

**Annual Study Center Review  
CIEE Study Center at the Universitat de les Illes Balears  
Liberal Arts Program  
Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
2009**

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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](http://www.ciee.org).

**Program Goals**

The program goals are to further develop spoken and written Spanish language skills and to pursue a variety of academic fields within the areas of humanities, business, tourism studies, Spanish literature and language, and social sciences. These goals are accomplished through daily interaction in Palma's business, social, and academic environment, a combination of CIEE language and content courses, and direct enrollment in university courses, living with Spanish-speaking families, class-related excursions, a conversations exchange program, a University volunteer program, and an internship opportunity.

The goals were met during the 2008-09 academic year.

**New and Noteworthy**

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**Academic**

**Spanish Language**

**Community Language Commitment**

This year, the two semester groups were outstanding. Overall, they were motivated students who used Spanish when participating in CIEE courses, excursions or cultural activities, and even among themselves. Most students in the fall had a lower level of Spanish, but their interest in learning the language created a positive environment towards using Spanish at all times. Spring students had a higher level of Spanish: three students were yearlong and five students had a high advanced level of Spanish.

The staff used only Spanish with students. Homestays were another important component in the learning process because either they do not know English or they know they should not use it with CIEE students. One of the CIEE professors had a tendency to use English to joke with the students, but he was advised not to do it with future groups. In the spring, there were two students who kept using English even in CIEE contexts. The RD, housing coordinator and language professor talked about this and decided to meet with each one of them at a different moment, to make them reflect on their goals and the advantage of using Spanish. The group also reflected about the use of the language in two of the group meetings throughout the

semester. Due to the conversations with professor, housing coordinator and RD, the group reflection during CIEE meetings, and the positive influence of the rest of the group, this the two students' attitude changed towards speaking Spanish. Usually when a student refuses to use Spanish from the beginning, it is difficult to see such a radical change.

Each student received one or even two language exchange partners. Most students kept meeting with the "intercambio," but those who did not found other ways to speak Spanish because they had made friends at the university or within young members of their homestay. Students who did an internship were the ones who had more opportunities to speak Spanish. Both semesters, internship students made friends or professional connections in the company where they worked, and commented that this was the best opportunity to use their Spanish in real life context.

### **Language training/Language materials for CIEE courses**

At this point, the CIEE language teacher is doing a Masters in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language. She continuously incorporates new material to the class and is open to revision and improvement of her classes.

### **Spanish Language Course Offerings**

Fall

Advanced Spanish Business Writing  
Spanish for Students of Business and Tourism

Spring

Advanced Spanish Business Writing  
Advanced Spanish Writing and Stylistics– (first time offered)

Each semester, the two language classes went together to the market, enjoyed a cooking class, and visited a traditional family owned winery and vineyard as well as a glass factory.

The winery was new this year and provided a more "authentic" experience for students. It was a family owned winery in the center of the island. The owner took students to the vineyards and the cellar, explaining in detail the history of the wine and how it was connected to the history of his ancestors. Afterwards, the class visited the most important glass factory of the Island, Gordiola, where students are offered the possibility of blowing glass.

### **Catalan language**

In spring, two academic year students registered in a Beginning Catalan language class offered by the city's Government. The university did not offer Catalan I in the spring. One spring student enrolled in Catalan II at the university. The three students ended up dropping these classes, because they did not like the methodology. Every year there seem to be more students motivated to take Catalan, but they end up not taking the class because they do not like the options offered at the university. Catalan is taught in a very traditional way focusing on grammar. Because of interest, however, CIEE has developed a new Catalan course that will combine a grammatical and practical approach. This course will be offered in the spring based on student interest.

## **Subject Area Courses**

### **CIEE courses**

CIEE offered *Palma in the Mediterranean* and *Spanish Politics and Society* in both the fall and spring semesters. In addition, in the fall, *Globalization, Human Migration, and Tourism: The Balearic Islands as a Case Study* was offered. In spring, *Advanced Contemporary Spanish Cinema and Literature* was offered.

For *Palma in the Mediterranean* (fall and spring), students visited the Cathedral and Museum of History, La Granja (traditional Mallorca farm house), and Glass Factory La Fiore. For *Globalization, Human Migration, and Tourism: The Balearic Islands*, students visited Riu Hotel and Arenal tourism area, as well as a rural hotel. For *Spanish Politics and Society* (fall and spring), students visited the Madrid Senate (fall), Palma's City Hall (fall), Parliament (spring), Association for the defence of Mistreated Women, and viewed two movies. Finally, in the *Advanced Contemporary Spanish Cinema and Literature*, students attend seven movies.

### **Direct Enrollment courses**

This year, CIEE students enrolled in regular university courses from the following departments: Spanish, Tourism Studies, Business, Marketing and Economics, Philosophy, Geography and History. This year, the registration in regular classes was done more carefully; the Resident Director used the newly created list of regular courses (which includes previous experiences, students' evaluations, RD reflections on the meetings with the professors) in order to advise new CIEE students. Also, there were three academic meetings that concentrated on registering, placement process, teacher interaction, understanding the syllabus and the assignments, and tutoring. Because of this more careful process, almost all classes were very positively evaluated. The only class that received a negative comment was "Literature and Society of Spanish Enlightenment (18th century)" mainly because of professor illness and absence.

In fall, students enrolled in the following regular university courses:

Geography of Tourism and Leisure  
Portuguese as a Second Language and its Literature I  
Portuguese Language, Literature and Civilization  
Contemporary Spanish Literature II  
Modern and Contemporary Spanish Literature  
Literary Aesthetics  
Great Scientific Discoveries  
Human Geography of Spain  
Staff Selection  
Skills and Resources for Oral Communication in Spanish  
Organization and Management of Corporations I  
Management of Hospitality Corporations (School of Hospitality) –  
European Culture (School of Hospitality)

In spring, students enrolled in the following regular university courses:

International Commerce Law  
International Economy  
Electronic Information Systems  
Literature and Society of Spanish Enlightenment (18th century)  
Contemporary Spanish Literature III

Philosophy of the Mind  
Philosophy of Language  
Golden Age Theatre

The Cursos de Español para Extranjeros course *Cultural Encounters in Spain. From Prehistory to the Present* was completely revamped from last year, when it was called *Historia, arte, literatura y tradiciones de la cultura hispánica*. This year, evaluations were all positive. Students rated the content and the professor highly.

### **Outstanding academic experience**

A spring CIEE student took the class International Commerce Law. Every year the professor of the class asks for volunteers who want to participate in MOOT, a prestigious international law contest. The CIEE student decided to be part of the team (formed by only four Universitat de les Illes Balears (UIB) students) and travelled to Madrid for the MOOT contest at the end of June. This year the contest was at the Universidad Carlos III because they won last year. UIB won first prize for the written project, and third prize for the oral competition. The CIEE student won a scholarship to study for a Masters degree at Universidad Carlos III next year, and some of the most prestigious law agencies in the world offered him an internship.

### **Non-Academic Features**

#### **CIEE Orientation**

Both semesters, orientation started a bit later to adapt to students' arrival at the airport. In spring, due to the weather, half of the group missed orientation. Extra sessions were organized for this part of the group.

A new addition to the program this year was four group meetings to discuss topics such as cross cultural issues, reflecting on personal goals, and living in a bilingual community. These meetings were successful and well evaluated by the students. Students participated more in CIEE activities and excursions, and even suggested other activities. Most students were open to reflecting on their expectations, feelings and goals during these meetings.

### **Cultural Activities/Field Trips**

#### **Day or Evening Activities**

These activities are not directly linked to a class, but professors have the calendar of activities and when possible, try to connect the visits to the content of the course.

During the fall and spring students had the following visits, day trips, and other activities:

- Bellver Castle, Gothic round castle from the XIV century
- Miró's Museum and House
- Historic center of Palma
- Contemporary Art Museum
- Night of the Open Museums (fall)
- Roman walls and ruins in Alcudia, Pollença's town and harbour, and views of Formentor's natural park
- Towns of Valldemossa and Deià, and House of the Arkduke connected to the history of this part of the island
- Town of Soller by 1912 train, and Port de Soller by tram, with UIB international students

- Excursion to Es Trenc natural beach (spring)
- Hiking: From Sóller to Fornalutx (spring)
- Palma Aquarium (spring)
- Activities with Spanish students including films, shopping, playing ball games at the beach, playing Spanish table games over dinner, going out to eat tapas, going out to dance salsa
- Half of the students participated in Palma's Half Marathon along the harbour and the coast of Palma (fall)
- Biking Palma Bay
- Theatre – As it is traditional in Palma for the Day of All Saints on November 1 the program went to the theatre to see “Don Juan Tenorio” by Romantic writer José Zorrilla (fall)
- Guided visit to the Christmas gastronomy of the oldest closed convent of Palma
- Thanksgiving at CIEE Housing coordinator's home, with students, professors and other UIB students (fall)
- Outside traditional market with Spanish students (spring)
- Annual presentation and tasting of Mallorcan wines (special invitation by Spanish Department) (spring)
- Joined the traditional celebrations of the Day of the Balearic Islands: demonstration of traditional dances and human castles (“castellers”), medieval Market, and exhibition of the cultural associations representing the different regions of Spain (spring)

### **Overnight Fieldtrips**

Each semester, the program visited Madrid or Sevilla with the Resident Director and a professor of art and history. In fall, the visit was to Madrid. This included Museo del Prado, Museo Reina Sofía, the Royal Palace, Parque del Retiro, The Senate, Debod temple, and tour of Madrid of the Austrian period. In spring, the visit was to Sevilla. This included Plaza de Toros, Barrio de Santa Cruz, Real Alcázar, Catedral, Giralda, Parque de María Luisa, and Plaza de España.

This was the first time the program travelled to Sevilla. It was a successful experience because it was a totally different part of Spain, and students enjoyed the city. Normally the program would have gone to Barcelona but, students tend to go on their own. Students only complaint was that there were too many activities and not enough free time.

### **Housing**

All fall students were housed with families. In spring, two yearlong students lived in shared apartments with Spanish students.

The housing coordinator has prepared a form for the homestays with information about all the excursions happening over the first two weeks, so they know exactly when the student will be home and when to prepare a lunch bag.

Students are now given not only a map with the location of their home and the route to the main square where they can take the metro to campus, but a new map which includes the homestays of the other CIEE students living nearby.

Although the apartment search process was very complex for the students, they were very independent and mature AYP students.

In the fall, some students complained about transportation, specifically about having to spend so much time on campus and then go back to Palma by metro or bus. The fact that this group took so many courses at the university, and was intensively academically involved made it more difficult for CIEE staff to schedule CIEE courses. Therefore CIEE courses had to be spread around the day and include Fridays. Because of this, there were students who spent many hours on campus five days a week. In the spring, it was even more difficult to schedule the CIEE courses.

In the fall, the UIB publishes the schedule of the regular courses very late, which prevents CIEE from contacting students for registration, organizing CIEE's courses schedule, and reserving classrooms. This is not only stressful, but complicated, and this means the RD will need to do the registration by email, and schedules during August or even in September. It had never happened before, but presumably it will keep happening during the next four or five years, while the university gradually adapts to the new Bologna structure of courses. This year the university is opening new courses only for the first year of Grado 1. Next year, UIB will open the new courses of Grado 2, and they will continue like this until they have changed the whole system.

## **Community Engagement and Integration**

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### **For-Credit Internship and Community Service Options**

In fall, two students did the internship at a non profit organization that works with children in India. They helped with the website, with the inventory of the local store (where they sell art-crafts made in India), the fairs around the island, and the year fair in Palma which lasted three days.

In spring, three students worked at a bank (helping with the international clients' accounts), a contemporary art museum (classifying news of the exhibitions in the media, and helping to organize the events and new exhibitions), and a marketing agency (preparing a study of the potential Chilean market, and helping with the website).

Each student evaluated their experience positively, and did outstanding final presentations and final projects. The five of them totally integrated in the company, spoke Spanish at all times, and felt welcomed by the other employees. Most of them became friends with other employees who even helped them in their projects.

Starting in the spring, the University opened the possibility to use UIB bikes for free, so students now can move around campus ecologically. This is especially convenient for students doing an internship, since Parc Bit, the technological park where most business students work, is connected to campus by a 5 minute-ride bike-path.

## **Challenges**

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### **Academic**

#### **Spanish Language**

In the fall, the language placement was very effective because the two language courses fit the two different levels in the group. In the spring, since the two language courses dealt with different topics, students chose the class because of the content and not their language level. Therefore, in both classes there were students with very different levels, especially in the class "Advanced Spanish Writing and Stylistics," which was offered for the first time in the spring. The

professor had to adapt the class to a wide diversity of levels, from one student who still had problems speaking, to a student who spoke fluently. All students complained that the class included too much theory instead of exploring the creative part of writing, and that because of this, it was not engaging. At the end of the semester, the RD and the professor met with the students and have now reworked the syllabus for the new year.

### **CIEE Courses**

All courses were positively evaluated, except “Globalization, Human Migration, and Tourism: The Balearic Islands as a Case Study” in the fall. Most students complained that the projects, paper and homework were not clearly explained, and they were always confused about what they had to do. They also complained that the course did not meet their expectations. For spring 2009, the professor redid the syllabus (and changed the title of the class to “Tourism, Economy and Society of the Balearic Islands”), to include more business aspects, and a clearer schedule of lessons and assignments. A new creative project was added: students will evaluate the final proposals for the new development plan of Arenal, one of the oldest and most diminished tourist areas of Mallorca; and students will create their own development plan for this area of Palma.

### **Future Directions**

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The program will continue to organize four meetings every semester to discuss multicultural issues and announce events.

The RD will work on incorporating and evaluating (meeting professors, reading new syllabi, and assessing students' evaluations), and translating the “Grado” courses that will gradually substitute the “licenciatura” courses. This will not be so dramatic because it will be gradual, every year the UIB will only change the courses for one year. It will be interesting to see how these classes function with the new Bologna system: more participation in class, smaller groups, continuous assessment, and more follow up by the professor.

Internships are a strong component of the program and each semester the relationship between UIB tutors and companies is growing stronger with CIEE students. There was a concern of how the worldwide financial crisis would affect the interest of the companies in interns, but for the moment UIB professors have managed to find smaller and interesting companies open to admitting students. Each year the quality of the projects done by the interns improves.

This is a strong program needing to refine only a few aspects.