A. BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

SPN 4500 Spanish Culture, taught in Spanish, aims to encourage critical thinking about traditional notions of Spanish culture while broadening students’ general knowledge and understanding of major historical periods and culture in the broadest sense of the word. The examination of Spanish culture is not by any means a neutral endeavor and cannot simply be a recounting of historical facts and major events and dates. In fact, current scholarship points us toward a view of culture, history and civilization as notions that come into constant scrutiny, analysis, revision, multiple interpretations, and manipulation.

In this course we will read quite a bit and ask many questions that we will try to answer. What major cultures, religions, languages, wars and political personalities have influenced what makes up contemporary Spain? How do Spaniards see their own country’s past, present and future? How do different foreigners see Spain and its legacy? What are common stereotypes and myths about Spain? Can we speak of one united Spain or a diversified Spain? Both? How is Spain dealing with now with immigration from Africa, Latin America and Asia? What is shaping national identities today and how can we better appreciate this through artistic expression in the arts and humanities? What are current views about marriage and family, gender and sexual orientation, equity, race, education, private life, regional autonomy, language rights, tourism, and the Catholic Church? How do Spaniards view their linguistic and cultural diversity, their own past and present Islamic and Jewish cultural heritage? How have the government and the people of Spain reacted to and tried to deal with a number of contemporary concerns, such as acts of terrorism, environmental and housing problems, rising prices and unemployment, and a number of political issues related to a re-vision of the Spanish Civil War? The questions are endless and we have much to study and consider in this introductory class.
This course will be grounded on selected required texts and engaging recommended readings; lectures on selected topics, student as well as tentatively planned invited guest speakers’ formal and informal presentations, and use of multimedia, all of which is based on an interdisciplinary, interactive approach using mostly a seminar-style interactive format for instruction. We will study selected topics and issues in Spanish culture through an introductory level examination of aspects of Spanish history, politics, art, architecture, literature, music, theater, dance, film, and topics in popular culture and current events. This course will count toward the Spanish major or minor program of study. All writing must be done in Spanish. Students are expected to attend at least two events outside of class (in the community) that are related to some aspect of topics related to Spanish culture. For example, these can include such events as lectures, book presentations, panel discussions, Spanish films, dance performances and art exhibits. Make sure you view the events calendar published by the Centro Cultural Español (CCE), located in downtown Miami.

**B. PRE-REQUISITES**

Students who enroll in this course must have an appropriate level of proficiency in Spanish to be able to function well in a 4000 level (senior) course since this class will require advanced level reading and writing skills, as well as corresponding listening and speaking proficiency. Students must be able to take handwritten written notes during class and participate orally in class discussions, as well as have the ability to plan and carry out individual or group oral presentations to the class. In other words, both native or non-native speakers of Spanish who have significant problems with their oral comprehension, reading or writing skills, or have difficulties taking weekly short essay quizzes or taking class notes in Spanish, are recommended to first take appropriate 3000 level courses, such as those in advanced grammar review and composition or advanced oral communication.

**C. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Required Texts:


[Note that this book by Tremlett has also been ordered in its Spanish translation, *España ante sus fantasmas*. You can purchase it in either language and can order books online or purchase them at the FIU Bookstore.]

Recommended-Only Books:

[This book, edited in English, is recommended reading meant to be used on your own, for background and supplementary information that will compliment Pereira-Muro’s text.]

**NOTE:** A selected bibliography of useful additional recommended readings on Spain will be distributed and reviewed in class during the second week. There will also be selected texts and articles available through the Reserve Desk of the FIU library, classified under my name and the course number.

The first sections of each chapter (Pereira-Muro’s text) are (see the preface, p. XIV): *Vistazo, Introducción* and “Timeline.” Students should study these sections of each chapter well and be prepared to answer the questions in the last section, called *REPASO Y SÍNTESIS*. This will be a good way for students to know or gauge if they have studied enough and understood the chapter sufficiently well in order to be ready for a chapter quiz or test later on.

The second part of each chapter, called *Textos y contextos*, offers authentic texts and documents that will aid in reaching a better understanding of the historical period reviewed and other cultural aspects presented or assigned in class. Students will read and prepare to answer comprehension questions of some of these selected texts as we move along. Therefore, students must study the material and come prepared to participate in class.

**NOTE:** There will be announced and unannounced short (10-15 minute) quizzes based on the required readings of that day. These will normally take place in the first half hour of class. There are no make-ups for quizzes or tests, but I will allow you to drop your lowest short quiz grade. I will not give quizzes to students who arrive late to class when students are almost done with their quiz. If you miss a quiz, that will be the one that I will “forgive” and drop (not count against you) from your final average. Please be on time.
D. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. A short research paper in Spanish (5 pages, double-spaced) on a course topic. Research or position essay is due on the first week of March. You can turn it in one class late but late papers will be penalized (half a grade point off; instead of B, for example, it would become a B-). No papers accepted after end of March. Follow MLA Handbook guidelines and proof your paper before turning it in.

2. Exams: There will be major tests: Test 1 and Test 2. Test 2 is not considered a comprehensive final exam. It will cover material from the second half of the course.

3. Quizzes: As mentioned above, there will be mostly announced quizzes (on a weekly basis). These will be based mostly on a selected aspect of the assigned readings for that day. Study well the chapter, including the “Repaso y síntesis” section, and questions that correspond to text material as this will be helpful in your understanding of the material. There will not be any make-ups given for quizzes. If you miss class or are late to class and miss a quiz on that day, you will not be able to make it up. However, as mentioned, this will then be your lowest grade quiz that I will forgive (drop) this one time only.

4. Oral presentations and class participation: Besides short lectures and informal discussion and viewing excerpts from educational or documentary films, we will discuss selected assigned readings for that day. Students need to come prepared to respond orally or in writing, and be able to participate in small group or whole class discussion on the topics and readings assigned. During the term students will be expected to prepare and give one or two brief (8 to 10 minute) oral presentation on an approved or assigned class topic, using PowerPoint or visual aids (transparencies, for example, and at least one handout (can be a bibliography, clippings, copy of an appropriate resource article, etc.) to be distributed to the class. A list of topics will be distributed. If the class is too large for individual presentations, students will be assigned to work in small groups. Further guidelines and instructions will be given in class regarding oral presentations.

E. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING

Attendance, participation, quizzes, assignments 20%
Oral presentation(s) & summary report, or paper 20%
March 5: Test #1 (Part I and class notes) 30%
April 23: Test #2 (Part II and class notes) 30%
**Grading Scale**

100-93=A
92-90=A-
89-87=B+
86-83=B
82-80=B-
79-77=C+
76-73=C
72-70=C-
69-67=D+
66-63=D
62-60=D-
59-0=F

**Note: Incompletes.** An incomplete grade is a temporary symbol given at the discretion of the instructor for work not completed because of serious interruption not caused by the student’s own negligence. University policy on this matter will be strictly observed. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need assistance at any time during the semester. Do not wait until the end of the term to ask for help or clarification, or to ask if you can do “extra credit” at that point.

**F. LIBRARY RESERVE DESKS**

Multimedia will be available from time to time at the Reserve Desk of the Sound & Image Department. Selected films (videos, DVDs) will be placed on reserve on the 5th floor of the FIU Green Library, for outside-of-class use. A designated audio-visual room on the 5th floor will be reserved on designated days and times of the week, when students can meet in pairs or small groups to view any assigned or “recommended only” audio-visual materials on reserve. Print material (books and articles) will be placed on reserve through the Reserve Desk (ask at the Circulation Desk/Reserve Desk) on the 2nd floor of the Green Library. These books are normally be found under my name or course number.
G. DATES TO KNOW  
(SEE OFFICIAL FIU WEB CALENDAR FOR DETAILS)
Test dates announced and on board during the first week. First test will be during midterm time and before last day to drop a course with DR grade (which is March 23, 2015); second test covers the second part of the course and will be given the last week of class.

H. CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism is not tolerated by the university. Any student who turns in work that is not his or her own, or who is found to be cheating during an evaluation (quiz, test or major exam) will automatically receive an F. Please read the current FIU Undergraduate catalog (online) concerning official university policies related to these topics. Check your work and document your sources.

I. CLASS ATTEDANCE AND PARTICIPATION/ENGAGEMENT
Class attendance is expected and mandatory. Unless you have an emergency, are ill, or must be absent for an urgent reason, students are expected to attend classes, be on time, come prepared, and participate in class discussions and oral presentations. Our class meets for a double time block, so missing a class is like missing two meetings. Attendance will be taken and be a (%) consideration as part of your final average in the course. If you miss three or more of these weekly class meetings, you should consider dropping the course by the deadline to avoid a low or unsatisfactory final grade. If you have any problems, please contact me. Students are requested to be involved in extracurricular academic/cultural activities related to Spain during the semester. Be on the lookout for possible lectures via Mediterranean Studies, the Centro Cultural Español-Miami, Books & Books, International Studies, Humanities Center lectures at the University of Miami (open to the public), and guest speakers in the Dept. of Modern Languages here at FIU.

J. CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS. NO CELL PHONES RINGING, TAPE RECORDERS, OR LAPTOPS.
Unless you have a physical or other kind of challenge that can be documented by the university, and have specific needs, please observe the above request that I believe will benefit students. Technology can be useful but it can also be very distracting to students themselves and to their classmates in many ways. Some studies now show that students are likely to pay less attention in class when they take notes using a laptop instead of taking traditional handwritten notes. They feel they have to write everything down and become stenographer-like copyists instead of paying critical attention to the content of what is being said and summarizing the most important points by way of handwritten notes that are easier for reviewing
later on. A laptop screen and tapping on the keyboard can also bother some classmates, and students who use laptops are also tempted during class to check and send emails, chat, look up information on the web, etc., instead of concentrating on the class discussion or participation. Please turn off your cell phones or set them on silent or on the “vibrate” setting. It is best to concentrate on the class and take notes you can go over and study later on.

K. Special Needs
Any student with special needs or who requires special accommodations should inform me as soon as possible. Disability Services for Students provides information and assistance to students with disabilities who are in need of special accommodation or assistance. Services are available to students with visual, hearing, speech, physical, and learning disabilities. Requests for these must be made prior to the beginning of each semester and current documentation of disability is required to receive services. Location: Graham Center 190, University Park, 305-348-3532. Let me know how I can be of assistance, if needed.

L. QUESTIONS?
If you have any questions or concerns about the class, your progress, or due dates, do not wait until the last minute to contact me. I am more than happy to speak with you before or after class, or by appointment, email or telephone. I will give you my cell phone, and I welcome your thoughts, suggestions, and questions throughout the semester. I also welcome your thoughts before or after class, and your visit during office hours or by appointment, to discuss or suggest any other appropriate class topics you would like to explore, as well as extra credit activities or readings you would like to suggest for yourself or for the class to explore further during the term.

¡BUENA SUERTE!