Spanish 4313: Topics in Latin American Culture

NOTE: THIS COURSE IS TAUGHT IN CUERNAVACA, MEXICO AND CONSISTS OF EXCURSIONS TO AREAS RELATED TO COURSE TOPICS AND CONTENT.

General Description:

An introduction to various aspects of life in Latin American countries from early times to the present. Focusing on the social and political development of Latin America, the course will reveal the unity and diversity that characterize contemporary Latin American culture. Typical topics for study include: the precolombian civilizations and their cultural legacy; the conquistadores and the colonial period; the independence movements, the search for and the definition of an American identity; the twentieth-century dictatorships; and the move toward democracy.

Course Objectives:

1. To acquire knowledge about the various cultures and countries of Latin America.
2. In order to communicate effectively with people from Latin American cultures, the students will discover and understand important cultural, social, historical, economic and political events that contributed to contemporary Latin American Society.

Specific Objectives:

The following themes and topics will be covered in this course:

1. Pre-Colombian, Colonial and Indigenous populations of Latin America
2. Ancient and Contemporary racial problems and conflicts
3. The role of women in history, politics and contemporary culture.
4. Internal and External Patterns of Immigration
5. Art, Literature, Music and the role in shaping cultural identity.
6. Geographical make-up of Latin America and the Caribbean
7. Goal: To better one’s ability in spoken and written Spanish by means of classroom lectures, class discussions, classroom presentations and written projects and exams.
8. Goal: To develop appropriate and specific vocabulary in order to discuss class themes.
9. Goal: To develop one’s skills in oral and written communication and the ability to research cultural topics in Spanish via the World Wide Web.