

# UC Riverside

## UCR Honors Capstones 2018-2019

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A Video Glimpse of Spain

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## Abstract

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMCy39yBxcY>

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## **Who I am**

Before I begin talking about my project, I'm going to talk about who I am and the experiences I've had that led me to complete the Capstone project. In high school, I have always tried to become involved in organizations and clubs. These included sports and volunteer clubs. One of the clubs I participated in was called the Interact Club. Through this club, I traveled to the Dominican Republic and Peru for volunteer service. In both of these trips, I had to challenge my Spanish speaking skills and cultural awareness of Latin American countries. The sports that I participated in were track and cross country. I was very passionate about these sports because it was both an individual and team sport. Everyone was encouraging, even if you were in the back of the pack. Unlike basketball or volleyball, the only person you had to count on was yourself. This taught me independence and cooperation among myself. I experience personal growth and developed relationships with my teammates and coaches that I will never forget. I am still close with them today.

Moving forward in college, I still kept my passion for travel and running. I ended up double majoring in Business Marketing and Spanish. Business marketing reinforced my communication skills while Spanish raised my confidence towards the Spanish language. Being a fourth year, I can now talk comfortably with others in Spanish instead of talking shyly. The two main clubs I participate in are the Running Club and Business Fraternity, Phi Chi Theta. In both of these clubs, I took on leadership roles so I can help others and improve my relationships in both. In the UCR Running Club, I am the External Communications officer and make sure we are in communication with outside sponsors. In my business fraternity, I am the videographer

and photographer. I film and edit videos that help raise awareness of our growth and development.

### **Spanish Language**

I decided to add Spanish as a double major at the end of my freshman year after placing into Spanish 5 at UCR. The lower division Spanish classes range from Spanish 1 through Spanish 6. I was only planning on minoring in Spanish but after my placement, I decided to fully major in it. Ever since I was young I have always been fascinated with learning languages, specifically Spanish. In high school, I took Spanish all four years and took AP Spanish my senior year. Throughout high school, I learned how to mostly write and identify proper Spanish grammar. However, I didn't know how to speak Spanish comfortably. Each Spanish class I took in college, I felt more comfortable speaking only Spanish, compared to my high school classes where the teacher spoke English.

I not only learned how to speak Spanish in the classroom setting but I also learned through friends. UC Riverside is a diverse campus filled with people from a variety of cultures. I have made many friends who gladly offered to only speak in Spanish with me. My roommate in college invited me to her Spanish household where I learned more of the slang and culture.

The majority of my Spanish speaking growth came from my trip to Spain, which I will talk about in a later section. There, I learned how to speak like the locals and made some friends there through studying abroad and becoming assimilated with the culture.

All in all, there are many underlying reasons why I decided to major in the Spanish language. The two main reasons are for personal and professional growth. Personally, I would like to travel and meet new people with confidence through my Spanish fluency. Professionally,

knowing an extra language expands my options and leaves more room to make connections within the company I'm working for.

## **Travel**

Before traveling to Spain, traveling across the world has always been my passion. Learning about each country's culture, customs, and people have always fascinated me. My love for traveling started when I was in middle school. In 6th grade, I visited my adoption center in China. I realized how different Asian countries are to the Americas. In high school, I completed community service in the Dominican Republic and Peru. There, I interacted with the students who were both my age and younger. Going to the Dominican Republic revealed to me how much of a language barrier there is between people. Speaking Spanish at the time was extremely difficult. I found out more so in Peru, when I visited an all girls' orphanage. Teaching the girls how to read and write was easy since I knew my grammar. However, speaking with them was difficult because we didn't know how to clearly express ourselves.

Outside of school, I traveled to other countries with friends. I went to Israel with one of my friends from high school. Leading up to the trip, she conducted Hebrew lessons so it would be easier for me to communicate with her family. Months before traveling to Israel, I would receive fun lessons on how to identify characters and speak Hebrew. This experience taught me my discipline and persistence in learning languages.

Last summer, I traveled to Sweden with a friend and stayed with his family for two weeks. Living in homes rather than hotels is a great way to immerse yourself into the culture. That way, you can eat the food your host family makes for you and participate in their day to day activities, like grocery shopping and walks in the park. I also took the time to learn Swedish



years before going on the trip. My goal one day is to learn how to speak multiple languages by the time I'm older.

## **Video Making**

It all started in high school when I had a friend who was into video making and editing. He always carried a professional camera with him. He eventually went to college for filmmaking. I was inspired by the idea of filming something and having the control of how it turns out. Eventually, I started a Youtube channel my senior year of high school where I would post one video a week. The videos would range from tutorials to challenges to vlogs. Vlogs are simply video blogs of daily life. I realized how much effort that went into filming. In order to get a quality video, you need to have a high-tech camera. Mine was a Rebel t3i which costs around \$1000. You also need to make sure wherever you are, there needs to be appropriate lighting. Depending on the video you make, capturing B-roll footage is essential in making great videos. B-roll is the use of alternative footage in place of the main shot to give it more background.

The editing of videos is also very important. Currently, I edit all my videos on iMovie. However, I would eventually like to transition to Final Cut Pro, which costs around \$300. Because I am a perfectionist, it takes a long time to edit a video precisely how I imagine the video to come out. Each minute of the completed video equates to one hours of editing or more.

In the first three years of college, I obtained an internship through the honors program as a Youtube editor. Through this internship, I edited videos that marketed the Honors Program. These videos included fun challenges with the staff, educational videos about joining honors, and many other videos promoting involvement.

Now, I am filming individual projects for my own use to look back on. For example, for the year of 2018, I'm filming a second a day and then compiling all the clips at the end of the year. I now watch movies in a critical yet appreciative perspective.

### **Spain trip and Video**

Ultimately, the inspiration behind my capstone was my study abroad trip to Spain and my passion for filmmaking. The study abroad program I participated in was through the Faculty Lead Education Abroad Program (FLEAP). We traveled and studied for an entire month. The first week, we traveled to many different cities, including Madrid, Toledo, Segovia, Sevilla, Bilbao, and Oviedo. We visited museums and explored the cities for that week. We also got to know each other on the trip. I only knew two people prior to this program. Even though going to Spain itself was a wonderful experience, I'd say bonding with my fellow students were my best memories. I remember we all got together in the hotel room after a long day of touring to play card games.

The last three weeks, we settled in Gijon and started our two classes there with the professor. The first class was dedicated to transcribing letters from the past. The second class was learning about the history of Spain and who ruled during which period. I enjoyed my time in Gijon because it was very relaxed and slow paced compared to the first week. Almost every morning fellow student Miguel and I would wake up and run a few miles among the sunset.

To make sure I'd remember the exact places we traveled to and the fun times we've had, I brought my Canon t3i camera with me on the trip. Each day I would record our activities by capturing a lot of B-footage. While editing, it's also essential to have a range of close up shots and wide shot angles. For example, it would be too repetitive if I just used wide shot angles

throughout the whole video. Deciding what music to incorporate in the video was a process. It's also important to match the music with the clips for a better transition. For example, the beginning of the chorus should be where you incorporate your most exciting clips.

## **Journal**

*The following journal entries are a more detailed account of my Spain experience. They are mostly informal but authentic write-ups of how I felt and what I experienced every day.*

*July 1, 2018*

- Woke up in Geneva with Janet and Leah at 9am
- Didn't end up going to lunch with them because I wanted to make sure that I'd catch my 2:40pm flight
- When I got to Geneva airport, the flight was delayed by an hour....and then delayed again by another hour!
- Finally got to Madrid and took a taxi to the Hotel Gran Via by 10pm, even though I was supposed to be there at 8pm...
- Got situated with my roommate, Leslie. I've known her from a few of my classes at college
- Now we're just relaxing in the hotel watching youtube videos

*July 2, 2018*

Today we woke up and had delicious breakfast. There was a great variety of food: from eggs to fruit to pastries. Then, we walked to the Museo de Prada, which is one of the most famous museums in Spain. Before entering into the museum a lot of us took pictures and had a mini photoshoot. I even took pictures of dogs with Briana. All of the paintings were so fascinating and detailed. My favorite painting was called 'The Garden of Earthly Delights' which depicted heaven, the present age, and hell. I probably looked at it for 20 minutes. After the museum, a few

of us were very hungry, so we walked to this cafe where you can eat outside. You have to pay a little extra to get seated outside in the fresh air. I guess when you have a view, it's more meaningful, which is why it's more expensive. While ordering my food, Karla suggested a drink called 'Tinto de Verano.' It's a cold, wine-based drink that tastes like Sangria. It is a mixture of red wine and soda, and served with an orange or lemon. It is absolutely delicious and so refreshing. For food, I ordered chicken with fries.

After lunch, we went to a bar to watch the soccer game. The place we went to was called Ovni and it was amazing! The chicken wings were so delicious, crispy, salty, and seasoned.

Then, I went exploring with Zuly and Leslie around Madrid. We took pictures all over the place. We also went to a small cafe known for the churros and hot chocolate dip. They go very well together and are famous in Spain. After the small treat, we explored and tried to find gifts for friends and family. There were many people around the city dressed in headless costumes trying to take pictures for money. One of them scared me and I thought it was funny. However, I had to pay them because they requested money for my entertainment.

*July 3, 2018*

The next day we took a bus to Toledo. We stopped the bus to take some pictures because the view was phenomenal. When we got there, we got to explore Toledo and its surroundings. All the buildings and environment was very rural. We all walked to the Cathedral of Toledo, which was so majestic and large. Alfredo and I took a break and played PokemonGo for a little bit. For

lunch, Karla, Briana, and I stopped at a lunch place that had a menu of the day, which included three courses of food you can choose from. I got a salad, seafood rice soup, and ice cream. I was very full afterwards.

When we got back, Zuly, Leslie, and I went to a paella place called 'Toro Tapas' which had very delicious paella. For only 16 euros, you get a salad, drink, and paella. I've fallen in love with paella after that experience. Apparently, I learned that if a restaurant has a menu with pictures in it, it isn't as fancy with a restaurant with no pictures at all.



*Paella*

*July 4, 2018*

The next day, we went to the Museo de Arqueología. It revealed the history of Spain and showed many artifacts from the olden ages (chairs, jewelry, and weapons). It was a modern museum

because there were screens you can watch on and even participate in a virtual reality simulation where you can look around so it feels like you traveled back in time to the past.

After the museum, a few of us went to the Parque del Retiro where you can walk through the nature and rent a canoe to go rowing in the lake. Karla, Briana, and I shared a rowboat and we got some exercise rowing in it. It was a very strenuous but fun experience. After that, we all went out and ate at Toro Tapas again because the paella was so delicious from the day before. Instead of Tinto de Verano, we tried sangria. That was also tasty but not as refreshing as Tinto de Veranos.

After food, Miguel, Alfredo, Briana and I went to an Irish pub and it was awesome because we got in for free (because no one was there). The first two rounds of drinks were also free! After the pub, we went to McDonalds and I got chicken nuggets which were the best investment I've ever made.

*July 5, 2018*

The next day, we checked out of the hotel and kept our suitcases in the hotel when we came back. We went to Córdoba for a little bit and then spent a night in Sevilla. Cordoba was a very beautiful place, especially the Mezquita de Córdoba. It's known for the the arches and designs that have red stripes. They remind me of candy canes. Then we walked around Toledo and got some ice cream because it was very hot.

After the Toledo trip, we took a bus to Sevilla for a night. Sevilla is absolutely breathtaking. All the surroundings were beautiful and it was very green. For dinner I ordered Tinto de Verano (what a surprise!), Gazpacho, a plate with fries, fried eggs, and ham.

*July 6, 2018*

On the 6th of July, we visited the Cathedral de Sevilla. One of the things I remember most was the major staircase we had to climb to listen to the bells up close and get a gorgeous view of all of Sevilla. The climb was worth it because we had a fun time relaxing on the top. After Sevilla, we took a bus to Merida and visited the Teatro romano de Merida. That was a very surreal experience because we got to go inside the stadium and pretend we were bulls. Then we took another bus to Trujillo and got some lunch.

When returned to Madrid, there was the gay pride festival super late at night and a huge concert (kind of like Block Party). So a few of us went out that night and danced out hearts out.

*July 7, 2018*

This day, we went to the Museo de Reina Sofia, which was entertaining because we got to imitate the Painting of Guernica. I was the bird. Then we went back to Ovni so I can get my chicken wings.

*July 8, 2018*

This was our last official day before class started. I truly had a very fun experience exploring all of Spain with my classmates. We took a bus and visited the Acueducto de Segovia and toured the Castillo de la Mota. The last cathedral we visited was the Catedral de Leon. It was pouring rain but also a cool experience because it made the Cathedral look majestic. At the end, we took a bus to our home for the next three weeks!



*Catedral de Leon*

*July 9-26, 2018*

These next few weeks in Gijon have been so memorable and unforgettable. That's where I formed close relationships with all my classmates, specifically Karla, Briana, and Gilda, who are going to visit me in SF later this month. Throughout these weeks, we learned more of the slang



people used and truly lived like a local. The beach was so fun and we played volleyball most of the time and relaxed. In the mornings, Miguel and I would run along the beach.



*Famous Gijon sign in the center of Gijon*

While in Gijon, we took two trips: one to Bilbao and one to Oviedo. Bilbao was our favorite location because we all participated in a scavenger hunt which got us familiarized with the area. We saw many amazing sights including cute coffee shops and live bands. Oviedo was also really fun but it was pouring rain. Luckily, we had our large ponchos the professor gave us. They varied in fun colors like bright pink, blue, green, and orange.

## **Future**

Moving forward, I am participating in programs that challenge myself both academically and personally. In the winter of 2019, I am participating in the UC Center Sacramento (UCCS)

program. There, I will be working with California Energy Commission as a communications intern. I will be incorporating both my Business Marketing and Filmmaking skills within this internship.

Overall, this Spain trip was more of a reinforcement to open yourself up and travel more. I made so many unique friendships through this trip. This also reinforces the idea that your life can change within only a month. Before studying abroad, I had the option to either partake in an internship for ten weeks or study abroad. I'm extremely grateful that I chose to study abroad because I have my entire life to develop professionally. However, I didn't have much time to travel the world with my fellow classmates and experience a different culture for a month. I know I improved my Spanish speaking skills tremendously. Although it's still difficult to speak as fast as the natives do, I'm still learning. And one day, I would like to get a job that incorporates my passion for spanish speaking, marketing, filmmaking, and of course traveling.