

Fordham University
Interdisciplinary Capstone
Medieval Studies (MVST) 4998
Spring 2020 and 20 May-5 June 2020
Weds. 6-8PM, FMH 322
SYLLABUS

Title: Study Tour: Medieval Spain (walking the Camino de Santiago)

COURSE CREDIT: A spring semester course for 4 credits. Fordham College students may apply the credits earned for this course (MVST 4998) as a free elective regardless of major, or toward a major or minor in Medieval Studies or History or other. The course covers the interdisciplinary capstone requirement in the core.

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CHAPERONE & TEACHING ASST: Rachel Podd, Dept. of History, rpodd@fordham.edu

FORMAT: Study tour in northwestern Spain along the historic and modern Camino de Santiago from León to Santiago de Compostela. This is a spring course. From January to May, the class will meet about twice a month for presentations, discussion, and practicums. Participants will then walk about 15 miles a day for two weeks (20 May-5 June), with meetings, lectures and discussion each day. The pilgrimage walk is the goal and capstone of a semester-long course on medieval and modern pilgrimage conducted during the spring course.

DESCRIPTION: The Camino de Santiago is the traditional pilgrimage route from France across northwestern Spain to Santiago de Compostela, the legendary burial site of St. James. One of the great medieval pilgrimages and the greatest surviving itinerary for medieval monuments and landscapes, it has enjoyed a remarkable revival in recent years, attracting European Union sponsorship, the attention of media stars, and hundreds of thousands of walkers and pilgrims. This course emphasizes connections between the medieval and modern pilgrimage to Santiago, specifically through the genre of travel writing. Students will be required to read and analyze medieval and modern travel narratives and then craft narratives of their own. Our consideration of travel narratives as they relate to our pilgrimage will encourage students to confront three interconnected aspects of experience, and to evaluate experience vs. reality.

- (1) *Outward journeys*: the physical trip through space; logistical concerns, food, lodging, comfort; the physical body and how the trip changes it; interactions with the people and things along the way; relationship between experience and authenticity
- (2) *Inward journeys*: the emotional, spiritual, or intellectual journey; range of motivations for travel, especially for modern pilgrims with a range of (or no) religious backgrounds;
- (3) *Virtual journeys*: the journey reflected back to others. How can you accurately convey to

them what you have experienced? Having gone through the trip, do you want people to undertake this for themselves? How do you encourage them to do so (or not)? What information do they need to have to start their own journey? What does it mean to provide (or follow) a guide to the Camino?

In this two-week study tour, participants will walk the route, and meet each day for lectures and discussion of the medieval and pre-modern monuments along the route, and work on a travel journal that will form the basis of their travel narrative. The group will meet periodically during the spring 2020 semester.

EVALUATION:

Class discussion and participation (spring) (20%): Discussion of readings as well as attendance at [practice walks](#) (everyone must sign up for at least two!).

Written Assignments/Presentations

- *Travel Narrative: Typologies* (20%, **due in class 2/26**) Each student is responsible for reading a travel narrative and writing a review. These reviews will then form the basis of short in-class presentations and a longer in-class brainstorming session about categories, aims, and assumptions of travel writing.
- *New York Pilgrimage* (20%, **due in class 3/25**) Each student will design, complete, and document their own pilgrimage in New York City. Students may go together, but must produce individual written reflection on the pilgrimage justifying why (or why not) it is a pilgrimage in lieu of the travel writing and other sources we have read together in class. Also includes a brief in class presentation/discussion.
- *Site presentation* (20%, draft due 4/30, presentation on tour - see schedule): Each student will be responsible for one of the sites that we will be walking through (larger sites like León and Santiago will be shared among multiple students). Prior to arrival in Spain, provide a short write up (about 300-500 words) on your site. This will serve as a guide for your companions as they pass along the way. On the camino itself, you will be responsible for your town as the resource person and guide (though we'll all work together on that), so imagine this presentation as the basis for the real-time, real-life consideration. Students should revise and add to these descriptions once they are in Spain.
- *Final Project: Pilgrimage Narrative* (20%, **due electronically 6/11**): Each student will be responsible for a narrative informed by our work over the course of the semester on travel narratives, as well as their experience on Camino. This narrative may be written (hand-written is fine); video journal; or photo essay.

Required TEXTS to Purchase:

- Nancy Louise Frey, *Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago, Journeys Along an*

Ancient Way in Modern Spain (California, 1998) 978-0520217515 [also on reserve at RH]

- William Melczer, *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela* (Itasca, 2008) 978-0934977258 [translation of Bk 5 of the Codex calixtinus, also on reserve at LC and RH].
- Dintaman & Landis, *A Village to Village Guide to Hiking the Camino de Santiago* 7th edition (Village to Village, 2019) 978-1947474178 (**BUY KINDLE VERSION BEFORE YOU GO TO SPAIN! We'll discuss details in class**)

Optional:

- David M. Gitlitz and Linda Kay Davidson, *The Pilgrimage Road to Santiago: The Complete Cultural Handbook* (Saint Martin's, 2000) 978-0312254162 - very useful for site presentations

Other texts will be available and shared via Google Drive and are denoted by ****

THE CAMINO AND RESPONSIBILITY

Although the historical context supplies the content of this course, much of the experience will be about walking and self-reliance. Participants will need to be prepared and fit. Good shoes or boots, well used and broken in, and a semester-long record of regular walking will be expected of everyone. The instructors will book accommodations in advance. **Each participant is responsible, however, for arriving in León by the evening of May 20**, and finding their way from place to place each day along the Camino, plus meals, coursework, and the experience of the Camino.

There are many ways walkers can make themselves miserable, or worse, but remember also that as many as 75,000 pilgrims/walkers will walk the Camino this year (there will probably be 50-100 pilgrims/walkers staying each night in the same towns along the way), and with a little care and preparation, everyone can share an unusual and fulfilling experience.

Each destination along the way will have most of the amenities, and at no time does the Camino stray far from villages or major roads, so the gear does not need to be comprehensive. In fact, the lighter the better, because you will be walking five to ten hours each day. Everyone needs good shoes or boots, a light sleeping bag (hostels sometimes do not have sheets or blankets), a light backpack, a couple of changes of clothes, water bottles, a hat, sunscreen, etc. The whole kit should not be more than 20 lbs, and ideally less.

We will be staying in private hostels and small hotels along the way. The accommodations are usually dormitory-style. Many do not provide blankets, so a light sleeping bag or liner is required. Course fees will cover the cost of accommodation.

Students will be responsible for their own meals, although we will have several group meals sponsored by Fordham as well as opportunities to cook and picnic together. Groceries are available in most villages for breakfasts, breaks and lunches, and bars along the route supply reasonable breakfasts and lunches. For the evening meal, many hostels have kitchens for preparing food, and almost every village has very reasonable restaurants with a "pilgrim's menu" (bread, first course of pasta or vegetables, second course of meat or fish or eggs, etc., dessert, water, wine, for 7-10 Euros).

In case of blisters, fatigue, heat or other emergencies, all points on the route are close to taxis or intercity buses. Clinics are accessible, well-staffed, and very accommodating to pilgrims. Almost everywhere has cell-phone coverage. WI-FI COVERAGE IS EXTENSIVE AND FREE IN HOSTELS, RESTAURANTS, AND FREQUENTLY IN TOWN SQUARES.

Class Schedule and Itinerary

(The tour dates are firm, but those for class meetings during the semester are tentative. Weekend or weekday walks will also be scheduled.)

Date	Topic	Readings/ Assignments
Weds January 15	Introductions/ Medieval Spain/	Pick sites in class
Weds January 29	Medieval pilgrimage/ Lecture: medieval art	Read: <i>Pilgrim's Guide</i> Pick travel narratives for presentation in class
Weds February 12	Medieval pilgrimage ctd.; medieval travel narratives; lecture: pilgrimage and pain	Read: ** Pilgrimage Narratives **, **Miracles of St. James,** **Sumption, "Medicine of the Sick"***
Weds February 26:	Modern travel narrative - typologies	Travel Narrative assignment and presentations due
Weds March 11:	What is a pilgrimage/ who is a pilgrim? Frey discussion	Read: Frey, <i>Pilgrim Stories</i>
Weds March 25:	Movie and pizza: <i>Six Ways to Santiago</i>	

Weds April 8:	Experiencing and justifying pilgrimage	NY Pilgrimage reports and presentations due
Weds April 22:	Wrap up/ final logistics	Draft site report due
May TBA (during reading days! Help me out by telling me senior class event conflicts at both campuses, please)		Camino group dinner
Weds May 20		Arrive in León
Thurs May 21 (1K= about .6 mi. distances are approximate)		León - site reports (3)
Fri May 22		Hospital de Órbigo (~31K) - site report
Sat May 23		Astorga (~15K) - site report (1-2)
Sun May 24		Rabanal (~20K) - site report (inc. Cruz de Ferro)
Mon May 25		Molinaseca (~25K)
Tues May 26		Ponferrada (~8K) - site reports (2, inc. Las Medulas)
Weds May 27		Villafranca del Bierzo (~28K) - site report
Thurs May 28		La Laguna (~25K) - site report (for O Cebreiro)
Fri May 29		Triacastela (~22K) - site report (for Samos)
Sat May 30		Sarria (~25K)
Sun May 31		Portomarín (~21K) - site report
Mon June 1		Palas de Rei (~24K)
Tues June 2		Melide (~15K)

Weds June 3		O Pedrouzo (~33K)
Thurs June 4		Santiago (~19K)
Fri June 5		Santiago - site reports (3) closing dinner
Weds June 11		Final project due