

Ecuador: Language, Culture and Justice

Contact Hours: 45 (15 sessions, 3 hours each)

Lead Instructors / Coordinators: Daniel Bryan (daniel@pachaysana.org) and Chelsea Viteri (chelsea@pachaysana.org) - taught in conjunction with Spanish tutors

Office Hours in Pre-Semester: *Let's make an appointment.*

Credits: 3

Description: This course has two distinct components. 1) A survey of Ecuadorian history, culture and society and how those relate to issues of conflict and social justice. 2) General Spanish classes that include grammar, writing, conversation and cultural topics.

Objectives: By the end of the course students will...

- Develop a broader level of knowledge and experience as related to Ecuadorian history, culture and society.
- Demonstrate a broader understanding of self as related to both the new culture in which they are living and the human condition
- Identify (and name) interconnections between history-culture and conflicts in social justice.
- Exhibit significant improvement in Spanish language skills

Note: Specific Spanish language acquisition objectives for each student are identified in the first two days of classes, after tutors have assessed their levels.

Course Requirements/Grading: Grades are determined by combining the Language and Culture assessments. Spanish tutors will assign a Spanish grade, which accounts for 50% of the total grade, according to the student's progress made toward the established goals and completion of all Spanish reading, writing and speaking assignments. Daniel and Chelsea will assign a Culture/Justice grade, which also accounts for 50% of the overall grade, according to class participation (including attendance) and the completion of a creative journal project. The grading scale will be the same as all Pachaysana courses

Spanish Component: Everyday students partake in cultural activities with their tutors, and over the course of the 15 3-hour class sessions are assigned 10 short readings and 10 short written reflections. Progress is measured according to the written reflections and verbal responses to the readings/cultural visits.

Culture/Justice Component: *Participation* is graded by attending sessions and actively participating in class discussions. The *Creative Journal Project* is divided in the following manner: 20%: Selection of topic and reading material by the assigned dates, 40%: Live Presentation, 40%: Written component

Creative Journal Project: The goal of this project is to give you the opportunity to summarize your three week introductory experience in Ecuador and how it has impacted you on a personal, spiritual, or professional level according to a chosen theme, which is selected either before arrival or in the first two days of class. The word "creative" is used because it is about creating a product that is unique to you and your experience in Ecuador over the three weeks, as well as allowing you to use creativity in expressing yourself in a way that is familiar and comfortable to you. This project also gives you the opportunity to make connections among all your experiences in Ecuador: daily activities, class work, excursions, volunteering, self-reflection, personal relationships, etc.

Unlike most academic endeavors, this project asks for your subjectivity. We want you to make it personalized and based on your own experience, rather than simply reporting/summarizing academic

studies performed by other people. This project is much more about the process and experience (a combination of action and reflection) than it is about a final product. While your final product is a way for us to understand your experience in Ecuador and how it has already impacted you in a short time, the ultimate goal of this project is for you to understand your own personal experience here and what you have gained from it. *You will have two personal advising sessions during the course of the pre-semester course to assist you create the project during which we can work together to shape your thoughts, feelings, observations, etc. into a real and creative project.* You are welcome to schedule other sessions as well if you feel necessary.

The presentation can take on many forms. In years past, students have written monologues, created a recipe booklet, made videos, prepared a small portfolio of artwork, among others.

Written Component

You must write 3 extended journal entries due at the end of each week. Each journal entry should be at least 1000 words and based on one or more personal experiences that relate to the themes of culture or justice. Please include the following in journal entries:

1. Describe your experience(s).
2. How did the experience(s) impact you personally? What was your reaction?
3. What did this experience teach you about culture and/or justice?
4. How did this experience make you think about your own behavior and beliefs? Describe.
5. Describe how your readings relate to your themes.

Readings

Spanish readings are assigned according to student levels and vary each semester. We ask all students to read sections of the following books as well as choose no less than one “deeper dive” reading. The idea is that students select a reading that will allow students to explore the chosen themes of the creative journal project in greater depth. The “deeper dive” readings are selected with the assistance of the student’s Spanish tutor and Daniel & Chelsea.

- Adoum, J. E. (1998). *Ecuador: señas particulares (ensayo)*. Eskeletra.
- Ayala Mora, E. (2014). *Historia, Tiempo y Conocimiento del Pasado*. Corporación Editorial Nacional
- Donoso Pareja, M. (2004). *Ecuador: identidad o esquizofrenia: ensayo*. Eskeletra.
- Espinosa Apolo, M. (2000). *Los Mestizos Ecuatorianos*. Eskeletra.