

# the **epic** ADVANTAGE

## **Student/Faculty Collaborative Research Experience**

### **EPIC ADVANTAGE: ANDALUSIAN DREAMING: NOSTALGIA AND REALITY IN SPAIN AND MOROCCO : FIELD RESEARCH IN SPAIN AND MOROCCO**

**Dates: June 14, 2018-July 8, 2018**

**Leaders: Chris Swafford, Bill Culverhouse**

**Application Deadline: November 6, 2017**



### **Description of Experience and Research:**

Andalusia (Al-Andalus) was the land of southern Spain and northern Morocco, Muslim from 711, home of the Cordoban Caliphate of the 10 and 11th centuries, and the Nasrid Reign in Granada until 1492. Andalusia was both contested space and an experiment in tolerance (does that mean tolerate or tolerance?) and cohabitation (*convivencia*) between Jews, Muslims and Christians. Today, Andalusia has become a symbol of the bygone days, a kind of memory Eden, a motive for nostalgia or recovery, the paradise lost. From Edward Said to Mahmoud Darwish to the Islamic State, Al-Andalus is remembered and coveted.

Students will engage in research about the general history of Al-Andalus as well as pursue individual interests, for example, Medieval poetic forms created in Al-Andalus or musical instruments or songs of Al-Andalus. Students will then research the current political and social demographics of Spain and Morocco and how their chosen individual research interest appears in contemporary cultural products. If students choose music, for example, they could explore contemporary flamenco in Spain or hip-hop in Morocco. Students will complete a creative project that weaves the imaginary of Al-Andalus with the realities of current life in Spain and Morocco.

### **Location in Spain:**

In Spain we will be located in Granada, the last Muslim kingdom in medieval Al-Andalus and currently the epicenter for an Andalusian Renaissance. In Morocco, we will be traveling to various sites in the Northern part of Morocco, formerly part of Al-Andalus.

This collaborative research project in Spain and Morocco has two pillars that support it. The first deals with Medieval Al-Andalus, the geographical setting for extended multicultural and pluralistic societies that fundamentally defined themselves as religiously different (Muslim vs. Christian vs. Jewish) and yet similar (Abrahamic) but aesthetically unified (art, music, poetry, cuisine, even horses). While contemporary assumptions about civic identity are primarily bordered through the notion of modern nation-states (Spain and Morocco in this case), our study of Al-Andalus, should show different constructions of public and private identities. For example, what was the role of multiple languages in the differentiation between the Jews, Christians and Muslims and how did the proliferation of languages-dialects maintain the diverse cultures as well as create difficulties for creating cultural products (for example poetry)?

The second pillar deals with the intersection of the past with the present. Spain is currently enjoying a kind of Andalusian Renaissance (centered in Granada). This celebration of Spain's past and its current attempts to move toward a diverse and tolerant society is tempered by "exotification," economic and social strife that often translates into conflicts couched in racial, ethnic, and religious terminology. Additionally, Spain is the principal portal for North African immigrants (legal and illegal) not just to Spain but through Spain to all of Europe.

The bordered political relationship between Spain and Morocco and their citizens/residents is complicated by world issues of globalization and development, the global North versus South, human migration, and social inequalities. These realities of contemporary sociopolitical life are contradicted by the imagined Al-Andalus, a seemingly borderless imaginary that has been consistently recreated aesthetically throughout its history and continues to be so in the current Andalusian Renaissance.

**Expectations for Students:**

There is no language requirement for this collaborative research project: students do not need to be able to speak Spanish or Arabic to apply. We are particularly interested in assembling a group of students who bring together interests in music, art and architecture, history, poetry and area studies (Spain and Morocco – languages, literatures, cultures). The product of this research will reflect the duality of Al-Andalus: in addition to producing an in-depth study of the past/present reality of Al-Andalus, we and our students will also create a product that aesthetically invokes the nostalgic imagined Al-Andalus. This may take, for example, the form of a poetry chapbook, an original musical composition, or a photographic essay. Nostalgia and remembering, Andalusian dreaming, will be contrasted with Spain and Morocco today.

**Faculty:**

**Chris Swafford** is a Professor of Spanish and Hispanic Studies. Her personal expertise is in Peninsular (Spain) languages, literatures, and cultures. She has led nine Earlham programs to Spain and eleven off-campus May Terms.

**Bill Culverhouse** is a former Assistant Professor of Music at Earlham. He currently teaches at Binghamton University. He specializes in Middle Eastern Music and has led research programs in Jordan with Earlham students.

**Dates of Experience:**

June 14, 2018-July 8, 2018

**Travel To and From Site:**

Students will arrive in Málaga, Spain on Thursday, June 14, 2018. Students may leave from Málaga Sunday, July 8, 2018.

**Application:** Applications can be received from students starting on Oct. 15, 2017. Application window closes on Nov 6, 2017.

**Link to Application:** [Apply in Handshake](#)

**Preparation:** Students will be required to take a 1 credit EPIC Advantage Orientation seminar during the Spring 2018 academic semester. This seminar will provide the necessary background and travel logistics for students to maximize the experience. Class meeting dates/times will be determined in the future.

**Student Eligibility:** Rising sophomores, rising juniors, or rising seniors may apply.

**Cost to Student:** This experience is funded as an EPIC Advantage opportunity. Funding covers passport, visa, travel, room and board, and other expenses required by the program. Additional personal expenses will be covered by the student.

**Program plans subject to change.**