AH/US 360 THE CITY AS A PLACE TO LIVE: THE BARCELONA EXPERIENCE
IES Abroad Barcelona

DESCRIPTION:
To truly live in our city means to expand the limits of our homes. To understand this concept, we will study the social aspects of public spaces and the importance of their form and qualities to help us feel one with the city we live in. The course will focus on the characteristics of different public spaces and the activities that take place in them. Throughout the course, we will explore themes in city urban development and learn to understand how it affects public spaces in both Europe and America. We will then distinguish the advantages of each. Barcelona will serve as a case study for the European perspective.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
- Lectures, discussions and class activities: The lectures provide the theoretical content of the sessions together with the adequate visual support. There will also be class discussions and activities to facilitate the students’ ability to analyze and apply different concepts to the readings and lectures.
- Course-related trips: There will be guided and self-guided visits to significant city areas related to the content of the course such as Barri Gotic, Eixample, Barceloneta. Each student must complete a field journal relating the four course-related trips.
- Student Presentations: Each student will make a presentation based on their own research relating to two of Barcelona’s public places. These two public places together with those covered in our course-related trips will make up an extensive list of eligible public places for their final project.
- Class Participation: Students are expected to have active participation in class discussions and complete all SCL activities during the sessions. Each student should make a summary of one session’s reading and lead the conversation about the reading in class. The answers to the reading questions will be part of the grade and should be done before each class.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
Mid-term exam (25%); Course-related trips Reports (15%); Offline Homework (15%); Final project (25%); Class participation (20%).

- MID-TERM EXAM: The mid-term is based on the contents of the course and will consist of filling in blanks and charts. There will also be a written component of short and essay-like questions (25%). After the midterm, quizzes or take-home exams could take place and will be considered part of student participation.
- COURSE-RELATED TRIPS REPORTS: Students will write a journal about field studies and self-guided visits describing the public places of the route (visual report). Student’s will describe the public place’s qualities and activities, together with their personal impressions. (15%)
- OFFLINE HOMEWORK: Some other assignments intended to improve student’s capacity of observation; environmental qualities and city life will be done in class and complemented at home. After the mid-term, students will select Barcelona’s public places in groups, and among them each student will pick 2 Public places in Barcelona and make a presentation based on their research to the class. (15%)
- FINAL PROJECT: After the mid-term, students will choose a specific public place or area in Barcelona and begin research on their selected place. The findings of this investigation will be part of the Final Project. This project will be developed as an article for a specialized travel publication while keeping in mind that the main theme of the course is on the public places and
their social life. The article will be about one specific public place of Barcelona selected by the student. The selected place should be analyzed and described in detail, so that their readers are able to experience and understand the place and its life. The article must be at least 5 pages long. (25%)

- CLASS PARTICIPATION: A good level of participation should accompany most of the classes. Answering online reading questions will be considered part of the grade and contribute to class participation. Every student should do a summary of one reading on the syllabus and be prepared to lead the class. (20%)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Recognize the more relevant urban features of both European (with Barcelona as specific case) and American contexts.
- Distinguish the historical layers in both European and American urban form process.
- Increase their understanding of cities and its urban/public places and the way people live in them.
- Identify Barcelona’s public places and features while contrasting them with the public places in their own cities.
- Understand layouts and maps so they can manage to orient themselves in a building or city.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad classes, including course-related trips. Any exams, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented medical or family emergencies. If a student misses more than three classes in any course, 3 percentage points will be deducted from the final grade for every additional absence. Seven absences in any course will result in a failing grade.

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| Session 7 | Urban form through time, in Europe III  
| Session 10 | Urban form through time, in Europe V  
| Session 11 | Midterm Exam |  |
| Session 14 | Urban form through time, in America I  
| Session 16 | Course-related trip IV: The Forum area. Modern developments in Barcelona. |  |
Session 18  
- Brunet i Cid, F. The economic impact of the Barcelona Olympic Games, 1986-2004. (pp. 5-18).

Session 19  
Barcelona’s Public Places Project. Student’s presentations.

Session 20  
Barcelona’s Public Places Project. Student’s presentations.

Session 21  
Urban form through time, in America IV, Recent developments in USA.

Session 22  
Debate  
Public places in European cities versus public places in American cities.

Session 23  
Barcelona latest urban proposal: The 2004 Forum of the Cultures. The huge developments in the area and La Mina’s transformation plan.  

Session 24  
Final Project due. Final comments and conclusions.

REQUIRED READINGS:


RECOMMENDED READINGS:


● New Jersey, USA: Princeton University Press. Shibley, Robert G.


