OVERVIEW OF COURSE

This course introduces Basque cultural studies in a global framework, dealing with issues such as tradition, gender, nation, violence, and social change. The course invites a look at culture from a critical perspective: it offers an anthropological and ethnographic analysis, inviting reflection on the definition of social groups, identity, and behavior. The course begins with a historical and anthropological introduction to the concepts of culture and identity politics, and proceeds with a focus on different manifestations of these over time and context in the Basque Country. It utilizes film and other media, which provide contrasting images of Basque identity and culture.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To gain a broad and comparative understanding of Basque culture and identity politics in a wider context,
- To explore the diverse ways in which Basque identity is expressed and defined.
- To challenge assumptions about the relationships between identity and ethnicity, language, gender, religion and politics in a cross-cultural context;
- To apply these skills, in a self-reflective manner, to your own experiences; and
- To develop further your writing style and ability to formulate an argument, considering other theories and approaches.

This is a 220 level Diversity course. As such it relates to Core Objective 10: Diversity and Equity. Students will demonstrate an understanding of diversity through courses that focus on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, physical
ability, language, and/or social class with an emphasis on the analysis of equity. Students will apply and evaluate approaches or modes of inquiry used to analyze diversity and equity and the social barriers to these goals.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- identify and describe the complex elements important to members of a diverse cultural group such as the Basques in relation to their history, politics, and cultural practices (C03 & C010);

- articulate an awareness of some of the central historical and present diversity issues addressed in the course, including race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and other identities (C010);

- analyze ways in which Basque cultural groups in the homeland and diaspora differ and how such differences position them in relation to each other (C010);

- articulate ways in which social identities intersect in Basque culture and influence individual life experiences and/or perspectives (C010).

- reflect orally upon how their own learning and life experiences in a global context enable them to understand different viewpoints on Basque society (C011).

Students will acquire the competencies described in the Core Objective through one analytical paper, a group presentation and two exams. The paper will require students to analyze cultural differences, different cultural rules and barriers to equity in homeland and diaspora Basque societies. Students will integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge of one or more central diversity issues, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and national origin in their papers and in their group presentations. Student leadership and participation in regular, structured discussion groups will help them integrate their knowledge of Basque culture and its relationship to identity politics, and will enable them to draw upon learning experiences relating to other cultures, including their own. The analytical paper and exams are designed to gauge the extent of student success in meeting these Core Objectives.

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THE MISSION OF THE CENTER FOR BASQUE STUDIES AT UNR

The primary mission of the Center for Basque Studies is to conduct, facilitate and disseminate interdisciplinary research on Basque society to local, regional, national and international audiences.

ASSESSMENT METHODS AND PLANS FOR THE EVALUATION OF STUDENTS’ WORK

The final grade for the course will be based upon a total of 1,000 points.

20% of your final grade (200 points): You will take part in a group presentation (30 minutes total) to the class, based on the topic you will have chosen together. The quality of your presentation will be judged according to the following criteria: the extent to which you are able to reflect effectively on your own learning and life experiences in a global context and apply such understanding to different viewpoints about the Basques; the extent to which you have used initiative in thinking about the topic and have drawn on the literature covered in the course; and the quality of your public speaking (how you address the audience and engage them in discussion). You will lose points if you “talk at us”, merely reading from a script and not making contact with your audience. Do not simply talk from your personal point of view, but consider what other relevant people say. You will gain points for engaging the audience and leading class discussion.

I encourage you to use images. You may show videos sparsely; the time showing videos is considered extra to your set 30 minute presentation.

Choose from the list of topics and dates, and let me know your first and second choices by DATE. We will then form groups, and I will help you select a focus for your presentation and additional source material.

You will be graded as a group.

See below the list of topics with date:

**Tuesday DATE (class 25)**
*Sweet Promised Land*: Portrait of a Basque Sheepherder in Nevada

**Thursday DATE (class 26)**
Personal Experience of Basque American Person

**Tuesday DATE (class 27)**
Basque Sheepherding in the American West and Tree carving.

**Thursday DATE (class 28)**
Basque Boarding Houses
20% of the final grade (200 points): You will produce one analytical paper on a topic of your choice from the list below.

The paper should be between four and five pages long (double-spaced, font size 12), in addition to a References Cited page. The paper will be due on DATE, in class. The paper must be handed in as both a printed copy and an email attachment. No late assignments. You may include images, in addition to the four to five pages of text.

I will evaluate the paper in relation to the competencies listed under “Student Learning Outcomes.” What cultural differences and cultural rules set the Basques apart from other societies, including our own? What barriers to equity (past and present) have Basques faced in the homeland and abroad? To what extent have you made effective use of the reading assignment(s), class discussions and lectures? To what extent have you explored the literature further? How cohesive is your argument? How clear is your writing style? You will lose points for repetitive prose, spelling and grammatical mistakes, failing to cite sources or to include a “References Cited” section, and normative statements. You will earn points for making good use of quality sources and demonstrating that you have grasped key points, for reflexive thinking and clear structure.

Structure is crucial:

Introduction. What is your paper about? What are you going to do in the paper?

Main part of your paper – your argument, with evidence and references to the literature.

Conclusion. Wrap up what your paper was about and your argument.

Provide References.

There will be no late assignments. Only a letter from the doctor can excuse a late assignment.

See below list of topics. Choose a topic and contact me to discuss how you wish to tackle the topic.

1. Food as a Cultural Construct: Northern Basques, Southern Basques and Diaspora Basques
2. Gender & Equity Issues in Basque Culture
3. Basque Politics & Contested Identities
4. Basque Art, Gender & Inequity
5. Basque Sports in the Homeland and Diaspora
6. Language and Basque Identity in European and American contexts
7. Basque Music & Radical Expressions of Difference
8. Discrimination, Assimilation & Ethnicity: Basque Americans

20% of the final grade (200 points): There will be a mid-term exam (on DATE), which will consist of five short answer questions and two short essay questions relating to the competencies associated with this course. You will earn points for
clear thinking and structuring of argument, use of evidence to back it up, and clear reference to the literature covered in the course. The exam will take one hour and a half.

You MAY use your notes. NO USE OF LAPTOPS OR INTERNET.

**20% of the final grade (200 points):** There will be an end of term exam (date to be confirmed), which will consist of five short essay questions that will ask students to integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge of key diversity issues in Basque cultural studies. You will earn points for clear thinking and structuring of argument, use of evidence to back it up, and clear reference to the literature covered in the course. The exam will take one hour and a half.

You MAY use your notes, NO LAPTOPS OR INTERNET.

**20% of the final grade (200 points):** You will be assessed as a class participant. Active participation is a key component of this course. I expect everyone to take part, by asking questions, making observations, and offering reflections. Class participation will be assessed on the quality and frequency of your contribution to discussions. You will be downgraded for non participation and unconstructive behavior. A/A- performance for regular, perceptive contributions; B+ for frequent, perceptive contributions; B for frequent, sensible contributions; B- for frequent comments; C+ for occasional participation; C for irregular participation; C- for little effort demonstrated in discussions; D for no effort shown to engage in discussion; F for regular absence and no participation.

I expect you to take notes in class.

Absence is excused only in the case of proven illness (letter from doctor). A second unexcused absence will entail a reduction of one letter grade from your final grade for the course.

The grading scale is: A 100-94; A- 93-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-84; B- 83-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-74; C- 73-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-64; D- 63-60; F below 60.

**How to Read Texts? Look out for:**

What is the question / the argument which the author tries to make in the text?

How clear is the argument? How well supported is it?

How does the text relate to the topic of the class? How does it relate to the other texts?

If there is something you don’t understand in the text, make a note of it, and mention it in the class. Do not be afraid to ask silly questions – we’re here to learn together and develop our understanding!

**Statement on Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. I will test papers for plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will not be
tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student’s enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course, or for the assignment. For more details, see the University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog.

**Disability Policy:** Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building, Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

**Statement on Audio and Video Recording:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

**Statement for Academic Success Services:** Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (784-4433 or www.unr.edu/mathcenter/), Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring/), and University Writing Center (784-6030 or http://www.unr.edu/writing_center/). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

**Assignment Scheduling:** Under no circumstances (except in a serious emergency) will assignments be accepted late.

**How to cite sources:** It is professional academic practice to give credit where it is due. This means whenever you quote someone, you must cite the source. For example:

In the text:
According to Mary Smith, “chickens just aren’t what they used to be” (in Douglas 2008:45).

Reference in a footnote or in the bibliography list at the end of the paper:

If your source is from the internet, in a footnote, make a reference to the webpage and the time you consulted it. For example:
**Attendance and Class Participation:** You are expected to participate in class (except in cases of emergency or serious illness). Participation entails active involvement in class discussions, asking relevant questions, and challenging points of view. By NSHE policy in Title 4 Chapter 20 A, Section 3, paragraph 1, [http://system.nevada.edu/tasks/sites/Nshe/assets/File/BoardOfRegents/Handbook/T4-CH20%20-%20General%20Policies%20Regulating%20Students%20and%20Student%20Government.pdf](http://system.nevada.edu/tasks/sites/Nshe/assets/File/BoardOfRegents/Handbook/T4-CH20%20-%20General%20Policies%20Regulating%20Students%20and%20Student%20Government.pdf), there are no official absences from any university class. It is the personal responsibility of the student to consult with the instructor regarding absence from class. In the event that a student misses a class because of an official university function or event or because of serious personal issues, the Office of the Vice President for Student Services may, at its discretion, send an explanation to affected faculty. The instructor shall make the final determination on whether the missed work can be done at a time other than during the regularly scheduled class period.

**Religious Holy Days:** It is the policy of NSHE (Title 4 Chapter 20 A, Section 3, paragraph 2, [http://system.nevada.edu/tasks/sites/Nshe/assets/File/BoardOfRegents/Handbook/T4-CH20%20-%20General%20Policies%20Regulating%20Students%20and%20Student%20Government.pdf](http://system.nevada.edu/tasks/sites/Nshe/assets/File/BoardOfRegents/Handbook/T4-CH20%20-%20General%20Policies%20Regulating%20Students%20and%20Student%20Government.pdf)), to be sensitive to the religious obligations of its students. Any student missing classes, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holy days should, whenever possible, be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holy day absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor in advance in writing, if the student intends to participate in a religious holy day, which does not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the assignment at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the institution, which could not reasonably have been avoided.

**READING ASSIGNMENTS:** Reading assignments will either be on electronic reserve (click on libraries, then on course reserves) or given out by me.

**Key reading:**

Douglass, William and Joseba Zulaika 2007 *Basque Culture: Anthropological Perspectives.* A copy of this book will be lent to you for the duration of the course. I expect you to return it to me on the last day of class.
COURSE CALENDAR

Week 1

Tuesday ?? January (Class 1):
Introduction to the Course and Syllabus.

Thursday ?? January (Class 2):
The Basque Country. Who are the Basques? 1

Week 2

Tuesday ?? (Class 3):
The Basque Country. Who are the Basques? 2

Thursday ?? (Class 4):
Traditional Basque Ideal Practices and Customs.
We will look at traditional customs and the ideals of a traditional Catholic Basque society, organized around the etxea and formal and informal social relations (places of sociability: the bar, the café, the plaza, the club/sociedad/txoko, the group of friends/cuadrilla. Also included is the role of the Basque language (euskara), forms of dress, cooking, music, rules of inheritance, dance and other rituals.

Week 3

Tuesday (Class 5):
First Neighbors
Customs and social relations in traditional rural Basque society continue to be important though they are less and less practiced today. One of these is the institution of “first neighbors” which played a key role in the organization of social, spiritual and economic life, and still does so today though in altered form.

Thursday (Class 6):

Basque Customs and Change

We will watch the documentary film The Basques of Santazi featuring CBS faculty member Dr. Ott, and discuss how customs have changed with time and impacted social relations.

Read: Douglass, William and Joseba Zulaika “Character and Rural Basque Sexual Mores”, in Basque Culture: Anthropological Perspectives, p. 239-254.

Hand me your first and second choices for presentations and discussant. The final list of presentations will be communicated to you by email before class 7.

Week 4

Tuesday (Class 7):

Soccer Madness: Athletic Bilbao

Sport is an important element of most culture across the world, and not least in the Basque Country. We will discuss one particular sport which has had an important role in the consolidation of Basque culture and national identity of the years: soccer.


Thursday (Class 8):

Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, and Fiestas

We look at one of the most important festivities in the Basque Country, with the running of the bulls, and place it in the context of the general importance given to festivities in Basque culture.


Week 5

Tuesday (Class 9):

Changes in traditional Basque society: Gender Stereotypes and Public Conflict over a Parade
One particular festivity has also been the focal point of conflict over recent changes in identity, specifically regarding gender roles. We will discuss in the context of wider political and social transformations beyond the Basque Country.

Read:
Bullen, Margaret, 1999 ‘Gender and Identity in the Alardes of Two Basque Towns,” in Basque Cultural Studies, Center for Basque Studies, 1999, p. 149-177.

Thursday (Class 10)
Language and Identity
We will explore the key role played by the Basque language in the shaping of Basque society, politics and identity. An enigma to linguists and a powerful, controversial tool in defining Basque-ness, Euskera both unites and divides society at local, regional, and national levels. What does the Basque language have to do with Basque nationalism and identity? How has the Basque language served both to unite and to divide society? What roles have Euskera and race played in definitions of Basque identity? What place did it have in early Basque nationalist ideology?

Read:

Week 6
Tuesday (Class 11)
Revision for Mid-Term exam in Class 12.
In preparation for this class: review your notes for mid-term revision and discussion. Be ready to ask any questions and express doubts in your knowledge of the topics covered so far.


Thursday (Class 12)
Mid-term exam.

Week 7
Tuesday (Class 13)
Basque Cooking
We will have a taste of Basque cooking and discuss how this has also changed over time, and played a role in the construction and expression of Basque identity.

Read: Sevilla, Maria-Jose “Life and Food in the Basque Country”. Article posted on Webcampus.

**Thursday (Class 14)**

**The emergence of Basque ‘radical’ nationalism.**

We will discuss the violent Basque political movements ETA and Iparretarrak which together plagued the Basque Country for most of the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Why did they exist and what impact have they had on Basque identity?

Read: Watson, Cameron “Introduction” in *Basque Nationalism and Political Violence: the ideological and intellectual origins of ETA*. Article posted on Webcampus.

**Week 8**

**Tuesday (class 15)**

**Ending ETA: a unilateral decision after 50 years of armed conflict**

ETA finally declared a ceasefire in 2011. We will discuss how this was brought about and what consequences it has had for Basque society.

Read:


**Thursday (class 16)**

**Basques in the Diaspora**

We will discuss some distinguishing features of a “diaspora” and talk specifically about the so-called “Basque diaspora”? How does the relationship between Basque migrants and their host society differ from that of other diasporic communities? What factors served to “push” Basques out of their European homeland and “pulled” them to host countries in the Americas? To what extent do definitions of “Basqueness” differ among Basques in diasporic communities around the world?


**SPRING BREAK**
Week 9

Tuesday (class 17)

Basques in the American West

Basques have been amongst some of the many immigrating groups to the American West since the 19th century and most of the 20th century. We will explore what it is that brought them here and how their life here affected their sense of identity.

We will watch the documentary film, The Last Link, which explores the return journey of a Wyoming Basque to his homeland in the Pyrenees.


Thursday (class 18)

Basque Art 1

We will look at the different artistic practices in the Basque Country and how these came to be defined as Basque and why.


Week 10

Tuesday (class 19)

Basque Art 2

We will look at how definitions of Basque art changed over the course of the twentieth century with the changing sociopolitical and economic climate.


Thursday (class 20)

Art and Identity in the Basque Diaspora

The 1960s and 70s in the Basque Country were marked by much economic emigration. We consider the impact that this has had for artistic expression in the diaspora, with a focus on the case of the commission for a monument to the Basque sheepherder in Nevada.

**Week 11**

**Tuesday (class 21)**

**Basque American Cultural Life**

The United States census for 2000 lists 57,793 people of Basque ancestry. With nearly 21,000 Basque Americans, California has the largest community. With some 6,600, Idaho comes second, closely followed by Nevada with just over 6,000 Basque Americans. Or are they American Basques? In these sessions, we will explore the range of meanings attached to “being Basque” in America and consider the roles played by Basque clubs, picnics, festivals, and sports. We will watch the documentary film, *The Basque Hotel*.

Read: Jeronima Echeverria, “California’s Basque Hotels and Their Hoteleras”, in *Essays in Basque Social Anthropology and History*, Reno: CBS, pp. 297-316;

**Thursday (class 22)**

**Basque Music**

We will explore the music scene in the Basque Country and discuss how it links up with Basque identity. We will examine how Basque punk rock challenged older Basque identities premised on lineage, ethnicity or located in ethnic-Basque spaces. We will also look at traditional Basque music and how this has been readapted by younger musicians to fit with their more modern sense of Basque identity.


*Paper due today in class as a printed copy as well as by email.*

**Week 12**

**Tuesday (class 23)**

**Basque Dance**

Basque dance has also undergone numerous transformations over the course of the last decades, as traditional forms have been experimented with by younger dancers to include styles from other parts of the world. We will also see how different types of Basque dance developed amongst the diaspora.

**Thursday (class 24)**

**Basque Traditional Sports: Pelota**

We will look at some other key sports celebrated in Basque culture, notably pelota, a distinctly Basque game. We will look at the importance this holds and how playing and appreciation of the game has also changed with time.

*Read:* Urza, Carmelo “Basque Sports: The traditional and the new”. Article posted on Webcampus.

**Week 13**

**Tuesday (class 25)**

Group Presentation on: *Sweet Promised Land: Portrait of a Basque Sheepherder in Nevada*

**Thursday (class 26)**

Group Presentation on: Personal Experience of Basque American Person

**Week 14**

**Tuesday (class 27)**

Group Presentation on: Basque Sheepherding in the American West and Tree carving.

**Thursday (class 28)**

Group Presentation on: Basque Boarding Houses

**Week 15**

**Tuesday (class 29)**

Final Revision

**Thursday (class 30)**

Final Exam
The Basque Country and its seven provinces (Lapurdi, Behe Nafarroa and Zuberoa on the French side; and Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, Araba and Nafarroa on the Spanish side):
France:

The French Basque Country in the department des Pyrenees Atlantiques:
Spain:
Basques across the world:

The European Union:
Europe: