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**Study Abroad Program**  
**Seville, Spring 2023**

**HIST 368: A Global History of Soccer in Spain and Seville**  
**(3 Credits)**

**Course Description**

Seville has not one but two top-flight professional soccer – or *futbol* – teams: Real Betis and Sevilla FC. They are irreconcilable antagonists, and their bi-annual meetings in *La Liga*, the Spanish football league, are terrifying occasions that always require a massive police presence. Football in Spain is not just a sport but a virtual religion, and the teams that play it have deep roots in the communities they represent. This is not unusual. In fact, football teams the world over excite a similar passion and fanatical loyalty, supporters of football are truly “fans.” This course will trace the development of Association Football – soccer as we call it – to its present position as the world’s most popular sport. Soccer now reigns supreme as a global sport, played and watched in all areas of the world, including in the one country that long resisted its charms: the United States. The game first took root in the industrial towns and cities of Britain, where professional teams like Blackburn Rovers (1875) and Manchester United (1878) were founded but it spread quickly to other countries in South America and Europe. The F.I.F.A. (*Fédération Internationale de Football Association*) was founded in 1904, and by the time of the first World Cup in 1930, won by Uruguay, the game was well-established in much of the world. After World War Two it expanded rapidly, and it’s estimated that 3.62 billion people, or about 46% of the world’s population, tuned in to watch the 2010 World Cup final in South Africa.

In that year, the World Cup was won by Spain, and Spanish football ruled the globe, dominating and reshaping not only international football, but through the growing influence of the Spanish super clubs Real Madrid and FC Barcelona, revolutionizing the club game all over the world as well with *Tika Taka*, the technically brilliant strategy of total possession that the Dutch star Johan Cruyff had instilled at Barcelona during his time as a coach there in the 1990’s. For almost two decades now, Spanish football has set a world-beating standard. But the story of Real Betis and Sevilla emphasizes another aspect of the global game, its local history and roots. Spanish *futbol* dates back to the British work gangs and companies of the late C19th, in industrial cities like Barcelona but also in rural Andalusia, where the British mining company Rio Tinto Zinc operated in the 1890’s, and where workers formed the first Spanish club in 1889, the Recreativo de Huelva. The first game of Spanish football was played between Recreativo and a team from the Seville Water Works (later Sevilla FC) in Seville in 1890. In this course we will survey the history of football from a global perspective, tracing the way it emerged around the world and why its influence spread, and exploring the way this intersected with the history of Spain, Andalusia and Seville to provide the foundation for the immensely popular game that now dominates Spanish culture.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will develop an understanding of soccer as a sport, and of the origins and history of soccer as a sport with its own unique history and patterns of development and change
2. Students will explore the spread of soccer as an international sport, and how the history of the sport intersects with the broader history of industrialization, nationalism, imperialism, and global capitalism
3. Students will understand the development of Spanish football as part of this broader transnational history and be able to link the growing popularity of the game to historical developments in Spain, Andalusia and Seville
4. Students will use their understanding and knowledge of these historical developments and the issues they raise to develop their own powers of critical thinking and writing.

## **Selected Readings**

Peter Alegi, *African Soccerscapes: How a Continent Changed the World's Game*, Ohio University, 2010.

Laurent DuBois, *The Language of the Game: How to Understand Soccer*, Basic Books, 2018

David Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Soccer*, Riverhead, 2008.

Timothy Griney, *Beyond Bend it Like Beckham: The Global Phenomenon of Women's Soccer*, Nebraska, 2012.

Sid Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga: Barcelona, Real Madrid and the World's Greatest Sports Rivalry*, Nation Books, 2014.

Colin Millar, *The Frying Pan of Seville: Sevilla v Real Betis, Spain's Hottest Football Rivalry*, Pitch Publishing, 2019.

Additional course readings, and there will be some, will be posted on the Laulima class website.

## **Attendance & Participation**

Regular attendance and active participation in class discussion is essential. Your participation in class discussions is crucial as this course will be taught in seminar rather than lecture form. Your attendance and participation will account for 15% of your final grade.

## **Writing**

Good writing is central to the humanities and to the practice of history in particular, and I'll be placing a strong emphasis on your written work. Writing assignments will be used throughout the course to encourage you to learn, analyze, integrate, and conceptualize the material we're reading and viewing. Your writing should be used not to passively record but actively explore texts and other historical materials, and to think about the ideas they

express and contain. It should also be used to explore your own responses, ideas and thoughts. I'll give you feedback on your writing throughout the semester, and by sharing your work with me and with other students, I hope you'll develop your skill as a writer and as a cultural observer and critic.

### **Assignments & Grading**

I will post discussion questions each week on the course readings that should be answered before the end of the week (1-2 pages). Cumulatively, these will be worth 35% of your overall grade. I will also ask you to do two oral presentations on some aspect of the global and local history of football (15%). The remainder of your grade will be based on a Final Paper of 5-7 pages (35%) and on class attendance and participation (15%). The final will be on a theme of your own choosing that synthesizes the readings we've done over the course of the semester, and requires some additional research of your own on the history or contemporary setting of Spanish soccer from a political, economic, cultural, or social point of view. All of the writing assignments for class must be completed to receive a passing grade.

### **Class Schedule**

The class is scheduled for 12 weeks. During this time we will make a number of expeditions out of the classroom to observe street *futbol* at the Alameda de Hercules or another park or plaza in Seville, to watch more organized futsal and youth soccer, and to attend a professional game at Real Betis or Seville FC.