

SP 2022: RXRS-499: Balkan History, Geography, and Folk Medicines

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Course Weight: 2 units

Locations: Stolat, Bulgaria
Sofia, Bulgaria
Varna, Bulgaria
Thessaloniki, Greece
Bucharest, Romania
Istanbul, Turkey

Catalogue description: Global perspectives Maymester – Folk Medicines, Geography, and History of the Balkans through immersive travel.

Introduction

This course will offer an immersive review of Folk Medicine and Practices in the Balkans – from Prehistoric to the Ottoman Empire. This course considers the benefits and consequences of folk medicine, including sustainability of these medical practices from both a historical and geographical perspective. Additionally, the course will consider the role of folk medicine as a cultural and political tool. Topics will be presented that highlight how folk medicine was used throughout the Balkans to shape, modify, or change history. Students will participate in immersive cultural and historic learning throughout the 20 Day Maymester.

Objectives

The study of medicine from the human past intersects across pharmacy, the humanities, natural sciences, physical sciences, and social studies. This intersection offers an ideal platform for fostering a lifelong appreciation for interdisciplinary perspectives and collaboration. Pharmacy Studies are fundamentally interdisciplinary, and an array of biological, chemical, and physical applications permeate pharmacologic research. Faculty from the University of Southern California's School of Pharmacy share common interest in history, medicine, and culture as do undergraduate students majoring in anthropology, art, biological sciences, classics, ecology, geography, and several other educational programs. The goal of this Maymester is to encourage students to explore the interdisciplinary scope of pharmaceutical sciences by immersion in the cultural history of Bulgaria and surrounding Balkan sites. This Maymester is designed to allow students with a common interest in pharmacy but with diverse

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backgrounds, skills, and interests to broaden their experience by taking part in a unique course offering designed to combine theory, application, and fieldwork.

Objectives for this course include:

In addition to developing a deeper understanding of the history of the Balkans, students participating in the Maymester will:

- Have demonstrated proficiency in pharmacologic methods related to folk medicine, archaeology, and history through classroom, field experiences, and exploration of local sites;
- Categorize the cultural contexts for the applications of traditional and folk medicines;
- Identify basic principles of pharmacology and historical theory;
- Appraise relevant data derived from the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities in the context of folk medicine; and,
- Investigate the overarching economic patterns of medicine throughout human history.

Evaluation and Grading:

Evaluation will be based on six self-reflection assignments and fieldnotes.

60% Self-Reflection Projects: (each worth 10% of the class grade) The Projects will be free-form projects due at the end of the course, students will prepare a 10-minute presentation to describe the projects. Students may self-select projects in any form (literature review or scientific manuscript, creative writing piece, podcast, fine art composition, poetry, song, or any other creative presentation) that explicitly addresses the locations visited and topics discussed during this Maymester. A grading rubric will be distributed during the second week of the course. Creativity and passion in creating this project is highly encouraged.

40% Fieldnotes: Students will need to bring a blank notebook (lined or unlined, student's choice). This notebook will be used to keep daily notes either in journal or ethnographic format. This will be shared periodically with the instructor throughout the trip. Students will be encouraged to personalize this fieldnote book and after class it will serve as a memento of the travels and their experiences abroad.

Please note, below is the "Approximate" grading scale breakdown. However, this scale is not set in stone and may slightly shift up or down based on overall scores. There are no pluses (+) or minuses (-) assigned to grades in this course.

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Percent	Letter Grade
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
Below 60%	F

Students will be asked to complete an anonymous critical evaluation of the course at its completion.

Course Readings

Supplemental Readings (selected essays, videos, and other media).

Topical materials including but not limited to the syllabus, supplemental reading assignments and additional handouts will be made available to assist in the cultural immersion of this Maymester. Students will also be encouraged to use Blackboard as an additional learning tool.

Course Outline

This course will be in the format of a Maymester foreign travel immersion course, under the guidance of the instructor for the specific session. During the daily sessions the instructors will engage the students with questions and draw comments or interpretations primarily based on the materials, immersion, and cultural experience. Students are expected to ask questions and participate in an interactive fashion.

Pre-Trip Orientation and Preparation

This Maymester will feature a mandatory pre-travel meeting wherein the following will be discussed / reviewed:

All international travel groups must host at least one pre-trip orientation session that covers the following:

- Travel details, living arrangements, and trip itinerary
- Emergency procedures, health insurance, International SOS
- Health and safety precautions
- Expectations for appropriate behavior and participation
- Country-specific information

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Pre-Trip Registration

Students will need to register for the course and will be asked to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire will ask for the following:

1. Full name (as it appears on passport)
2. Passport number and expiration date
3. Declaration of Bee Allergy
 - a. This will not exclude participation, but will require an EpiPen to be obtained and carried by the student during the trip

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Date	Topic	Location(s)	Notes and Deliverables
Day 1 May 14	Leave LAX overnight flight to Sofia, Bulgaria	LAX	
Day 2 May 15	Arrive in Sofia. Check into the Hotel. In the late afternoon explore the ancient city of Serdika. Roman Conquest and Blood Roman City of Serdika	Sofia, Bulgaria	
Day 3 May 16	Explore Sofia; Communist Era tour, Nevsky Cathedral, St. Sofia Catacombs, Vitosha Blvd. National Archaeological Museum. Enjoy Lunch at the famed Museum restaurant. During lunch enjoy meeting local Ministry officials who will discuss current events in Bulgaria and give background on politics, health care, and more. In the late afternoon head to Thessaloniki Greece! Check into our hotel and enjoy a traditional Greek dinner. In the evening head out and explore the city.	Sofia, Bulgaria Thessaloniki, Greece	Fieldnotes review with Instructor

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Date	Topic	Location(s)	Notes and Deliverables
Day 4 May 17	Greek Medicine, Mystics, and Oracles Galerius Palace, Rotunda, Acropolis, Agora, & Byzantine Baths	Thessaloniki, Greece	
Day 5 May 18	Free exploration city of Thessaloniki. Visit Aristotelous Square, the Ladadika District, and incredible museums. In the evening meet up for a special dinner celebration.	Thessaloniki, Greece	
Day 6 May 19	Travel to Bansko, Bulgaria. Check into a boutique family-owned hotel and head out to dinner with views of the mountains!	Bansko, Bulgaria	While traveling to Bansko, Bulgaria Fieldnote Review with Instructor 10 Minute Student Presentations
Day 7 May 20	Today we learn about the healing power of water and air. We head up 8000 feet to the Alpine Lake and fields and yes for those who are brave enough we swim! Enjoy lunch among the clouds. In the afternoon we head to the Stone and Compass Center. In Bulgaria water is everything. From Roman times to modern times the mineral springs and lakes have long been used to heal ailments. Modern day Dr's still write medical patient plans based around using the natural water resources found throughout Bulgaria.	Stolat, Bulgaria	

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Date	Topic	Location(s)	Notes and Deliverables
Day 8 May 21	Folk Medicine and Sustainable Practice. Local healers will visit the center and discuss the history of folk medicine. The Roma culture will also be discussed.	Stolat, Bulgaria	Bulgarian for Beginners (Stone and Compass will provide instruction in beginning Bulgarian and useful phrases) Bulgarian Culture and Customs
Day 9 May 22	The day will be spent learning about Honey, Lavender, and Healing Herbs In the late afternoon we head to a special oasis that is known by locals who swim there and believe in the water's healing powers. The evening is spent enjoying a truly amazing dinner at a traditional village restaurant.	Stolat, Bulgaria	"Beekeeping 101"
Day 10 May 23	In the morning head to Veliko Tarnovo, the ancient capital of the great 10 th century Bulgarian Kingdom. Visit the largest castle in Europe, step back in time and walk the cobble stone roads. In the afternoon head to Necropolis AD ISTRUM an ancient Roman city and learn about how Romans built health care systems and created markets to sell remedies that are still used in Bulgaria today! In the evening when we return to the Stone and Compass center, we will enjoy a buffet dinner along with Folk Music and Dance.	Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria	Fieldnote Review with Instructor

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Date	Topic	Location(s)	Notes and Deliverables
Day 11 May 24	Travel to Varna, Bulgaria. Along the way we will stop at the Stone Forest an ancient natural wonder. After checking into our hotel we will head out for free time in the evening.	Varna, Bulgaria	Student Presentations will take place in the morning after breakfast
Day 12 May 25	Today we will learn all about the Prehistoric Peoples of the Balkans and visit the Necropolis of Varna and Cultural Museum of Varna. Students will get to glimpse the famed Thracian Gold Horde as well as view the oldest hand wrought gold in the world found in 2018 on a dig fully funded by Stone and Compass.	Varna, Bulgaria	
Day 13 May 26	Free exploration of Varna	Varna, Bulgaria	
Day 14 May 27	We will also stop at the famed Balchik botanical gardens and palace.	Varna, Bulgaria	While traveling to Bucharest, Romania Fieldnote Review with Instructor 10 Minute Student Presentations
Day 15 May 28	Gypsies and Folktales Old Town Bucharest, Museum of Romanian History	Bucharest, Romania	

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Date	Topic	Location(s)	Notes and Deliverables
Day 16 May 29	Free exploration of Bucharest, Romania <u>Or</u> Optional Curtea Veche, Dracula Castle, and Transylvania.	Bucharest, Romania <u>Or</u> Transylvania, Romania	In the evening we meet for dinner and student presentations
Day 17 May 30	Air travel to Istanbul, Turkey We head to the hotel upon arrival and then spend the rest of the day getting a guided tour of the traditional living areas of the city.	Istanbul, Turkey	
Day 18 May 31	Sultans, Spice Trade, and Empire Sultanahmet Archaeological Park (Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace)	Istanbul, Turkey	
Day 19 June 1	Markets and Remedies Grand Bazaar and Taksim Square	Istanbul, Turkey	
Day 20 June 2	Free Exploration of Istanbul, Turkey	Istanbul, Turkey	Final dinner and student presentations Fieldnote Review with Instructor
Day 21 June 3	Awaken to one last breakfast together before we all fly home		

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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

International Policy for Student Conduct

As is the case with USC study abroad programs, all SCampus policies are in effect for sponsored and affiliated student-led trips abroad. Student coordinators, all trip participants, and faculty/staff advisors should familiarize themselves with the University Student Conduct Code and other University policies as outlined in SCampus. It is the responsibility of student coordinators and faculty/staff advisors to inform prospective/selected participants that all SCampus policies apply to trips abroad.

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0”
after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected*

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characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscsa.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.