Study Abroad

VALLADOLID, SPAIN
2020

Program Guide
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Congratulations on being accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC) study abroad program with the Universidad de Valladolid (UVA) in Spain. Living and studying in a new culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

* Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
* Increasing understanding of different cultures
* Enhancing personal development
* Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
* Gaining self-confidence and independence
* Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

Use this program-specific guide with the more general resources in your BlugoldsAbroad account. While this guide contains the information available at the time of publication, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email information throughout the semester, and we encourage you to do your own research, also, using the web resources listed towards the end of this guide, as well as others that you find. Contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff or your peer advisor with your specific questions.

Questions only you can answer include:
1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and wish to challenge yourself in a new environment?

2) Given the way the program is set up, how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is to truly be immersed in the Spanish language and culture, yet you will be taking classes with all international and/or American students, how can you ensure that you get out and interact with the local population?

The information in this guide was current at the time of publication, though changes may occur at any time.
ACADEMICS

Additional information on topics such as maintaining program eligibility, registration at UWEC, class attendance, course equivalencies, grades, transcripts and service learning is in the Academics section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Pre-departure Planning
Please see the UWEC Valladolid Academic page for details on how to plan for your courses in Spain.

Registration at UVA
You will not need to do anything to register in Valladolid, since you will be taking a set schedule of courses based on your classes completed at UWEC and your UVA placement exam.

Credits and Course Load
SUMMER: You can enroll in the four-week June session, the four-week July session, or both. At least one, 3-credit course is required in each session in which you enroll. (Students at beginning language levels may earn 4 credits/session.)

Specific credit information is currently under review and will be added when available.

SEMESTER: You will take Grammar, Conversation, Spanish Culture, Spanish Literature, History of Spain, History of Spanish Art, Geography of Spain, and European Union.

Fall: 12 UW-Eau Claire credits are assigned for as follows:

**EITHER**: 3 credits for Span 302 (earned through completion of Gramática Española at the appropriate level)

**OR**: 3 credits for Span 410 (earned through completion of Gramática Española at the appropriate level). You may only take 410 if you have already completed Span 302 at UW-Eau Claire.

AND:

UWEC Class | Valladolid Classes
---|---
3 credits for Spanish 405 | Expresión Oral
3 credits for Spanish 363 | Literatura
3 credits for Spanish 356 | Historia; Geografía; Historia del Arte; Cultura Española combined. You cannot ask to receive separate credit for these courses.

Spring: 16 UW-Eau Claire credits are assigned as follows:

**EITHER**:

3 credits for Span 302 and 2 credits of upper division Spanish elective (all five of these credits are earned through completion of Gramática Española at the appropriate level)

**OR**:

3 credits for Span 410 and 2 credits of upper division Spanish elective (all five of these credits are earned through completion of Gramática Española at the appropriate level). You may only take 410 if you have already completed Span 302 at UW-Eau Claire.

AND:

UWEC Class | Valladolid Classes
---|---
3 credits for Spanish 405 | Expresión Oral
3 credits for Spanish 363 | Literatura
3 credits for Spanish 356 | Historia; Geografía; Historia del Arte; Cultura Española combined. You cannot ask to receive separate credit for these courses.

2 credits for Spanish 395 | Trabajo Monografico**

**This is a two-credit major essay that you will write during the second half of the program.**
Important Semester Notes:
Students who have completed 302 at UW-Eau Claire prior to study abroad must take 410 in Valladolid. This means that you must take the “Advanced” or “Superior” level of the Gramática Española class. If you do not test into that level, please notify the CIE immediately.

Students having completed 301, but not 302, at UW-Eau Claire prior to study abroad will take the appropriate course determined by the Valladolid placement exam for 302 credit. Depending on your placement exam, you may be in the “Intermediate”, “Advanced” or “Superior” level of Gramática Española, but you will earn 302 credit regardless. You cannot earn 410 credit in Valladolid without having earned 302 credit at UW-Eau Claire.

Keep in mind:
- To receive summer financial aid, you must take at least six credits.
- The credits you earn abroad are considered UW-Eau Claire resident credits.
- The classes you take abroad will count towards the total credits needed for graduation.
- Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved in advance by the CIE and UVA.

Class Schedule
SUMMER: Classes meet four hours/day, Monday-Friday, in the mornings.

SEMESTER: Class schedules will vary by week and month. Classes meet Monday-Friday, and each class will meet for different amounts of time. Specific class schedules may change several times during the semester, but a typical class day will start around 9:30am and most days end at about 2:00pm, so you can go home for lunch. A class may occasionally meet after lunch, but that will usually only last for a few weeks.

Additional Class Requirements
As part of your classes, you will also be required to attend three to four cultural events on campus or in the community. There are many options, movies, music, theater—and you choose what you want to attend.

Grades
Grades are assigned by the professors at UVA according to the Spanish system. A grade report with Spanish grades and U.S. equivalencies is sent to UW-Eau Claire at the end of the semester. The U.S. grades and credits appear on your UW-Eau Claire transcript and are included in your GPA. The grade conversion scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valladolid Grade</th>
<th>UW-Eau Claire Equiv.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8.99</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-6.99</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-5.99</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4.99</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: UWEC students abroad are not allowed to take classes pass/fail. Grades from UVA are figured into your UWEC GPA and posted to your UWEC transcript. No exceptions will be made.

UVA & UWEC Transcripts
Please see the Academics section of the Study Abroad Handbook for important information if you are graduating, transferring or applying for a competitive major such as Nursing or Education at the end of your term abroad.
A transcript for your program will be sent from UVA to UW-Eau Claire. Transcripts usually arrive four-six weeks after the end of the UVA term. Because this is later than the UW-Eau Claire semester, your Blugold CampS account will initially indicate “NR” (not reported) for all courses. This will be changed once the grades arrive.

**Language Immersion Requirement**
If you are a Spanish major or minor, the semester program fulfills the requirement. The summer program fulfills the requirement if you complete both sessions.

**Spanish Academic System**
Although you are going to a program for international students, it is important to keep in mind that you are not going to a U.S. classroom abroad. These courses are taught within the Spanish university system by Spanish professors.

**Overview:** Higher education in Europe different from that in the U.S. **Students are expected to learn fairly independently and often work together outside of class to understand or expand upon the materials presented.** There is little time allowed for discussion or classroom participation, and short quizzes and daily or weekly assignments are very uncommon.

**Syllabi:** Specific course syllabi with dates and topics, required in U.S. higher education, are generally unknown. Classes often have no required textbooks. This gives U.S. students the impression that Spanish instructors are unorganized or not well prepared when in fact, they are working within the framework of a different academic system.

**Assignments:** Compared to classes at UWEC, you will not receive a lot of homework in Spain. Most people have 10-30 minutes of grammar assignments to complete each night and sometimes 10-20 minutes of reading for literature. So, you don't have a lot of daily work, but don't let that fool you into thinking that the classes are easy!

**Exams:** Grades are largely based on major exams and/or papers. You will have comprehensive exams in the middle of the term and again at the end of the program. This mirrors the Spanish system: Spanish students obtain their academic degrees by taking comprehensive exams at various points during their university education. The exams require students to integrate knowledge from several areas. Less emphasis is placed on individual courses.

Exams are comprehensive and require a good amount of studying. **DO NOT start studying the night before!** Go over your notes each night starting at the beginning of the semester, then start studying more in-depth about a week or two before an exam, midterm, or final. Exams are similar to those here. There is a lot of writing involved - you will have essay questions and short answer responses more often than multiple-choice exams.

**Academic Assistance:** If you have questions for professors that cannot be asked during class, the time to ask is either right before or right after class. Spanish professors are not required to hold office hours; the time they expect to interact with students is during class. That said, do not be afraid to ask questions. The professors are more than willing to answer both academic and cultural questions for you.

**Student Services:** Another difference to note is that “student services” is a relatively unknown concept. The university is there to provide access to academic resources. It does not have the mission, common to most U.S. institutions, of “student development.” University students are considered adults who will work their way through the system, asking questions when necessary. As a newcomer to the system and the culture, you will find it necessary to ask questions often!
Service Learning
If you are interested in completing your service-learning requirement in Spain, ask one of your professors how to get in touch with Cruz Roja for volunteer opportunities. There is detailed information on how to do your service-learning abroad in the Study Abroad Handbook.

To do so, go to: https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/ Click on “Create a Project”.

The UWEC Valladolid study abroad coordinator, Cheryl Lochner-Wright will be your UWEC Mentor. Enter her username on the form: lochnecb

For the question, “How would you like your mentor to be involved in your project?” state that your mentor will read and comment on your reflection paper and may ask you follow-up questions as necessary.

MONEY MATTERS
UWEC information about making payments, when they are due, withdrawal and refund deadlines, financial aid, general scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in the Money Matters section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cost Estimate
You can find the most current Cost Estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the CIE Valladolid webpage. Be sure you are looking at the correct term. The cost estimate includes what you pay to UWEC, what you pay to UVA, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

Currency Exchange
The currency of Spain is the Euro. One Euro has 100 cents. There are 8 Euro coins, ranging in amount from 1 cent to 2 Euros. Coins have different designs in the various countries that use the Euro. Bills range from €5 to €500 and have a standard design across countries.

You can find current exchange rates at http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/.

Cost of Living
For an idea of what everyday costs you may encounter, check out this website https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Valladolid

Scholarships
In addition to the scholarships listed in your Study Abroad Handbook, this may also apply for Valladolid students:

Hilda Belle Oxby Scholarship: Advanced students of Latin American studies or Spanish, with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and 3.5 in Spanish are eligible to apply. Contact the Foreign Languages Department for application details. This scholarship generally has a March deadline.

HEALTH & SAFETY
General information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health & Insurance and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Centers for Disease Control
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has vaccination suggestions, how to stay healthy when abroad, and health information specific to Spain. Review the CDC site for Spain.

Due to increasing measles and mumps cases in Europe, we strongly encourage you to check your vaccine history to see if you have had the MMR vaccine.
**Healthcare**

**Medical Services**: You can choose from many different types of medical facilities in town: private doctors, clinics, medical centers, private hospitals, or big main hospitals. Unless it is an emergency, the private sector is usually quicker. Your host family will help you get in contact with the appropriate facility/doctor. You can also ask staff members at the language center about where to go to get medical care or go to the CISI insurance portal for addresses.

**Counseling Resources**: Past students asked about English-speaking counselors in Valladolid. The following information was provided by Assist America, with the caveat that this information is not an endorsement of the practice, and it does not guarantee coverage by CISI.

*The following psychologists at the practice below speak English. Payment should be made at time of service. Keep your receipts and file for reimbursement with CISI if the treatment received is covered by the policy:*

Leticia Sordo Ruiz  
Psicóloga  
C/ 20 De Febrero, 9 - 2 Dcha,  
Valladolid, Spain.  
Tel:+34 983 370 989  
Email: info@psicologialeticasordo.com  
Website: [http://www.psicologialeticasordo.com/](http://www.psicologialeticasordo.com/)  
Hours: M to F from 9:30 am to 3 pm & 4 pm to 9 pm.

**Medical Supplies/Medications**: You can find basic medical supplies or medications in local pharmacies. They are plentiful and are identified by a green cross (universal symbol in all of Europe). They even sell personal hygiene items that you might not expect, like toothbrushes.

**CISI Insurance in Spain**

If your charges are less than 1,000 Euros, **you will have to pay up front** since the Spanish physician and/or hospital will not process bills for less than that amount through a U.S. insurance company. Most facilities accept cash, and many accept VISA cards as well. Be sure to **get a receipt** in order to file your CISI claim. In other countries, you may need to pay up front regardless of the amount.

To put this in perspective, a past student who was hospitalized in Spain overnight for stomach pains had a total bill of 300 Euros. This included x-rays, IV, doctor visits, prescriptions, everything.

**Services for Students with Disabilities**

(site specific info)

It is also important to look at the level of accessibility in general. To find more information on this topic, please see the Local Laws & Special Circumstances section of the U.S. State Department Country Information page.

**Safety in Spain**

Information on crime, specific safety issues, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Spain is included in the U.S. State Department’s Spain Country Information website. Specific safety in and around Valladolid will be discussed during orientation in Eau Claire and in Spain.

**Pick-Pocketing**: Pick-pocketing is common on public transportation and at popular tourist sites, particularly in Madrid and Barcelona. To reduce the risk, do not have your phone or other valuables out in public spaces. An iPhone is a target for pick-pockets. If you carry a purse, make sure it is across the body and has
zippers. Keep your wallet in a front pocket, not a back pocket. Only carry small amounts of cash on you to minimize loss. Using a money belt under your clothing is another way to prevent valuables from being stolen.

**Sexual Assault:** The U.S. Embassy in Spain often receives reports of sexual assaults affecting U.S. citizens. There have been numerous reports alleging sexual assaults against U.S. citizen students by a representative of a tour operator based in Seville, Spain. Exercise the same caution as you would in any unfamiliar area or with unfamiliar people. Be cautious in bars and clubs where alcohol is served, and do not leave your drink unattended or accept a drink from strangers, as they may have slipped drugs into the drink.

In the words of a past participant: *Women need to be fully aware of the tendencies of Spanish men. They are extremely charming and nice when you are talking but tend to become very aggressive when you reject them.*

**Emergency Contacts**
General emergency procedures are described in the Safety Abroad section of the Study Abroad Handbook, and Valladolid has onsite staff available for consultation if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card at Orientation 2; be sure to keep it in your wallet. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

**911 Equivalent in Spain**
If you are in an emergency situation in Spain, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line in Spain is 112. We suggest you save this number in your cell phone.

**Marijuana**
As of this writing, personal use of marijuana on private property is legal. Membership in “cannabis clubs” has grown because they meet the requirement of private property. However, membership is restricted to Spanish citizens over the age of 21.

Any form of public use is illegal. Even carrying it on your person in public can be considered drug trafficking, at the discretion of law enforcement officials. U.S. citizenship offers no protection if you break a Spanish law. There is NOTHING the CIE, your host organization, or the U.S. government can do if you are found in violation of Spanish laws.

In addition to legal penalties, you are putting yourself at risk of robbery or assault, or you may get a much more dangerous combination of drugs than you thought you were buying.

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**
Passport information is included in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact the CIE for more information about the following topics.

**Visa**
A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country.

**SUMMER/FALL:** Spain is one of the Schengen countries. Because the summer and fall Valladolid programs are less than 90 days, you do not need a student visa. In fact, as fall students were informed in the Learning Content
section of your online study abroad application, because the program is less than 90 days, you CANNOT get a student visa for the program. This also means that if you plan to travel before or after the program, you cannot be in the Schengen countries for more than a total of 90 days.

The Fall Valladolid program is usually between 77 and 80 days long. This means you can only plan to remain in the Schengen countries for a combined total of 10-13 days before or after the program. If you leave the Schengen area and go to the United Kingdom, for example, but must return to Spain or to another Schengen country to fly home, you must be sure to save at least one of your 90 days for the return to the Schengen area. Plan your travel carefully!

You can find a complete list of Schengen countries here: https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/schengen.html

SPRING:
It is your responsibility to apply for and receive the appropriate visa for study in Spain. Traveling under the correct visa and having proper documentation is the responsibility of the individual student. The Center for International Education is not responsible for students who do not get the proper visa prior to traveling abroad, and student visas (or extensions to tourist visas) cannot be issued in Spain.

You received instructions on completing the visa application forms and supplementary materials over the summer. All necessary forms are in your online BlugoldsAbroad account, and they are due to the CIE, 3 Schofield Hall, on or before Friday, September 6 if you want your UWEC study abroad coordinator to include your application at her group submission appointment.

If you do not turn in all required materials by that time, you are responsible for submitting and picking up your own visa. Details are available on the Consulate of Spain, Chicago website: http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/CHICAGO/es/ServiciosConsulares/Serviciosconsular/esenchicago/Documents/documentosvisados/estudiante.pdf

Visa applications will not be accepted more than 90 days or fewer than four weeks in advance of intended departure.

Visas for Travel to Other Countries
If you plan to travel outside the Schengen area while abroad, you should verify visa requirements for each country you will visit by contacting the nearest consulate for that country, or your travel agency. Most Western European nations do not require U.S. citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than 90 days.

PACKING TIPS
There is general packing information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook, and you will get a suggested packing list for Spain at Orientation 2. In addition, you should know the following:

Weather
Although people often think of “sunny Spain,” Valladolid is not on the Mediterranean! Central heating is uncommon, and the damp cold can feel much colder than the actual temperature.

The average temperature in September and October is 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Temperatures range from 30-50 degrees from November through February, and it rains frequently. In March, April, and May the range is 40-70 degrees.
Summer temperatures are warmer, with highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s.

**Clothing**
The Spanish dress less casually than the average American. Students generally wear jeans to class, but they dress them up with a nice blazer or sweater, or shirt and nice shoes.

Some students have commented that since they were not in class with Spaniards, it does not really matter what you wear to class. While this is true on one level, if your goal is to fit in as much as possible in Spanish culture, it is worthwhile to make the effort.

It is uncommon in Spain to wear tennis shoes for non-athletic purposes. Some clubs may even deny entrance to individuals wearing tennis shoes or jeans.

**Gifts**
You may want to pack some small items as gifts for your host family. A memento from Wisconsin, like a UWEC mug, might be nice. If you are unsure what, if anything, to bring, ask your Peer Advisor for suggestions.

**Converters & Adapters**
If you plan to bring a hair dryer, razor or other appliance from the US, you will need to **buy both a voltage converter and a plug adapter**. Another option is to buy the appliances after you arrive.

If you plan to bring your laptop abroad, check the power cord to see acceptable voltage inputs and outputs. If it includes 220 volts, you will only need to use a plug adapter, not a voltage converter.

If you have several US appliances you plan to use abroad, consider bringing a power strip, also. You will still need to have a voltage converter in order to plug it into the wall.

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### GETTING TO SPAIN

There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the [Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook](#).

**Travel Arrangements**
It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Valladolid. You will fly into Madrid Bajaras airport. Specific dates will be published on the [UWEC Valladolid program page](#) when it is available.

**Getting to Valladolid**
**Summer:** Because UVA has summer courses starting weekly, rather than one large start date as they do for the semesters, they do not provide group transportation from Madrid. You can travel by bus or train. Depending on when you make your arrangements, you will either report them to the CIE or directly to your host family. Some host families may be able to pick you up at the bus or train station; others may direct you to take a taxi to their home.

**By Bus:**
**Option 1:** You can take a bus directly from Barajas airport (Madrid). If you arrive early in the morning, you will have a long wait, because the first bus leaves the T4 (T4 Terminal) in the afternoon. The bus company is "Alsa," and you can find the schedule here: [http://www.alsa.es/compra-y-horarios/aeropuertos/madrid-barajas/?searchType=airport](http://www.alsa.es/compra-y-horarios/aeropuertos/madrid-barajas/?searchType=airport)

**Option 2:** If you do not want to wait, you can take a subway or taxi and go to the "Estación Sur" in Madrid. You will again travel to Valladolid with the bus company Alsa ([www.alsa.es](http://www.alsa.es)), but there are more frequent departures than there are from the airport. The trip takes 2 hours and 15 minutes.
**By Train:**
If you prefer, go to Valladolid in a fast train, (which is more expensive), you can take a taxi (about 20 €) or catch a train from "Cercanías" (C) at the airport to the "Chamartín" station, and then take a train to Valladolid. There are Cercanías from Airport-T4 to Chamartín Station about every 12 minutes:


You can find the train schedule from Chamartín Station to Valladolid-Campo Grande. This is the website: www.renfe.es

**Semester:** You need to arrive in Madrid on the date and by the time designated by UVA if you wish to take the UVA-provided bus to Valladolid.

Transportation from the airport in Madrid to Valladolid is provided by UVA on the arrival date. The group will meet at the Punto de Encuentro (Meeting Point) T1 (Terminal 1). If you arrive at a different terminal, you will need to make your way to Terminal 1. Once you get through customs and claim your baggage, make your way there. It is on floor 0 (planta 0), close to the pharmacy and Missing Items Office (farmacia y la oficina de objetos perdidos). A representative from the University of Valladolid will meet you there.

**Early, Late or Delayed Arrival Semester:** If you miss the group transportation from Madrid to Valladolid, either because you are planning to travel independently, or because your flight is delayed, **you will need to contact your host family and travel to Valladolid on your own**. See the “Travel Arrangements- Summer” section for information on independent arrival.

**All:** Once you know whether you are arriving by bus or train, and at what time, contact your host family by phone or email with this information.

They will let you know if they are able to meet you at the bus or train station, or whether you will need to take a taxi to their home. Please copy Rubén Caramazana, the host family coordinator, on the message. His email is rcaramazanag@funge.uva.es.

**SETTLING IN**

**Orientation**
The day after you arrive, you will have a city tour and a brief orientation to the program.

**On-Site Support**
The Cursos para Extranjeros staff will be your main advising contacts while at UVA. Their contact information is on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

**Study Space**
On campus, the Centro de Idiomas has a study room in the building, and there are multiple libraries in different buildings nearby that are great study space.

**Local Transportation**
Host families live anywhere from a 20 to a 45-minute walk from campus. Many students do walk, but those who live further away may wish to buy a bus pass. How to do this will be explained at orientation in Valladolid.

**Clubs & Organizations**
**Intercambios:** On Friday nights Spaniards who are studying English at the university and students from the U.S. meet up at school for a language exchange program. Each native Spanish speaker is paired with a native English speaker, and you spend five minutes talking in Spanish then 5 minutes talking in English before you talk to new people. **Past participants emphasize that this is the easiest way to meet a lot of new Spanish friends!**
**Sports clubs:** There is a sports center on calle Ruiz Hernandez, where you can get involved in just about any sport you can think of, volleyball, basketball, soccer, track, swimming, hiking, you name it, they have groups and activities. The website of the sports center is: [http://fuentelamora.es/](http://fuentelamora.es/)

**Activities/Events**
Information about university/community events is posted weekly on the main bulletin board in the Cursos building and in every classroom. Make an effort to find out what is going on. Keep your eyes open for information about the excursions offered by the Cursos, they are often not planned or publicized too much in advance.

**Dance:** Go to Colonial Cubana for salsa lessons on Thursday nights.

**G.U.M.** If you are into outdoor activities, ask your professors how to get involved with this organization. They organize outdoor trips and activities every couple of weekends.

**Teaching or Tutoring English**
Another way to get involved is to be an English tutor. There is no formal way to go about this (it isn't set up through the university), so if this interests you, you will need to seek out the opportunities. You can ask your host family, professors, or friends you meet at Intercambios if they know of anyone who is interested in being tutored in English or wants to practice speaking English. Some past participants posted flyers in their neighborhoods, public libraries or at the University, offering to teach English to kids or adults. Past students have tutored young children and created lessons every week to teach them, others met weekly at a café with a Spanish student their age to help them with English homework. Still others were conversation partners with adults who wanted to improve their fluency. Some were volunteers, while others were paid.

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**HOUSING**

**Living Situation**
You will live with host families, to maximize your exposure to Spanish language and culture. Your homestay begins at 12:00am the day of your arrival and ends on the final day of the program at 12:00 noon.

**Most Spanish host families live in apartments.** This is very common in Europe, although in the U.S. more families tend to be in single-family houses.

The families involved in the program come in all shapes and sizes, two parents with several children, a widow and her child, an older couple whose children are on their own, a single woman, etc. Some of them have had students for years; some will be hosting for the first time.

**Family Placement**
You turned in a housing preference form with your acceptance materials and you will be placed with a family based on the information you submitted. You will share your family with another international student (usually another UW-Eau Claire student, or student from the U.S.). Single rooms may be available at an additional charge. On your housing preference form, you indicated if you want to be in a family with small children, pets or no pets, smoking or no smoking, etc. Keep in mind that this is a preference list only, and that "families" come in many forms, from single women to retired couples.

Family assignments are made by the administrative office at the University of Valladolid. **Two to four weeks prior to the start of the program,** the CIE will receive an email with your host family's address, a short description about the family members, a map of where they are in Valladolid, and information about other host families near you. We will pass it on as soon as we receive it.
In most cases, your family information will include an email address. Before going to Spain, it is a good idea to email your host family and thank them in advance for having you. You can also introduce yourself and ask them a bit about themselves. If you noted specific food needs (gluten-free, vegetarian) on your housing form, it would be good to mention them again. You may even want to send a picture of yourself.

Most students from UW-Eau Claire have been happy with their families and with life in Valladolid. In any new living situation, there are some adjustments to be made. It is very important to ask your family for guidelines. The more flexible you are; the more pleasant life will be.

Some students have noted that they felt more like renters than like they were living with a host family. For suggestions on how to become more a "part of the family," see the Get Involved with Your Family below.

What's Provided?
- A double, furnished room, with bedding
- One shower/day, towels provided
- Three meals/day (as long as you are home at mealtime)
- Laundry ~ once/week

Utilities
While utilities are included, electricity, water, and telephone use are very expensive in Europe, and some families impose restrictions on the use of hot water and the telephone. There is more information on phone use in the “Communication” section.

Many families are on a plan where electricity is discounted at night and more expensive during the day, so ask when you should shower (don’t take long, hot showers), hand-wash clothes, etc.

Don’t ever forget to turn off the lights when you don’t need them. Use natural light from windows whenever possible. Turn off the water when soaping up, brushing teeth, etc.

Laundry
Your family will do your laundry once a week. You may want to wash some special items by hand. Most Spaniards don’t have dryers, so they will hang your clothes on the line to dry which could take a day or two. Make sure you always save some clothes to wear!

Internet Access
Only about 80% of Spanish households have Internet access. Requiring host families to have internet would unfairly disadvantage willing host families. Be prepared to not have access at home and be pleasantly surprised if you do. In the words of one past participant: "It was hard at first because I didn’t have Internet! I hated not being able to Skype and Facebook whenever I wanted, but in the long run it was great. I spent a lot more time walking around the city and doing things in Spain, instead of sitting at home and going on the Internet."

Meals & Snacks
You will receive three meals a day: breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Remember that you are a guest (even if a paying one) in your family’s home, and that this is not a hotel situation. Do not insist on being able to do things as you would in your own home. This is particularly important when it comes to food customs. You are most likely used to snacking when you wish, eating on the run, or inviting friends to meals. Be prepared for the following:

Breakfast: a quick, small, informal meal. It usually includes coffee or hot chocolate, bread or toast or a little muffin with jam, digestive cookies (kind of like Graham crackers), yogurt, and/or a piece of fruit. Depending on your host family’s schedule, you might eat breakfast while they are still sleeping or at work.
Lunch: (la comida, NOT el almuerzo): the biggest meal of the day in Spain. Many host families serve a three-course meal. Some people describe Spanish food to be filling and carb-heavy, especially during the fall/winter. The first course is often a salad, stew, soup, or vegetable puree. The main course is some type of meat or fish with rice, potatoes, or garbanzo beans. The third course is "dessert" which is typically fruit and sometimes yogurt. On special days you might get a pastry, flan, or ice cream.

Dinner: a small meal usually served between 8pm and 10pm. Salad, tortilla or a fried egg, croquetas, and slices of cheese and meat are typical. Fruit or yogurt is also served after dinner.

General Food/Meal Etiquette
The refrigerator is often off-limits, and between-meal snacking is less common than it is here. You may get hungry between meals, especially at the beginning. **Snacks are your own responsibility: go to the supermarket and buy some snacks or fruit that you can carry with you to school.**

In general, Spaniards have very good table manners. Watch how your host family eats, bread is usually the only food that is acceptable to eat with your finger. A fork AND knife are generally used throughout the entire meal. If there is something unfamiliar on your plate (e.g. a whole shrimp), and you have no idea how you are supposed to eat it, just ask!

If you know you will miss a meal, let your family know and ask how you should handle the situation.

Some Typical Foods to Try
- **Tortilla española:** an egg and potato omelette, eaten hot or cold, sometimes as a sandwich filling.
- **Croquetas:** small, fried patties, cakes, or balls stuffed with meats, vegetables, fish, and/or cheese
- **Lentejas:** lentils
- **Paella:** saffron-flavored rice dish served with meat, seafood, and vegetables in a buttery sauce
- **Potaje:** garbanzo bean and spinach stew - delicious and warming when it is cold outside!
- **Jamón Ibérico/Chorizo:** a "tough" sausage, almost like jerky.
- **Churros con chocolate:** you probably won’t get these at home...but they are a great treat at cafes!

This is a good website if you want more information about Spanish food:
- [http://spanishfood.about.com/od/discoverspanishfood/a/spain_meals.htm](http://spanishfood.about.com/od/discoverspanishfood/a/spain_meals.htm)

Living with a Family
Get involved as much as you can with your family. They are an important resource for you to learn from and a great resource to help you experience the culture of Spain! You may have an interest in cooking. By taking some mixes or recipes from home, you may easily gain entry into the kitchen, and your host mom may be thrilled if you show an interest in Spanish cuisine.

Conversation is important in Spanish culture. You can spend hours after a meal chatting and watching television or learning to play Spanish card games.

Remember that you are a guest in your family’s home. Offer to do some things around the house, like helping with meals or dishes. Keep your room and other areas of the house that you use tidy. Be aware of noise levels, particularly if you are coming home later at night.

Depending on your specific home situation, you will probably not be expected to help with setting or clearing the table for meals. Do it anyway! This is a great opportunity to talk and develop your relationship with your host family. In addition, these small efforts show that you are a considerate and appreciative guest in their home.
Keep in mind that any relationship is a two-way street. **It is as much your responsibility to fit into the family as it is their responsibility to include you in their daily life.** The more you put into the relationship, the more you will receive!

**Guests**

In Spain, inviting a guest into your home implies a close relationship, it would be more common to gather with friends at a restaurant, while the home is reserved for families.

If you are expecting friends or family members from the U.S., make lodging arrangements for them at a local hostel, apartment or hotel prior to their arrival in Valladolid. The host family should not be expected to have additional visitors stay in their homes, even for just a few days.

Please be aware that it is not culturally appropriate for you to have your boyfriend or girlfriend spend the night in your room in your host family’s house.

**Changing Families**

If you discover that you absolutely cannot get along with your host family, talk with the Program Coordinator at the UVA about it so that appropriate changes can be made. (UWEC is not involved in the actual family placements, and changes must be done through UVA.) But remember to give the situation some time and to be flexible and open-minded.

**Financial Arrangements**

While UVA screens families carefully to ensure that they have cultural interests for participating, **most households participating do so at least partially for economic reasons.** This is only logical, given the disruption that hosting a student causes to family life. It is not easy to welcome a stranger into your home for several months. The entire family needs to adjust schedules and habits to accommodate a new person. In addition, there are very real costs associated with having another person in the home. Receiving some monetary compensation for this is only fair, and most families would not consider hosting otherwise.

**COMMUNICATION**

Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on computer app-based phone services (SKYPE, What’s App, Facetime, etc) **is in the Contacts & Communication section of your Study Abroad Handbook.**

**Time Difference**

Spain is seven hours ahead of Eau Claire. For example, 1:00pm on a Thursday in Eau Claire, it is 8:00pm on Thursday in Valladolid. To see the current time in Spain visit: *(find appropriate list);*  
https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/spain/madrid

**Email/Internet Access**

Again, **host families are not required to have internet access,** so you cannot plan on having access at home. E-mail is available in a building (Alfonso VIII) about a 10-minute walk from your classroom building. **Don't be fooled into thinking that this means you have access like you do here.** For example, in past semesters this lab was open from 9am-2pm and 5pm-7pm on weekdays; 9am-2pm on Saturdays.

Some students wonder if they should bring a laptop to Spain. Past participants recommend bringing a laptop if you have one, as well as extra batteries. UVA has free Wi-Fi, so if you have a laptop, connecting there is no problem. You will need a password for access, and that password changes on the first of each month. You can get the updated one in the administration office of el Centro de Idiomas.

There is also free Wi-Fi in the main town square (Plaza Mayor), so students who do not have
Wi-Fi at home frequently bring their laptops to the square to use it there.

Another possibility is public libraries. You will receive the name and address of the largest one at orientation. Your host parents may be able to direct you to one closer to home. You will ask for a library card (which will require showing a copy of your passport and having two passport-sized photos), and then you can sign up to use a computer for an hour at a time.

The above options are free. For additional access, past students recommend using Internet cafes.

In the words of a past participant: "Just because you have Internet in your home does not mean that your connection will be amazing. Many of us are used to a speedy and smooth-running connection here, but that is often not the case abroad. Skype calls may have pretty poor quality at times. It is also not uncommon for your home Wi-Fi to abruptly go out for several hours or even a whole day. Overall, the Internet connections worked pretty well; just don’t expect it to be perfect!"

**Landline Phone Information**

Phone lines in Spain are incredibly expensive. **Most families require the use of a public pay phone for any outgoing calls.** You can generally receive phone calls at your host family’s house with no problem.

If allowed to use the phone, ask permission each time. Keep phone calls to a minimum. Long distance calls are not itemized, so it is not possible to find out from the bill how much a particular call cost.

**Pay Phones/Calling Cards**

Use a pay phone to make calls. There are cabinas or phone booths on just about every block. Having a calling card/ international calling card will make this easier. You can buy phone cards (tarjeta telefónica) to use at almost every kiosko (kiosk). Ask for a "tarjeta telefónica" for "llamadas internacionales." Instructions for these cards are located on the back. You simply insert the phone card into the phone (looks like a credit card slot at an ATM) and make your phone call.

**Cell Phone Information**

Cell phones (móviles) have become a near obsession in contemporary Spanish culture (perhaps even more so than in the U.S.!). Some past participants have found it economical and convenient to purchase cell phones for their time abroad; phones were usually around $40-50, and they just purchased minutes as they needed them. Calling people is incredibly expensive; however, texting is quick and cheap. If you think you might be interested, stop in a cell phone store for more information. These stores are everywhere and are not difficult to find.

Many students also choose to bring their smartphones with them to Spain and call home over Wi-Fi. If you don’t have a smartphone, an iPod touch or tablet works well, too. Most students use Facetime, Skype or WhatsApp.

**Calling from the U.S.**

**From the U.S. to Spain:** If you want to call someone in Spain before you arrive, you must first dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you dial 34, the country code for Spain, and the rest of the number.

It may be most economical for your family or friends to call you in Spain. Past participants have told us that a great phone card is from Nobel.com. The rates are great; the only catch is that it does expire after three months. But, CALL AROUND to set yourself and your family up with the best deal, or you may be surprised at your first bills!

**From Spain to the U.S.:** To “phone home” while you are abroad using a calling card or calling collect, you must dial an access code to get an American operator. There are many
forms of phone cards that you can purchase so you will want to look around for the best value.

**Courteous Communication**
If Skyping/using other communication apps in your apartment, use headphones, close the door to your room, speak softly, and end the conversation immediately if it is time for a meal.

**Snail Mail**
International airmail takes 7-10 days to cross the Atlantic in either direction. Packages usually take at least two weeks and sending from Spain can take longer than receiving in Spain.

**Communicating in Spanish**
You have been studying Spanish for years, and now you are going to apply your language skills in day-to-day life. Here are some things to keep in mind.

**Before You Go:** Start listening to Spanish music, movies, TV in Spanish. Get your ear accustomed to it before you get there!

Also, start reading it, beyond what is required for class. Consider changing your phone language to Spanish, reading websites from Spain, finding online newspapers.

**Fluency:** In the words of a past language student, "I am going to warn you right now: you WILL NOT be fluent after only three-five months in another country. I definitely improved in my reading, writing, listening and speaking, but I did not sound like a native. Don't expect to come home fluent, or you will spend your whole time abroad frustrated with yourself. Take things one day at a time and you will be so impressed with yourself. There were days where I would all of a sudden realize that I was participating in classes that were only in Spanish! It's definitely a great feeling to see how much your Spanish speaking is improving."

**Speaking:** Speak as much as possible. You have SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES to speak Spanish (since you're living in Spain). There are so many people willing to help you get better:

**Professors:** It's their job to help you improve, so they will correct you in class and will require you to speak often. They are always willing to help explain things or sit down and talk with you about things you don't understand.

**Families:** It is very likely that your family has been hosting American students for a number of years. This means that even when you say the wrong thing, chances are they will understand you. Don't be afraid to speak with your family at meals, after meals, during down time, at any possibility.

**Other People You Meet:** Natives of Spain KNOW that you are not a native speaker even before you open your mouth. In most cases, if you are making an effort to communicate with them, they will be very kind and patient with you. In addition to this, get to know local students. Many of them are studying English and would LOVE to get together and talk. One thing to remember: you need to make the effort to get to know them.

**Common phrases:**
Here are some words and phrases common in Spain that you may find unfamiliar if you've learned Latin American Spanish:

**Alumno:** (instead of estudiante)

**Naranja:** (for both the fruit and the color orange)

**Patata:** (instead of papa, meaning potato)

**Ordenador:** (instead of computadora)

**Servicio/Aseo:** (bathroom – instead of baño)

**¿Qué tal?** – instead of ¿como estás?

**Movil:** - instead of telefono celular

**VOSOTROS:** This is a form that is not covered much in Spanish classes and is more or less that "ya"ll" form. Spaniards use this ALL THE
TIME but luckily, it is a very easy form to catch onto. The vosotros is used almost always in place of uds. (unless you're in a very formal setting)

Tio/Tia: This is a phrase that is used as "dude" and is said to friends

Vale: It means "OK" and is used a lot as a filler word

Venga: Another filler word. Often Spaniards will say "venga, hasta luego" when they're saying goodbye

Hasta luego: "see you later!" which is used when people run into each other on the street, or when they're saying goodbyes. However, they kind of run the words together so it sounds more like "ha-uego"

TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

See additional information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Organized Travel
Three excursions to sites such as Salamanca, Segovia, Ávila-El Escorial, or Madrid are included in the program cost for all terms.

Bus
For travel within Spain, many past participants highly recommend traveling by bus rather than by train. Buses in Spain are clean and nice and are typically faster and less expensive than trains.

Train Travel
Point-to-point tickets are usually less expensive in Spain than using a rail pass. Rooms and food in southern Spain were the cheapest participants found in all of Europe.

You can check train times and routes on https://www.raileurope.com/ This Web site also lets you know if the train you need requires reservations. If it does, be sure to reserve a seat ahead of time so you can take the train you need.

CULTURAL NOTES

A Brief History of Spain
Spain became a part of the Roman Empire in 206 CE. Once the Roman Empire began to weaken, the Visigoths took over the territory of the empire that is now Spain. From then it was a battle of what group ruled over Spain. After the Visigoths, the Muslims, who came up from Africa, took over until, eventually, the Catholics (known as the Spanish) started to take their territory over starting at the north. Granada (south of Spain) was the last territory that became part of what we know as present-day Spain in 1492, during what is known as the Reconquista.

Also, at this time, exploration of the seas was taking place and the Spanish government financed Portuguese navigator Christopher Colombus for his voyage which led to the discovery of America. Spain gained a lot of power and wealth with all the colonies and resources they found in the Americas, first with Cortes in Mexico and then in Peru with Pizarro.

While these voyages across the oceans were taking place, Spain was enforcing a religious persecution of all non-Catholics known as the Inquisition. Spain’s status as THE power in Europe was short lived however, when their once invincible Armada was defeated by the English. This defeat was followed by Spanish losses in the Americas with Civil Wars and Revolutions leading to independence in Latin America.

After their loss of the Americas, there was a period of relative stability until revolts in Morocco led to the three-year Spanish Civil
War. It ended with Francisco Franco taking power and becoming dictator.

During World War II, Franco was a supporter of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. After Franco’s death, Juan Carlos was proclaimed King and has held that position ever since. Now that Spain is a parliamentary monarchy, they have also joined the EU and have had several prime ministers, including Zapatero and the current Mariano Rajoy.

http://www.factmonster.com/country/spain.html


Government
Spain is a parliamentary monarchy. This means that there is a king, but the official governmental power falls in the hands of the Prime Minister. The current King of Spain is Felipe VI, married to Reina Letizia. The current Prime Minister is Mariano Rajoy. Rajoy was appointed in December 2011 and represents the Partido Popular.


Population
The population of Spain is estimated to be 48,958,159 as of 2017 of which almost 70% are Roman Catholic and 30% are of other religious denomination. The official language of Spain is Spanish Castillian, however the other predominant languages are Catalan, Galician, and Basque.


Cultural Basics
Spanish people are very friendly and open once you get to know them. While in America it is common to smile at strangers on the street, people in Spain tend to keep to themselves unless they know each other.

When you first meet someone, shaking hands with them is usually what you should expect. Once you know a person, girls may say hello and goodbye to each other with a kiss of each cheek (starting with the left) and boys may do a double handshake with the left hand on the forearm.

There are a lot of religious (Roman Catholic) festivities in Spain and as a guest in Spain, it is expected that you respect their traditions and, if you choose, may participate in their celebrations. Spanish people are very laid back and easy going.

People in Spain put a lot of importance on how they dress so, for example, wearing short shorts (girls) or khaki shorts (boys) is not very well viewed by Spaniards and you can expect looks.

http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/spain-country-profile.html
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**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**U of Valladolid**  
Isabel Paul Garcia  
CENTRO DE IDIOMAS  
Universidad de Valladolid  
Depto. Español para Extranjeros  
“Campus Miguel Delibes”  
47011 Valladolid, Spain  
Telephone: 011 34 983 18 46 70  
Fax: 011 34 983 18 46 71  
E-mail: isabel@funge.uva.es

**Spanish Consulate in Chicago**  
180 N. Michigan Ave. Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL. 60601  
Tel. (312) 782-4588  
Fax: (312) 782-1635  
E-mail: cog.chicago.vis@maec.es  
http://www.exteriores.gob.es/consulados/chicago

**U.S. Embassy in Madrid**  
Calle Serrano, 75  
28006 Madrid, Spain  
Telephone: (34) 91 587 2240  
Emergency after-hours telephone: (34) 91 587 2200  
Ask to speak to the duty officer if you need emergency assistance outside business hours.  
Facsimile: (34) 91 587 2303  
E-mail: askacs@state.gov  
Website: U.S. Embassy Madrid  
https://es.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/madrid/

**UW-Eau Claire**  
Center for International Education  
Cheryl Lochner-Wright  
Sr. Study Abroad Coordinator  
E-mail: lochnecb@uwec.edu  
3 Schofield Hall  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
Eau Claire, WI 54702  
Phone: (715) 836-4411  
Fax: (715) 836-4948

**After Hours Emergency**  
(715)577-9045

Remember that in most cases, local contacts are best in local emergency situations.

If you have an after-hours emergency that can be helped on the U.S. side, please call University Police at the number above. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day. You may get an answering machine; however, an officer is alerted as soon as you have left your message. Be sure to give the officer the phone number you can be reached at, as well as what type of assistance you require.
PAST PARTICIPANT TIPS
What They Wish They Had Known Before They Left

- How much things would actually cost. And that you always have to go out to meet up with people.
- That the supermarkets and pharmacies in Spain are closed on Sundays. And that there are tons of smokers on the streets in Valladolid, in all of Europe basically!
- That just coming is not getting out of my comfort zone enough - you have to get out and branch out away from the other American students to make connections.
  - How cold it is; I should have packed warmer clothes.

The Best Part of Their experience Mid-way Through

- My host family—it’s true when they say you learn the most at the dinner table!
  - The excursions to Segovia & Salamanca.
- Having the real experience of living in Valladolid, Spain, rather than choosing to travel every weekend.
  - The intercambios—they should be required!
  - Meeting new people, seeing new places.

Biggest Adjustments They Had to Make

- Talking all Spanish, all the time.
- The eating schedule/not having control over my own food & eating times
- The culture of going out as a young person: people don’t hang out at each other’s houses here, they hang out in public spaces
  - Taking short showers and turning off the lights all the time

Safety Tips for Future Students

- Keep an eye on your valuable belongings like phone, computer chargers
- Women need to be fully aware of the tendencies of Spanish men. They are extremely charming and nice when you are talking but tend to become very aggressive when you reject them.

How They Summed It Up

- Living in Spain was the most difficult thing I have ever done, but well worth it. I cherish every moment.
- Full of memories that I will never forget and I’m really grateful for the experience. There were hard times and they were made harder by me being in a foreign country, but these hard times helped me solidify who I am as a person and become much more independent.
- I absolutely loved this program, and this semester will easily be my favorite of my college career.
  Valladolid and Spain have earned a very special place in my heart. I was able to travel to places I’ve always dreamed of, make connections with people I never otherwise would have met, and learn tons about Spain from really great professors.
- I really enjoyed the educational program (for the most part) and the ability to travel to other places. However, the program is quite large so it was so easy for everyone to just speak English instead of Spanish. I think if the program was smaller, that wouldn’t happen

Updated: 7/19 clw