

COURSE SYLLABUS

GEOG 3443 Madrid and the Geographical Imagination

Prof. Bob Rundstrom (rrundstrom@ou.edu) - June 10 - July 5, 2019

" 'Place' places people in such a way that it reveals the external bonds of our existence and at the same time the depths of our freedom and reality." -Martin Heidegger

"Madrid is having nothing and having everything." - Ramón Gómez de la Serna

If you're eager to experience and learn about **Madrid** and its people, this humanistic course in the urban geography of this city is for you! It is structured around the concept of **place** as a fundamental construction of human existence. We embed ourselves in this energizing, kaleidoscopic city while building an understanding of it both as a major global city and as a multi-centered agglomeration of highly distinct barrios or neighborhoods. Students build a sense of Madrid and its individual neighborhoods as *integrated places of natural and built* environments given shape and meaning by the *social* forces of both residents and visitors. In doing so, we learn the power of place to promote individuality and community, conformity and resistance, commodification and consumerism, and stewardship and sustainability.

We ask, "How do these forces come together to shape our experience of this city? How does human intervention shape different places? How do human life and natural phenomena play out in one place and why does it seem so different in another? What are the constraints placed on people and on nature? And what imaginative responses to Madrid have thoughtful observers like artists, writers, and filmmakers made in the near and distant past? Most importantly, how will **you** imagine and describe Madrid?

Students will have ample time to experience and quietly reflect on many parts of the city, both with and without the instructor, and to prepare their own geographical interpretations via written text, still photography, and sketch-mapping.

COURSE GOALS

- to sharpen your powers of observation and your thinking, writing, and visualization skills
- to understand how places are shaped by social categories of class, gender, ethnicity, racialization, and age-cohort or generation.
- to improve analytical, interpretive, and theoretical skills for seeing through media-generated definitions and images of places
- to understand the crucial role *geographical imagination* plays in all human societies, and especially in you
- to engage in a process of self-discovery through exploration

Learning Structures and Grading

The course features a mix of traditional lectures and discussions, periodic local site visits, creative writing, photography, and sketch-mapping. Grades are assigned as follows:

- 1 ~2.5pp. (single-spaced) Essay on Themes in Writers' Descriptions of Madrid (uploaded to Canvas) **20%**
- 2 Geographical Photo Essays of Neighborhoods (each consists of ~2.5 pp. of single-spaced text + photos + sketch-maps, uploaded to Canvas) **20% each**
- 1 Geographical Photo Essay of Parks (each consists of ~2.5 pp. of single-spaced text + photos + sketch-maps, uploaded to Canvas) **20% each**
- Attendance, Participation, and Effort **20%**

2 Required Books, 1 Map, and Other Items

Helen Constantine, ed. (2012). *Madrid Tales*, selected & trans. M. Costa. NY: Oxford University Press. [selected short tales used throughout the course]

Not For Tourists, Inc. (2018 or 2019). *Not For Tourists Guide to Madrid*. NY: Skyhorse Publishing. (\$14.99)

1 complete, folding, large-scale street map of Madrid, with names of neighborhoods clearly printed on it.

An assortment of short articles, poems, and book excerpts are required reading and are made available on Canvas.

Selected Film Scenes May Be Shown in Class. Films from the following directors are the most relevant to imagining Madrid: Camus, Potau, de la Iglesia, Urbizu, Saura, and of course Almodóvar.

Other Required Items

1 notebook for both field notes and class notes. Get whatever kind feels right.

1 camera or smartphone, & laptop or tablet

Calendar

Preparatory Readings to Enjoy Before You Leave, During Your Flight, and During Week 1 in Madrid (Make Notes!):

What kind of geography are we studying? (we will discuss these during our first week in Madrid)

Edward Relph (1989), "Responsive Methods, Geographical Imagination, and the Study of Landscapes," in A. Kobayashi & S. Mackenzie, eds. *Remaking Human Geography*, pp.149-163. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Kurt Meyer (2008), "Rhythms, Streets, Cities," in K. Goonewardena & S. Kipfer, eds. *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*, pp. 147-160. NY: Routledge

Introduction to Madrid

Not For Tourists, Inc., *Not For Tourists Guide to Madrid*. Focus on learning just the locations and names of neighborhoods, and El Retiro, Casa de Campo, Parque del Oeste, and Madrid Río/Rio Manzanares.

Madrid Tales [you choose selections]

The Following are on 'Canvas':

Jimmy Burns (1994). "The Bumpkin Capital," in his *Spain: A Literary Companion*. London: John Murray.

Ernest Hemingway ([1930] 2005), *Death in the Afternoon*, in H. Thomas, ed., pp.61-62, *A Traveller's Companion to Madrid*. Northampton, MA: Interlink. [excerpt only]

María Matz and Carole Salmon (2015), "The City I Live In: Almodóvar Reshapes Madrid as Spain Goes *Glocal*," in A. Corbalán & E. Maycock, eds. *Toward a Multicultural Configuration of Spain: Local Cities, Global Spaces*, pp. 153-163. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Catherine Nash (2001), "Preface" and "Chapter One" in her *Madrid: A Cultural and Literary Companion*. NY: Interlink.

Arthur Riggs (1928), "Madrid: The Made-To-Order Capital," chap. 11 in his *The Spanish Pageant*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Ruth Way (1962), *A Geography of Spain and Portugal*. London: Methuen. [only pp. 285-287]

Week 1, Monday June 10 - Friday June 14

Madrid's Skeletal Geography and Writers' Descriptions of the City

Topics: Introduction to the Course - Responsive Methods, Powers of Observation, Using the Imagination, The 6 Elements of *Place*; Introduction to the Madrid *Metro*; simple techniques in sketch-mapping; discuss themes in assigned readings during first 3 days of the week

Reading for this week: Finish Preparatory Readings

Thursday June 13, 5:00pm: 1st Essay Due - Organize & Summarize Themes From Preparatory Reading About Madrid

Weekday Excursion: "Anden 0" Museum under Plaza de Chamberí

Weekend Excursion to Cadiz

Week 2, Monday June 17 - Friday June 21

Your Geographies of Madrid Barrios

Topics: Compare Environment, Barrios, Plazas, Calles, People, and Behavior in both day and night in ***Salamanca and Lavapies***

Reading: Catherine Nash (2001), "Lavapies: The Melting Pot," in her *Madrid: A Cultural and Literary Companion*. NY: Interlink.

Weekday Excursion: Salamanca District and Lavapies

Sunday June 23, 5:00pm: Geographical Photo Essay Due - "Comparison of Salamanca and Lavapies"

Week 3, Monday June 24 - Friday June 28

Your Geographies of Madrid Barrios

Topics: Compare Environment, Barrios, Plazas, Calles, People, and Behavior in both day and night in ***Malasaña and the Arganzuela District***

Readings: Very Short Excerpts From:

Madrid Tales [selections]

Tom Abrams (2010). *Goya's Head*. Livingston, AL: Livingston Press.

Pio Baroja (1922). *The Quest*. I. Goldberg, trans. NY: Knopf.

Pio Baroja (1923). *Weeds*. I. Goldberg, trans. NY: Knopf.

John Dos Passos (1922), "Winter in Castile," [a set of 13 poems about different parts of Madrid] in his *A Pushcart at the Curb*, pp.13-62. NY: Doran.

Theophile Gautier ([1845] 2001), *A Romantic in Spain*. NY: Interlink.

Ben Lerner (2011), *Leaving the Atocha Station*. Minneapolis: Coffee House Press.

Jules Stewart (2012), "Adiós Franco, Hola Almodóvar," chap. 11 in his *Madrid: A History*. NY: I.B. Tauris.

Weekday Excursion: Malasaña and Arganzuela District

Sunday June 30, 5:00pm: Geographical Photo Essay Due - "Comparison of "Malasaña and Arganzuela"

Week 4, Monday July 1 - Friday July 5

Your Geographies of Madrid Parks

Topics: Parks and Green Space, History of Planning and Purpose, Who Uses Them and How?

Reading: Araceli Masterson-Algar (2016), "Lakes and Lacunaes in Madrid's Parks," chap. 3 in *Ecuadorians in Madrid*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Weekday Excursions: El Retiro, Madrid Rio, and Park Oeste

Sunday July 7, 5:00pm: Geographical Photo Essay Due - "Madrid's Main Parks"

Compare El Retiro, Madrid Rio, and Park Oeste (incl. Montaña) with each other and with what parks are like and how they're used where you come from.