



## *Banking, Wineries, Technology, and much more! UW Students explore Spain's unique businesses and culture*

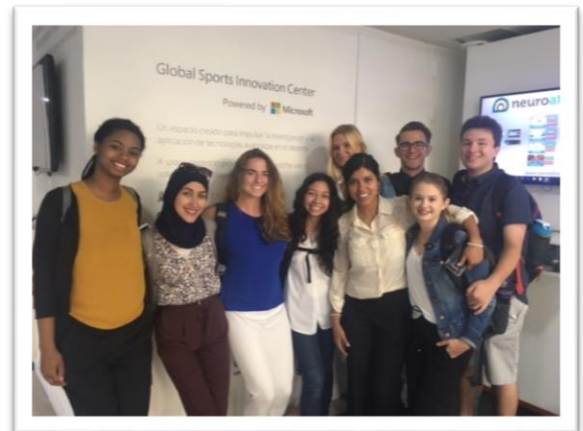
A bank whose business model discourages growth. One of the most famous (and mysterious) wineries in the world. The biggest e-learning platform in Europe.

A select group of students from the University of Washington was granted access to some of the most representative, powerful and singular companies in Spain as part of "Business and Cultural Dynamics in Spain," an exploration seminar offered jointly this past Early Fall 2017 by the Spanish and Portuguese Department and the Foster School of Business.

The program was restricted to a maximum of fourteen students to provide the participants a dedicated learning experience and better access to the companies visited. "My favorite part of the program was the chance to experience various aspects of Spain, in the company of a small group of mutually interested students," said Austin Graham, who is double majoring in Spanish and Philosophy.

Marilís Mediavilla, the program director, noticed that many students pursuing degrees in Spanish and other interdisciplinary studies were thinking about a future where their second-language skills could

secure them job opportunities at US-based companies, or even abroad. Thanks to her own background in business and local professional contacts in Spain, Mediavilla was able to secure visits and meetings with representatives from top Spanish companies like Bankinter, one of the world's most reliable banks; Vega Sicilia, the country's best winery; and Telefónica, the biggest telecommunications company in Europe.



The variety and relevance of the business sectors and companies featured in the program were welcomed by the participants. Patricia González, a Business Administration major, appreciated being exposed to companies that ranged from entrepreneurial ventures to family-owned businesses to multinational corporations. For Anna Porteous, majoring in Spanish, the visits “were really enlightening” and helped her decide what to focus on once she graduates.

The seminar, based in Valladolid and Madrid, also offered its students full immersion into Spanish culture. Medieval cities like Segovia and Toledo, Madrid’s historical center, and even Picasso’s *Guernica* featured heavily in the participants’ experience and complemented the business side of the Exploration Seminar. “There was time to visit museums, parks, cultural centers, and to try out local restaurants and bars,” said Claire Coppola, an Accounting major.

Planning for a new iteration of the program is underway. If you want to learn more about it, contact Marilís Mediavilla at [marilism@uw.edu](mailto:marilism@uw.edu), visit our stand at the UW Study Abroad Fair this coming January 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 from 10 am to 2 pm in the HUB, or come to the information session on Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 2018 at CMU from 3.30 pm to 4.20 pm.

