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Reflection English Copy

Reflection of Cultures

The fundamental themes of my Spanish Civilization and Culture class included the history and development of America and the Iberian Peninsula, the details of many societies and empires, and the mixture of cultures into new ones. Although language acquisition plays an important role in the foreign language education of students, many other aspects such as history, food, and traditions are an equally important part of learning about a culture and language.

There is a direct connection between this coursework and my potential jobs in the future, opportunities with my church, and my other coursework with the need to learn to communicate better in a world that has so much interaction between cultures. For example, this summer, I am supposed to participate in a mission trip with my church. My church has a strong relationship with a small community in La Paz, Mexico. I don't want to go on this trip and expect every person to be the same. I want to be able to serve the people while I am there. In an effort to do this, I chose to study Mexican culture for this entire semester through a project in my Communication across cultures course. In spending this time studying the culture, I have learned about their verbal and nonverbal communication, their perspective on time and the past, present, and future, and their perspective on close relationships. Likewise, in my Spanish culture and civilization class, I have learned that many parts of Mexican culture, such as religious

beliefs, have historical ties to areas in Spain since the area had Spanish conquests in it. These specific examples of connections will help me while I am in Mexico because I will be able to handle any differences in our cultures. For example, catholicism is the most popular religion in Mexico and we are traveling there as a protestant church. It is important for us to be respectful of our difference in beliefs such as the idea of salvation and the respect of tradition and scripture combined as opposed to only scripture. It is important for us to learn about these differences since we want to build meaningful relationships with the people.

I took three culture classes this semester. All of these classes taught me that it is important to learn about other cultures in order to expand your own worldview. In relation to my personal experience, the post-graduate job search can be very difficult. However, I have an advantage since I have taken these culture classes because many companies want students who have a better understanding of other cultures and can build relationships with people very well. With good international relations comes an exchange of goods as well as ideas in business, medicine, education, and other important parts of the development of society. Because of my culture classes, I can demonstrate to employers that I understand that every culture has different manners of life and it is important to learn about them in order to better interact with them.

In learning about the history and development of many different spanish cultures, I have learned that culture is something that is always changing and it is important to adapt to differences as you travel and meet people around the world. In my future, I want to travel more and work internationally. A lot of my education before this

coursework was focused only on the history of the United States. My point of view has changed in that I now understand that Hispanic culture is not homogenous and that many of the Hispanic cultures are a mix of other cultures that had influence from other cultures. I can make a direct comparison here because the culture in the United States has influence from other cultures as well. Now that I have studied and learned more about Spanish cultures around the world, I have more knowledge of Spanish speaking countries and I can apply this knowledge to my communication skills, my worldview, and my future jobs and travel opportunities.