**Major/Minor:** Spanish; French, Italian

**Country:** Spain  **Program:** Granada  **Term & Year Abroad:** 2010-2011 Year

**Instructors**
- **What were they like when compared to UCSB instructors?**
  The instructors were about the same. They were all pretty approachable. They were a lot more lenient with foreigners in terms of the final grade if you went to their office hours and talked to them.

- **Could you call them by their first names?**
  I really don’t know. I never did, but I don’t really do that at UCSB either.

- **Was the student/instructor relationship more formal than at UCSB?**
  Yes, but not that much more formal. I would always use the ‘usted’ form in e-mails, and almost always in speaking.

- **Were they available for help during office hours?**
  Yes, for the most part.

**Courses**
- **Were the courses more difficult when compared to UCSB courses?**
  No, they were about the same.

- **Was the grading system similar to UCSB?**
  Not at all. The grading system is based on 10 points, not letter grades. Anything above a 7 is considered really good. And professors are only allowed to give out one 10 for every 20 students.

- **How did the course structure differ? Ex) did you have many assignments or just finals?**
  It was all based on the final exam.

- **Did you have oral and/or written exams?**
  Written.

- **Was the final exam schedule flexible or inflexible?**
  I don’t know. I didn’t have a problem with the given exam dates.

- **What kind of academic support, if any, did you receive?**
  None.

- **Did you find you needed to be more independent and take more initiative abroad?**
  Absolutely.

- **Was classroom participation expected?**
  About half the time. It really depends on the courses.

- **How were the host university courses different than UCSB courses?**
  They were in Spanish.

- **Were classes usually on certain days/times and for how long?**
They were usually twice a week; an hour and a half long.

- What is the class culture like? How important was it to be punctual? Could you eat/drink in class?
  Everybody shows up to class late. I would show up 10 minutes late every day and wait for the professor to arrive. There is no eating/drinking allowed in the class.

Language
- In which languages were the courses offered?
  Mostly Spanish, however if you are learning other languages, the courses will be taught in that language.

- What language did you take your courses in?
  Spanish mostly, but I also took a French course.

- If you took your courses in a foreign language, please provide info about your overall experience, difficulty of courses, language acquisition, placement exams, etc.
  It’s always easier to understand than to speak, so you get used to listening to the language and begin to understand fairly quickly. The difficulty level of the courses is about the same, the exams aren’t that hard if you go to class and take notes. The hardest thing personally was the French course I took because I was learning French through Spanish, which is not a native language for me.

Host University
- How large is the university? Student enrollment and approx campus size (smaller than UCSB)? Is it an urban campus with many tall buildings or just a few building?
  The university is located all over town in different “Facultades” depending on your field of study.

- Do the local students live on campus, at home, or off campus?
  Most students live in ‘pisos’ or apartments around town.

- If not located in the city center,
  o How far or close is it to the city?
    Depends which Facultad you frequent.
  o What type of public transportation could you take – cost?
    I would always walk, but you can take the bus for about 1.5 euros.
  o Could students take cabs -cost?
    You could, but that would be kind of weird.
  o How long would it take to get to the city center?
    About 20 minutes walking.

- Are there student clubs on campus that UC students could join?
  Not that I was aware of.

- Is there a bookstore on campus? Where did you get your books?
  I found a second hand bookstore where I would buy my books for really cheap. But I only had to buy novels, which are probably easier to find than textbooks.
- **Is there a computer lab on campus? Or, should students bring laptops?**  
  Yes there is a computer lab. Some students would bring their laptops though.

- **What types of establishments are in the university’s neighborhood? (cafes, stores, etc)**  
  A monastery.

### Housing

- **What types of accommodations are available to UC students?**  
  Apartments and dorms.

- **How close are they to campus?**  
  Depends on where your faculty is located.

- **How did you find your housing?**  
  Ripping pieces of paper off of telephone booths and calling the number saying I was interested.

- **Where did you live and with whom?**  
  In an apartment with 3 Spaniards.

- **If you lived off campus, was it difficult to find an apartment and roommate?**  
  No, it was very easy.

- **Were the rooms nicer or not than I.V./UCSB dorms?**  
  They were about the same, although some were really gross while others were really nice.

- **Was it more expensive than living in I.V.? How much was a typical rent cost in US dollars?**  
  It was much cheaper than I.V. It cost about $300 a month for a single room.

- **How/who did you pay for housing?**  
  My landlord.

### Food

- **What was the food like?**  
  A lot of people really disliked the food, but I thought it was delicious! The food can be really bland and boring, but if you eat real homemade Spanish food by someone’s Spanish mother, it is absolutely incredible.

- **Where did you eat most of your meals? Cafeterias, restaurants, street vendors, etc?**  
  I ate most of my meals at home. My roommates taught me how to cook a lot of typical Spanish dishes. I would go out for ‘tapas’ a lot too, which were the free snacks that would come along with your drink. (ONLY IN GRANADA!)

- **How much was an average meal?**  
  A full blown meal with 2 dishes, dessert, a drink and coffee was about 7-8 euros. Tapas were about 2 euros at the most, and it would include a drink and a snack sized portion.
- What time of day did people eat lunch/dinner?
Lunch at around 2-3pm and dinner at 10-11pm.

- Would it be difficult for vegetarians to find meals?
Good question! I’m a vegetarian, and it wouldn’t necessarily be hard, but it got really boring to eat bread and cheese all the time. There were some vegetarian bars too. You just have to look.

**Travel/Safety**
- If not discussed above, describe the public transportation system around your host university/city?
  Buses.
- Did you feel safe in your host city? Are there tips you would offer future students?
  Yes, there were always people around. I was never afraid to walk around at night if I was with other people, or even alone, but I think by the end I had a false sense of security. Be safe.
- Describe the public transportation in your host country?
  Buses! And trains.

- Was it difficult/easy to travel to neighboring countries?
  Yes, it was very easy. If planned far enough ahead, finding really cheap flights was easy.

**Host City/Country**
- What was the weather like?
  It was swealteringly hot in the summer (113F) but it got pretty cold in the winter as well. The temperature plateaued at about 0C for a few months.

- Describe your host city…which California/US city is it similar to (if any)?
  Not a clue.

- What were some interesting/fun things that you did in the host city?
  Going out to tapas bars, walking around to the different parks, going out to discoteques.

- How international was your host city in terms of tourism, cultural diversity, and international businesses?
  Extremely international. There were loads of international students from various European countries who were there with Erasmus.

**Culture**
- Describe the cultural differences that you observed/encountered.
  - **Time & punctuality**
    Ha! It’s Spain, enough said.
  - **Eye contact & staring**
    All Europeans stare.
  - **Relationships**
    The same, we’re all people.
o More formal dress in general, for women, for school, etc?
   More black, more boots, lots of tights.

o Alcohol consumption
   There is a lot of it. Maybe more than in I.V.

o What culture shock did you go through?
   Hating America and everything related to it. Also, hating the English language.

o Other?

**Banking**
- Were credit cards widely accepted?
   Yes.

- Did you open a local bank account? Was it easy?
   Yes I did and it was the worst decision I ever made. Do not open an account with Banco Santander! I never used it and had to pay to close it.

- If you did not open a local bank account, was it easy to withdraw money from the ATM?
  Which banks were popular & had low ATM fees?
   ‘Twas indeed easy. I used BBVB and had a flat rate fee of $5 everytime I withdrew money.

- Were there ATMs on campus?
   Don’t really remember, but I believe so.