and cultural interest. The cost of the Madrid trip is additional and is not included in the basic program fee.

CREDIT:
Credit for The Spanish Experience may be earned at both the UNDERGRADUATE and GRADUATE levels. All participants enroll in Summer Session II at The University of Akron, for one credit (1C) in either Spanish 311, Spanish Cultural Experience (undergraduates), or in Spanish 697, Individual Reading in Spanish (graduates). This aspect of the program involves the keeping of a daily diary in Spanish, brief written and oral reports on excursions and other activities, and a short individual project that are supervised and graded by the program director. Each participant also enroll at the Universidad de Valladolid in one of the various levels of the Spanish as a Foreign Language program, for which they receive 5 transfer credits. A grade of “C” or better is required by most colleges and universities for the credit to be accepted for transfer. Participants devote approximately 4 hours per day 5 days per week for four weeks to formal study of the Spanish language and its culture. For regular UA students, the Spanish as a Second Language coursework is transferred to The University of Akron subject to prior approval based on completion of the Transient Permission Form. “Guest” students (participants enrolled for the summer only who are not regular Akron students but are full-time at other institutions) must check with their college or university to arrange for acceptance of the transfer credit. All students are required to take a placement examination administered upon arrival by the Centro de Idiomas. Placement is in one of four levels: Elementary, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior. At each level, course work includes the study of grammar (generally 2 hours per day), conversation practice (generally 1 hour per day), and culture (generally 1 hour per day). Classes also stress the development of reading and writing skills, and the cultural component includes Spanish daily life, customs, gastronomy, festivals and traditions; art, music, film, and history; geography and political, commercial and economic characteristics of modern Spain. At the Advanced and Superior levels other course options also are possible, such as Business Spanish and literature courses.

GRADING:
Grading of coursework in the Spanish as a Second Language program is done through regular evaluation of each student’s class participation and written and oral work, and through final examinations designed and given by staff of the Centro de Idiomas. Final authority for all grades rests with the program director. Evaluation and grading of the student’s one-credit work for which they are enrolled at The University of Akron is the sole responsibility of the program director. All students are required to keep a critical journal in Spanish describing daily activities, cultural visits, overall impressions of notable differences between the United States and Spanish customs and mores, and a record of the student’s experience in Spain in general. This journal must be handed in to the program director and, together with the individual assigned activities and final project, will count toward the final grade. A letter grade as well as credit will be awarded by The University of Akron only for the 1C component. The remaining 5 credits apply as transfer credit, with no letter grade appearing on the UA transcript. Students also receive a transcript from the UVA. Again, “guest” students (participants enrolled for the summer only who are not regular Akron students but are full-time at other institutions) must check with their college or university to arrange for acceptance of the transfer credit directly from the UVA.
ELIGIBILITY, ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT:
Participants in the program must have completed successfully three semesters of college Spanish (Spanish 201 at UA) or the equivalent to enroll in The Spanish Experience. Enrollment is for summer session II at UA, with tuition corresponding to the fee for one (1) summer credit. The program is open to both undergraduate and graduate students in good standing and other qualified individuals. Space in the program is limited and admission is selective. All participants must demonstrate evidence of personal maturity and serious commitment to the purposes of the program.

ORIENTATIONS:
During the semester preceding the program, participants are required to complete a few assigned readings and to attend several orientation sessions held by the program director at The University of Akron. Upon arrival, there is a special introduction to the city and to Spanish daily life. This introduction involves walking tours and demonstrations of how to use the different means of transportation, group discussions, and individual reports based on planned activities such as visits to different kinds of stores, cultural landmarks, recreation/entertainment facilities, familiarization with the news media, and with telephone, banking, and postal procedures, etc. The program director is available to meet with and assist students on an individual basis throughout the program.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION:
While in Valladolid, students are housed in single rooms in carefully selected Spanish households, one or two per household. Housing is within walking distance or with easy access to public transportation to classes. The program fee provides for pensión completa, i.e., three meals a day, and laundry once a week while in Valladolid. Bag lunches also are provided if requested for excursions. Alternative housing in a university residence or an apartment may be arranged in special cases.

TRAVEL:
Students are encouraged but not required to travel to Spain from Cleveland as a group. If enough participants choose to travel together, the program director may be able to make group travel arrangements. Travel dates are subject to change, but the anticipated departure date (Cleveland-Madrid) is Friday, July 1, with arrival in Madrid on the morning of Saturday, July 2, then continuing on by chartered bus to Valladolid, with final arrival on the same day (Saturday July 2). Although a tentative group return date is set for Friday, August 5, return travel arrangements are variable according to each student’s plans. Students preferring to make their own travel arrangements may do so, but they must inform the program director of their plans. Following the fifth-week group stay in Madrid, students are free to pursue independent travel. Because of the variable return dates, the duration of such travel depends on the individual and need not be restricted to Spain. The cost of all independent travel is additional and is not included in the basic program fee.
ACTIVITIES:
While in Valladolid, the program includes several weekend excursions organized by the Centro de Idiomas. These excursions are led by expert guides and go to places of artistic or scenic interest. The cost of these excursions is included in the basic program fee. The Centro de Idiomas also sponsors a wide ranging program of regular cultural events, including a contemporary Spanish cinema cycle; traditional Spanish dances; traditional Spanish songs; concerts and theatrical activities; guided tours to museums; and varied sports activities. Likewise, the excellent modern facilities of the UVA include a library and video collection, language laboratories, and athletic facilities. Individualized additional instruction is available at extra cost, and a special feature of the program involves an initial social gathering and subsequent regular meetings and activities with native-speaking conversation partners. The city of Valladolid offers ample opportunities for recreation, shopping, dining out, night life, and enjoyment of lovely parks and promenades. During the time in Madrid, there are guided visits to museums and scenic/historic locations in the capital city as well as trips to nearby locations outside Madrid, such as the city of Toledo and the palace/monastery of El Escorial. Opportunities abound for sightseeing and enjoyment of Madrid’s night life, outdoor cafes, parks, movies, theatres, musical events, restaurants, and other myriad other activities.

INSURANCE:
All participants should be covered by a standard policy in the United States that extends to overseas travel. Adequate insurance coverage is required and is an individual responsibility. The basic fee also includes Spanish medical insurance coverage for the duration of the program.

FACULTY:
Classes are taught by experienced native Spanish university instructors on the staff of the Centro de Idiomas and by the program director. The organization and supervision of the program for summer 2005 will be carried out by Dr. J. Christopher Eustis, Professor of Spanish and Chair of the Department of Modern Languages at The University of Akron. Professor Eustis has lived and travelled extensively in Spain and has organized and directed summer programs in Spain twice since joining the faculty at UA in 2000. He previously founded and directed similar programs at Virginia Tech for five years and in summer 2000 at Case Western Reserve University. Professor Eustis holds degrees in Spanish from Indiana University (Ph.D.), Middlebury College in Vermont and Spain (M.A.), and Brown University (B.A.).

COST:
The projected basic cost per person for summer 2005 is approximately $1,800. This estimate does not include international air fare, UA tuition and fees, or the optional Madrid trip. The estimated overall cost per person is approximately $3,100, including estimated international air fare and UA tuition and fees for 1 credit. This estimate also is based on a minimum of fifteen students and does not include the cost of the Madrid Excursion (rough estimate of $500). The director / UA reserves the right to make cancellations, date and fee adjustments, or any minor changes in the program that may be required. A surcharge may be necessary there are fewer than fifteen participants or if the dollar drops significantly vis-à-vis the Spanish currency. The basic fee includes round-trip bus transportation from Madrid-Valladolid; UVA tuition and fees; room and board in a Spanish household with three meals per day and laundry once a week while in Valladolid; examination and transcript fees; and the cost of cultural visits in Valladolid and weekend excursions. Again, NOT INCLUDED in the basic cost are the price of round-trip air fare between the U.S. and Spain, any additional necessary domestic travel in the U.S., UA tuition and fees for 1 credit-hour, the cost of additional meals while in Valladolid and the cost of variable general personal expenses (passport fee, gifts, daily snacks and refreshments, dining
out, etc.). Also not included is the cost of the optional Madrid stay, including lodging, meals, transportation, admission fees, and any other personal expenses.

**PAYMENT:**
Together with the fully completed application form, a refundable deposit of $100 is due upon application, to reserve a place in the program. A payment of $500 is due by March 1, 2005. The balance must be paid by May 1, 2005. Checks should be made out to “The University of Akron,” with the notation “DISSTA 2005” at the bottom left side of the check. Within the limits of University regulations, cancellations after 1 May would be assessed a fee. Full refund will be made should the director have to cancel the program. All things being equal, acceptance into the program will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

All payments should sent or given directly to Dr. Eustis (or to departmental Administrative Assistant Ms. Susan Baker) in the Department of Modern Languages, 304 Olin Hall, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-1907. Payments must be made by check or arrangements can be made for credit card payments: **Cash payments cannot be accepted.** Receipt of all payments will be acknowledged.

**PERSONAL EXPENSES:**
Students are responsible for daily transportation while in Spain. Public transportation in Spain is inexpensive: 10 rides in the bus costs approximately $5.00, and a monthly pass costs around $30.00. Students also should budget for personal expenses while on excursions. The amount of spending money needed varies with each student and with different life styles. Students should consider their spending patterns at home and take comparable funds for personal expenses. City life in Spain can be comparably expensive to any big city in the United States, with an extremely active nightlife and an abundance of different forms of entertainment, shopping, and eating out opportunities.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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