

Spanish 234 in Costa Rica Interim 2015

Profesor: Dr. Kristina Medina Vilariño

Prerequisite: Spanish 231

Cost: \$3,530

Spanish 234 (the equivalent of 232 on campus) provides students with the opportunity to complete their fourth semester of Spanish in Costa Rica, a Spanish-speaking country in Central America. Students will continue to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in Spanish through living with a Costa Rican family, acquiring and processing information about Costa Rica, attending classes and participating in field trips and excursions. Special emphasis will be given to description and narration, comparison and contrast, and explanation and analysis of such topics as the following:



- ◆ Costa Ricans (*Ticos*) and their physical environment: the urban landscape of San José, the capital city, and the diverse ecological systems of two coasts and the mountains and valleys in between, including a volcano or two.
- ◆ Family, kinship, gender and social relations in urban and, to some degree, rural Costa Rica
- ◆ Education, work and leisure activities in San José and, to a lesser degree, outside of the capital
- ◆ Cultural similarities and differences between groups within Costa Rica and between North American and Costa Rican societies

Prerequisites:

Completion of Spanish 231 with a grade of B- or above (or approval of the instructor). Personal qualities of openness toward other people, cultures and ways of life; the capacity to adapt to **new and different** situations, including those that may not offer the “creature comforts” to which we are accustomed; flexibility when dealing with unforeseen circumstances; and willingness to speak Spanish at all times when involved in class and group activities.

Students who have completed Spanish 232 on campus **are not eligible** to take Spanish 234 in Costa Rica for credit.

Course Overview and Expectations:

Students will be expected to attend and participate actively in all class sessions and all scheduled out-of-class activities and field trips. Daily classes will normally meet in the morning at the center of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, although classes may be held at other locations during excursions. Integrated language/content assignments will engage students in learning cultural information through selected readings assignments from a variety of sources (essays, short stories, current newspaper and magazine articles, government documents, and so forth; interviews with native speakers of Spanish; guest lectures; and experiential learning activities. All activities will be conducted in Spanish.

The academic evaluation will be based on the quality of class participation in oral activities, including small- and large-group discussions, an oral interview, the quality of a journal and of compositions, and written exams.

Supplementary Activities:

Many afternoons will be devoted to cross-cultural activities in San José or the surrounding area, including visits to historical sites, museums, churches, markets and other places of cultural interest. Again, all activities will be conducted in Spanish. These are mandatory.

Family Homestay in San José:

All students will live in private homes in the San José area during the interim, except during excursions. The homestay will provide an experience in language immersion and allow students to observe and participate in family life in Costa Rica. Few homes will be in walking distance of the ACM center, where classes will be held; hence, most students will take public transportation (buses) to get to class.

Excursions:

We will take two overnight excursions, one to the province of Puntarenas on the Pacific coast and the second to the province of Limón on the Caribbean coast.

Program Cost:

As stated at the top of this sheet, the program cost is \$3,530. This fee includes air transportation, room and board (family homestay and accommodations and meals on excursions), out-of-class cultural activities, and entrance fees and admissions charges. Beyond this fee, costs to be borne by the students include books and course materials, local transportation in San José (bus fare to and from class) and any personal expenses.

Application Procedure:

Please submit your written application according to the procedures outlined by the International and Off-Campus Studies Office. Acceptance to the program will be based on written applications, fulfillment of the academic requirements, and a formal interview with the instructor.