Analyzing and Exploring the Global City: Barcelona

COURSE DETAILS

Course Designator and Number: BCLA 3xxx
Number of Credits: 3
Language of Instruction: English
Contact Hours: 45
Instructor: On-Site Faculty

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cities around the world are striving to be “global,” and Barcelona, the capital of Catalunya, is one of the largest and most cosmopolitan cities in Spain. It is globally renowned for its art and architecture, possessing no fewer than nine UNESCO World Heritage sites, and has become a major destination for global tourism. This interdisciplinary course examines the emergence of this elegant, creative city as Spain’s gateway to the Mediterranean, and analyzes its history and evolution since its foundation by the Romans. Students will explore the role of population dynamics, industrial change, and globalization in shaping the city and the lives of its inhabitants, examining the ways in which the interplay of urbanism, politics, and society has addressed challenges of social, political, and technological change in the past and today. The course also traces the changing nature of Barcelona’s relationship with the rest of Spain, Europe, and the wider world. Topics will include ancient and Medieval Barcelona; nationalism and innovations in art and architecture; the role of the 1992 Olympics as a catalyst for urban regeneration; the impacts of gentrification, tourism, and the recent economic crisis on the city and its inhabitants; and future scenarios of urban change.
Course Objectives

The course will mix classroom work with experiential learning and will be centered on field studies to sites such as Park Güell, the Poble Espanyol, Plaça d’Espanya, Avinguda Maria Cristina, Gothic Quarter, Ramblas, El Raval, and Olympic Village to give students the opportunity to experience the city’s varied urban geographies firsthand and interact with these sites in an informed and analytical way. We will consider what these sites reveal about the city’s complex histories, but also how they are used today to represent the city’s past, present, and future to contemporary Barcelonians and tourists. The interpretation of architecture, specifically Modernisme and Noucentisme as two fundamental Catalan architectural styles, is an important component of the course. In addition to studying the physical and social evolution of the city of Barcelona, students will compare and contrast the city with other European global cities such as London, Dublin, Florence, and Berlin. The course is broadly chronological in its approach, the goal of which is to understand the development of Barcelona and the social dynamics of its urban communities. The course also aims to help students contextualize their travels and encounters in Barcelona and develop informed interpretations of their experiences, as well as enhance their understanding of recent Spanish and Catalan history, politics, and society.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will have the skills and knowledge to:

1. Understand the ways in which Barcelona’s identity and function as a global city have evolved through history to the present day
2. Contextualize the social dynamics of Barcelona in relation to the changing contexts of nationalism, industrialization, immigration, and globalization
3. Appreciate the ways in which art, architecture, and culture are showcased throughout the city and contribute to Barcelona’s global impact and significance
4. Critically deconstruct the built environment and interpret its iconography and symbolism in appropriate ways
5. Engage critically with debates surrounding Barcelona’s urban regeneration and governance, and recognize the relationship among socio-economic inequalities at global, national, regional, and urban scales

Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate:

- Responsibility and accountability
- Independence and interdependence
- Goal orientation
- Self-confidence
- Resilience
- Appreciation of differences

They will be able to communicate their ideas and research findings in both oral and written forms.
Methodology

Field studies form an important component of this course; attendance at these classes, which take place during our class time on selected weeks, is mandatory. Field classes present a valuable opportunity to learn about the forces which have shaped, and continue to shape, global Barcelona by focusing on specific case studies in different neighborhoods of the city. We will interpret the sites we visit through class discussion as well as in written work and the final examination.

Students will engage with a wide variety of literature—including primary documents, literary accounts, historical interpretations, and contemporary social analysis—which traces Barcelona’s physical and social transformations over time and allows students to consider the diverse ways in which the city has been represented. Written work will allow students to interpret evidence from fieldwork, and secondary research will allow them to develop their own arguments about the nature and significance of the forces shaping the city and engage with a variety of critical perspectives on its current transformation.

Background information will be provided to prepare students for fieldwork, which is treated as classroom time: attendance is a course requirement. The attached syllabus should be understood as a provisional plan for what we will do in class. Although changes will be kept to a minimum, we may make substitutions or additions as necessary.

Field Components
CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. You will actively explore the global city in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the papers and projects assigned in this course. The assigned field components are listed in the weekly schedule below.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they arrive at field study classes on time. The instructor will send electronic directions to field study sites in advance of the relevant class. It is important to be punctual and be at the right meeting point for field studies. Expectations are the same as for classroom sessions: actively participate, take notes, ask questions. Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in co-curricular program activities.

We will make use of other relevant My Global City events and activities in class discussion where appropriate, as well as draw on students’ own individual travel experiences in Spain and Europe as appropriate, to draw comparative conclusions.

Globally Networked Learning Opportunity
Globally Networked Learning (GNL) connects students to a global network of learners to gain transnational perspectives on specific topics. This course section incorporates GNL learning activities involving CAPA students in CAPA locations such as Dublin, Florence, London, and Sydney.
In the mode of the urban explorer or flâneur, students will explore their host cities and neighborhoods and document their experiences through photography. This activity enables them to showcase their initial individual perceptions of their cities and their engagement with the urban spaces they encounter through the creation and sharing of a collaborative digital map, using Google Maps. Using the digital map and other online tools, students will compare and contrast selected aspects of their global cities’ urban environments and social dynamics.

Please refer to the GNL—Global City pages on Canvas for further details.

Required Readings/Materials

- Weekly required readings will be made available in electronic format via Canvas or paper Xerox format. It is imperative that students do the assigned readings before the class for which they are assigned, as they will be required to discuss and evaluate these ideas in the sessions. Readings will be supplemented with video footage to foster comparative analysis, introduce representations of historic and contemporary Barcelona in a variety of media, and illuminate issues of topical concern. Students may also utilize the SUNY-Oswego online library resource (access on request) for an extensive catalogue of e-books and journals: http://libraryguides.oswego.edu.capa.

- Selected Web Resources
  - In English
    - Ajuntament Barcelona (City Hall, City Information): http://www.barcelona.cat/en/
    - Metropolitan Barcelona: http://www.barcelona-metropolitan.com/
    - The Local: https://www.thelocal.es/
    - Catalonia Today: http://www.cataloniatoday.cat/
  - In Spanish and Catalan
    - La Vanguardia: online edition of Barcelona-based paper: http://www.lavanguardia.com/
    - El Mundo: http://www.elmundo.es/
    - ABC: http://www.abc.es/

- General Bibliography
  - Theory and Concepts

Barcelona and Spain


Tóibín, Colm (2010): Homage to Barcelona, Picador


Comparative Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Score or percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93–100</td>
<td>Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90–92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87–89</td>
<td>Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83–86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80–82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77–79</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73–76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67–69</td>
<td>Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0–59</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
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Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban communities presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban exploration paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field study analysis</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Assessment Details

Presentation: Barcelona Communities (15%), in class weekly as allocated
This assignment is based on an analysis of personal exploration of a specific Barcelona community or neighborhood. Students will either present in pairs or individually, depending on class size and logistics. Students should spend time visiting their chosen location and incorporate their own observations and insights into their analysis. Each presentation must be based on a student’s individual work and must not reproduce materials/content from another class or My Global City event. Presentations should engage with specific details from the community that highlight its character and distinctive elements. Students may also include photographs of the area, interviews with members of the local community, and a consideration of relevant community issues and local development projects. Video material may be included but must be brief (2–3 minutes).

Presenters will address the character, main points of interest, and significance of their location in terms of themes such as: society, arts and culture, architecture, historical development, environment, housing, demographics, multiculturalism, style, tourism, and industry and the economy. (Note: you should not address all of these themes, but should select those more relevant to your neighborhood). Collectively, these presentations provide insight into the diverse nature of the city and its inhabitants and will allow us to identify points of comparison.
Presentations should be approximately 10 minutes in duration, and students are encouraged to be creative in their presentation technique through the use of audio/visual display, etc. Students will be evaluated on their ability to creatively introduce and analyze their location, assess its significance for an understanding of Barcelona’s character as a global city, connect the topic to the main themes of the course, and generate discussion with the class through the use of questions and discussion points.

Note: Your presentation may focus on any part of Barcelona except those covered in the field studies.
Sources: The primary sources for the presentation should be your own observations of the area, together with relevant class readings and resources, and lecture material.

Urban Exploration Paper: Barcelona Communities: 1000 words, double-spaced (20%)
This assignment is based on an analysis of personal exploration of a specific Barcelona community or neighborhood—the same location as covered by your urban exploration presentation. The paper will allow students to develop the themes and ideas examined in their Barcelona Communities presentation. Additionally, papers will engage with course concepts and themes in order to analyze further the character and significance of their chosen location in relation to Barcelona's identity as a global city. Your paper should provide insight into how your specific location relates to Barcelona's global character and influences.

Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive and based on a clearly stated thesis. They should be approximately 1,000 words in length and should incorporate secondary research (at least five sources) and engage with course readings. Papers will be evaluated with respect to strength of argument, complexity of ideas, detail and sophistication of examples, and engagement with secondary sources and course themes. Papers should engage with ideas about the global city as examined in class. Each paper will be based on a student’s individual work and must not reproduce materials/content from another class or My Global City event. Further guidelines will be distributed in class.

Field Study Analysis: 2000 words, double-spaced (30%)
You will write on three of the following field studies:
1. Showcasing the Nation: Poble Espanyol, Plaça d'Espanya, etc.
2. Museu d'Historia de Barcelona
3. Ramblas & Gothic Quarter: Slavery Walking Tour
4. Eixample and Parque Güell
5. Post-Industrial Barcelona: the Olympic Village / Poblenou / Barceloneta / Raval

This assignment is based on an analysis of three course field classes. The aim of the field study assignment is to "read" the sites you encounter in order to assess their significance for understanding Barcelona’s development and character as a global city, and to write analytically about them. Your paper should be based on a specific theme linked to the field studies you have selected, which relates to the nature of the global city and its development. Possible themes may include: the impact of migration and multiculturalism; urban change and regeneration; arts and culture; globalization and the city’s changing global connections; economic change; social dynamics; architecture and the built environment; heritage; tourism; community activism; fashion and style; and the role of the past in shaping the present. Your paper should specifically address the ways in which your chosen field studies
enhance your understanding of global Barcelona in relation to your theme. Each paper should relate to the specific topics covered in class and demonstrate a firm understanding of the concepts and ideas discussed.

Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive, based on a clearly stated thesis, and supported by specific details from the field studies, class handouts, and readings. Papers should be original, based on Global Barcelona course content, and should not reproduce content from other courses. Although the primary source will be students’ own observations at the sites themselves and, where applicable, the guide’s commentary, written analysis must be supported by a minimum of eight secondary sources, which should be cited in the text and in a bibliography.

Students should also read further around the topics in preparation for their papers: relevant additional resources can be found through students’ institutional online access to scholarly journals and the SUNY-Oswego library. Specific study materials and questions to consider will be provided before each field study. Students can also include an analysis of photographs, charts, and any other relevant material from the visit in their papers. Please feel free to contact me for topic advice and suggestions.

**Class Participation (10%)**
Active participation in lectures and field studies is an expected component of the course and will enhance students’ understanding of the material for their research projects, papers, presentations, and exams. Lectures and field studies encourage discussion based on students’ observations as well as insights from course materials. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to each class and to contribute to discussions in an informed manner through relevant comments, questions, and analysis. Silent attendance in class will not result in a strong participation grade.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they sign the class register at the beginning of each class and field study. Students arriving late to any class must ensure they sign the register at the end of class.

This course section incorporates GNL learning activities involving online work with CAPA students at other program locations, included in class participation.

**Class participation will be assessed according to the following guidelines:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A range</td>
<td><strong>Excellent:</strong> consistent contributor; offers original analysis and comments; always has ideas on topics of the readings; takes care not to dominate discussion</td>
<td>Obviously has completed all readings; intelligently uses resultant understanding to formulate comments and questions for the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td><strong>Very Good:</strong> frequent, willing, and able contributor; generally offers thoughtful comments based on the readings</td>
<td>Has done most of the readings; provides competent analysis of the readings and applies insights from class appropriately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B/B-</td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory:</strong> frequent contributor; basic grasp of key concepts but little original insight; comments/questions are of a general nature</td>
<td>Displays familiarity with some readings and related concepts but tends not to analyze them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Poor:</strong> sporadic contributor; comments/questions betray lack of understanding of key concepts; often digresses in unhelpful ways</td>
<td>Displays familiarity with few readings; rarely demonstrates analytical thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/F</td>
<td><strong>Very Poor:</strong> rarely speaks or illustrates a lack of active listening and does not contribute to group discussion; merely quotes text or repeats own comments or those of others</td>
<td>Little to no apparent familiarity with assigned material or application to relevant experience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Final Exam: (25%)**
The final exam (2.5 hours) consists of two sections: a) a choice of short-answer questions and b) an essay answer chosen from a selection based on the key themes covered in the course. Students will be required to consider and assess the relationship among different topics addressed in the course.

**Assignments Policy**
Students must complete all required components by the established deadlines. Late submissions will incur a penalty of 5% per day without the instructor’s prior approval of extension and may result in a grade of F for the course. If all work is not submitted by the end of the program, students will receive an F for the course.

Please submit all written work in hard copy in class in addition to submission via Turnitin. Electronic copies of written work will not be accepted, except where otherwise stated. Please keep a hard copy of all written work.
COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1

Introduction: What is a Global City? Global Barcelona

- **Lecture and Discussion:** Introducing Barcelona. Introduction to the course, themes, and concepts. Analyzing and exploring the city: methodologies. First impressions; Barcelona’s historical identity, changing skyline, and urban geography. What is a global city? What are the characteristics that make Barcelona “global”? How is Barcelona’s “global” identity experienced and presented in the city today?
- **GNL:** Introduction to “Impressions of the Global City” activity.
- **Follow-up Reading:**

Unit 2

Barcelona/Catalunya: Constructing the Nation

- **Lecture and Discussion:** A brief introduction to the history of Spain & Catalunya; defining the nation and the politics of national identity. What is the role of the cityscape of Barcelona in expressing and contesting ideas of nationhood? The “tourist gaze” on the city, the construction of “tourist Spain” and cultural stereotypes. The transition to democracy; language, nationalism, and Spanish and Catalan identities.
- **GNL workshop:** Posting images and text on the shared map (first perceptions).
- **Reading:**

Unit 3

Field Study: Showcasing the Nation: Public Space & Identity

- **Reading:**
Unit 4

Mapping the Development of the City

- **Lecture and Discussion: Barcelona's historical development.** Understanding the shape and organization of Barcelona today: its districts and multiethnic communities. “Hidden histories” of Barcelona.
- **GNL:** Complete posting images and comments on the shared map
- **Reading:**

Unit 5

Field Study: Museu d’Història, Ramblas, and Gothic Quarter

- Visit to the Museu d’Història de Barcelona and Slavery walking tour of the Ramblas & Gothic Quarter: [http://memoriabcn.cat/rutes-guiades.php](http://memoriabcn.cat/rutes-guiades.php)
- **Reading:**

Unit 6

Industrialization, Modernism, and Nationalism

- **Lecture and Discussion:** Industrial Barcelona; the “crucible of modernity”; expansion of the city—the Cerda Plan and Eixample. Class politics: bourgeoisie and working-class communities. Architecture and the expression of national identity and utopianism. Heritage and the uses of the past: Modernisme and Noucentisme. **Case Study:** The architecture of Gaudí.
- **GNL:** Discuss images and text on shared map, comparative observations.
- **Reading:**

● URBAN COMMUNITIES PAPER DUE IN CLASS

Unit 7

Mid-Term Break: No Class

Unit 8

Field Study: The Eixample and Parque Güell
- Urban utopianism and national identity. The Cerdà Plan and Eixample: visit to the Sagrada Familia and/or Parque Güell.

Reading:

Unit 9

Multiethnic Barcelona: Diversity, Tolerance & Xenophobia
- Lecture and Discussion: The politics of migration in Spain and Cataluny a: convivencia, conversos, moriscos and the legacy of Francoism. Socio-economic factors driving immigration to Spain and Barcelona; introduction to the main ethnic and migrant groups in Barcelona, their socio-economic, political, and cultural contributions to the city; tolerance, racism, and xenophobia.
- The Barcelona Refuge City Plan http://ciutatrefugi.barcelona/en/inicio. How is the city responding to the current Mediterranean migrant crisis as part of a network of European cities, against the grain of the Spanish state?
- GNL: start posting new images (later impressions) and text onto the map
- Reading:
Unit 10

Urban Inequalities: Regeneration and Gentrification

- **Lecture and Discussion:** The cycle of poverty; understanding deprivation in the global city; dimensions of deprivation: housing, services, education, health; the relationship between ethnicity and socio-economic status in Barcelona. Responses to poverty and urban renewal: regeneration, gentrification. Social displacement, exclusion, and “cleansing.” The Olympic Games as an engine of urban transformation.
- **Case Studies:** El Raval; Can Peguera; Poblenou; Olympic Village
- **GNL:** Continue posting new images (later impressions) and text onto the map
- **Reading:**

Unit 11

Field Study: Urban Transformation and the Olympics

- Walking tour of post-industrial Barcelona: the Olympic Village / Poblenou / Barceloneta. The legacy of 1992 and the role of the Olympic Games in urban transformation: re-branding the city. Democracy, community, and public space; inclusive urban design—the Barcelona model.
- **GNL Activity:** Final map images and text should be completed this week
- **Reading:**

Unit 12

Urban Futures, Global Futures—Course Review

- **Screening and Discussion:** *Bye Bye Barcelona* (2014) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdXcFChRpmI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdXcFChRpmI)
- Is Barcelona a “successful” city? Tourism and the environment. The economic, social, and cultural impacts of mass global tourism on local communities, the urban environment, and political responses. The rise of local “no-go” areas, anti-tourism feeling, and social protest. Turismofobia (“tourism-phobia”) and the *parque tematización* (“theme-park”-ization) of the city.
Future scenarios of urban change, designing the future city, technology, and urbanization for social and environmental sustainability. The role of the city council in encouraging new initiatives. Synthesis and review; final impressions.

**GNL discussion:** Analyzing final images and findings. Comparing global cities.

**Reading:**

**FIELD STUDY PAPER DUE**

**Unit 13**

**Final Exam and Discussion**
- Final exam and summary discussion

**POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

**University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:
**Scholastic Dishonesty**

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

**Student Conduct**

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.