

GAP YEAR PROGRAM

SOFT SKILLS + SPANISH & INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE + INTERSHIPS/VOLUNTEERING

Spanish & Culture

Our objective for students is to learn the language and to use it with confidence. Various learning practices (oral and written expression, listening comprehension, audio and video materials, text reading, etc.) and focus on interactive communication will advance the students improvement. The students will not only learn Spanish effectively, but gain knowledge on the social, cultural and political life in Argentina.

Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success

It is a curriculum on teaching "soft" or workforce readiness skills to youth. Created for youth development professionals as an introduction to workplace interpersonal and professional skills, the curriculum is targeted for youth ages 17 to 21 in both in-school and out-of-school environments. The basic structure of the program is comprised of modular, hands-on, engaging activities that focus on six key skill areas: communication, enthusiasm and attitude, teamwork, networking, problem solving and critical thinking, and professionalism.

Global Citizenship is at the Core of Our Mission

The Onix-Intercambio Cultural Foundation is the bridge between higher education and professional careers—leveraging all of what Córdoba has to offer to provide dynamic, experiential learning opportunities to empower and motivate young people to become engaged global citizens. Intercultural internships provide remarkable opportunities for students to gain incomparable career experience and develop intercultural competencies.

Filling the skills gap in the global workforce

Student need real-world experience, the right skills and expertise to succeed in a competitive international labor market. The Intercultural Competencies Gap Year was developed to give global citizens a competitive edge and upward mobility throughout the career. Cultural Understanding & Intercultural Competence are all about communication. Knowing how to understand an audience and communicate verbally and non-verbally is vital in all academic disciplines or career fields.

However, intercultural competency goes beyond communication and includes growth in other important areas.

- To understand a culture different from your own, you must think critically.
- You must work hard to deduce the nuances of explicit and implicit rules and norms.
- You must learn to collaborate with people different from yourself.

Many study abroad and exchange programs refer to the acquisition of intercultural competencies as a key benefit of the experience. However, students are often left on their own to navigate cultural differences and learn to survive in different contexts. In an international internship/volunteering context, the need for students to have intercultural competencies is more expedient.

At the conclusion of this 10-week program participants will:

- Be skillful in reflecting on experience to gain insights that contribute to personal and professional growth
- Be able to articulate personal skills, strengths and values within the context of the work environment
- Be aware of best practices regarding professional behavior within a work environment
- Integrate critical thinking in cross-cultural debates
- Strengthen Spanish language skills
- Relate the internship experience to lifelong learning and career development
- Apply leadership and intercultural skills in order to identify others' needs, challenges, and motivations
- Participate in the life of the host society through an internship placement and the local environment.
- Able to analyze the social context of the workplace site and its influence on language, intercultural norms and values, and economic and cultural assumptions
- Understand how different values and communication styles may impact workplace dynamics and develop strategies to manage these differences

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Date: Sep 12-Nov 21, 2021

Duration: 10-Week

Suggested Ages: 17 – 21 years old

Requirement: None

What is included in the program fees?

- Pre-Arrival Orientation
- Airport pick-up upon arrival
- Welcome package & Orientation
- Teaching materials (study materials)
- Homestay with half board (Breakfast & Dinner)
- Optional exams at the end of each level and at the end of your stay
- Certificate including the amount of hours and level attained
- 100 hours of Spanish Language & Intercultural Competence
- 45 hours of seminars on cross-cultural studies and soft skills
- Extracurricular activities per week / Field Visits
- Weekly tutorials after class
- Free Internet access/Audio and video rooms/Hot and cold drinks
- Help in organizing trips around Argentina
- 24 hour hotline in Spanish, English and German
- Dedicated full-time staff members with you 24 hours a day
- All administrative and registration fees, tax and civil liability Insurance

The program does not include:

- All roundtrip Airfare
- Personal expenses
- Personal travels and transfers during and outside of program dates
- Laundry service
- Entertainment expenses including beverages and personal purchases
- Health insurance/Expenses for medical and other emergencies
- Visa fees

ONIX-INTERCAMBIO CULTURAL IS:

Academic Quality

Our teaching methods incorporate the latest advances in Spanish education to ensure effective results.

Cultural Immersion

We engage and enable our students to apply their knowledge in the real world

15 years of Experience

You focus on learning the language in Spanish lessons, while we help you handle the rest

Soft Skills – Driving Change – Creating opportunity

Mastering Soft Skills for Workplace Success

Global Citizens

Empowering students to address social challenges and strengthen civil society

Intercultural Competence

Develop key global skills like cross-cultural understanding

Driving Change – Creating opportunity

Let the world change you



METHODOLOGY – SPANISH & CULTURE CLASSES

In order to make best use of all the productive and helpful aspects of the different Spanish teaching methods currently in vogue, we have developed an approach that selectively picks the most valuable elements of each. Our objective is to take full advantage of the different pedagogical principles for Spanish language education. This way, our methodology combines the latest strategies and methods (process and communicative approaches) with the more traditional ones that have proven to be efficient over many years (formal and functional approaches).

Our selective methodology was developed to meet the requirements of learning Spanish in an immersion context, and is based on the specifications proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This comprehensive teaching method allows students to develop simultaneously and in a harmonic way all the foreign language learning skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), together with strategic skills. This way, it facilitates the integration of the students' different learning styles and abilities. Our experience shows that this approach is significantly enhancing our students' progress in acquiring content and developing language skills.

Indeed, learning a language is not only about learning grammar and vocabulary, but requires students to be able to put into practice their knowledge in different real-life situations. This also motivates our choice to integrate specific cultural contents (particularly the Argentine and Latin-American one) into the learning process. Communication requires knowing more than simply the structure of a language: it requires implicit knowledge of the cultural context in which interactions take place.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

We believe that language and culture go hand in hand. This is why we have designed programs rich in cultural content, the degree of which varies according to the duration of your specific program and skill level. These activities form an integral part of our teaching methodology to ensure that our students gain true insights and get answers about our history and culture. Every Monday we propose our students a list of at least four weekly events, including academic activities and upcoming city programs.

- Walking tours
- Language workshops
- Movie nights
- Tango classes
- Museum visits
- Food & wine tasting
- Sports
- Nightlife

SOFT SKILLS ACTIVITIES

Activity Layout

These activities were created for all youth, regardless of differences in learning style, and as such have been designed with an inclusive spirit and a structure supporting universal design for learning. Each exercise consists of an activity designed to get young people thinking about, practicing, and discussing skills important for career and personal success – soft skills. The basic foundation for the structure of these activities includes convenience, cost-effectiveness, and creativity.

Through the Lens of Universal Design for Learning

As most youth development professionals recognize, young people come to pre-employment and employment training programs with a very wide variety of skills, talents, interests, and needs. For many youth, the typical classroom curriculum – which includes goals, instructional methods, classroom materials, and assessments – is cluttered with barriers and roadblocks, providing little support or opportunities to succeed for a wide range of learners. Rather than make extraordinary adjustments for particular students, universal design for learning lessens this conundrum.

Universal design for learning is: a framework for designing educational environments that enable all learners to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. This is accomplished by simultaneously reducing barriers to the curriculum while providing rich supports for learning.

10-WEEK – SCHEDULE SAMPLE

WEEK 1	Orientation - Walking Tour / Spanish Language Class & Intercultural Competence Developing Self-Awareness / Goals / Culture & Identity of Argentina / Field Visit
WEEK 2	Spanish Language Class & Intercultural Competence Soft Skill Unit 1 – Communication / Field Visit / Reflection Activities / History of Tango Seminar - Dance Class
WEEK 3	Spanish Language Class & Intercultural Competence Soft Skill Unit 2 - Enthusiasm & Attitude / Field Visit / Reflection Activities / Food & Culture of Argentina
WEEK 4	Spanish Language Class & Intercultural Competence Soft Skill Unit 3 – Teamwork / Reflection Activities / Field Visit
WEEK 5	Internship or volunteering Soft Skill Unit 4 - Networking / Reflection Activities / Spanish Language Class / Field Visit
WEEK 6	Internship or volunteering Soft Skill Unit 5 - Problem Solving & Critical Thinking / Reflection Activities / Spanish Language Class / Field Visit
WEEK 7	Internship or volunteering Soft Skill Unit 6 – Professionalism / Reflection Activities / Spanish Language Class / Field Visit
WEEK 8	Internship / volunteering Intercultural Competencies / Cultural Intelligence / Reflection Activities / Spanish Language Class / Field Visit
WEEK 9	Internship / volunteering Intercultural Competencies / Cultural Intelligence / Reflection Activities / Spanish Language Class / Field Visit
WEEK 10	Internship / volunteering Intercultural Competencies / Cultural Intelligence / Reflection Activities / Field Visit / End-of-Program

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Students are responsible for observing the legal provisions applicable to enter and leave Argentina.
2. Personal expenses arising out of or related to the student's stay in Argentina are not included in the program.
3. **Student is responsible for purchasing a comprehensive international health insurance policy to cover health care costs during the visit to Argentina.** Students release and forever discharge Onix-Intercambio Cultural Foundation and Partner from any and all liability whatsoever for medical attention and medical expenses during that period.
4. Students personally assume all risks, whether foreseen or unforeseen, for any harm, injury or damage that may befall them during their visit to Argentina. They are also fully responsible for their luggage and personal property entirely throughout their trip. Students release and forever discharge Onix-Intercambio Cultural Foundation and Partner from any and all liability whatsoever for any direct or consequential loss, injury or damage arising from any of the aforementioned situations.
5. **Reduction of Spanish Lesson:** Onix-Intercambio Cultural Foundation reserves the right to reduce the number of lessons in a class with less than 3 students. If there are 2 students in a class, lessons will be reduced by 50%. If there is 1 student in a class, lessons will be reduced by 60%. **(20 group lessons = 10 two-to-one lessons = 8 one-on-one lessons)**
6. All students or partner are responsible for their own airfare, airport transfer, health travel insurance and daily living expenses.

Onix-Intercambio Cultural Foundation

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www.argentineculture.org

Infrastructure: <https://www.argentineculture.org/school-in-picture>

School Life: <https://www.argentineculture.org/onix-in-pictures>

[Google Map](#)

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UNIT 1: SOFT SKILL COMMUNICATION

The activities in this section will not only help participants practice and recognize how they **provide information** to others, but also help them consider how others may prefer to **receive information**. It is important to reinforce with participants that communication skills involve give and take — and they can, indeed, be learned and strengthened over time.

1. Whats' Your Point? (Time: 20 Minutes)

This activity helps participants understand the **importance of being specific** when offering and receiving communication. Often times our meaning gets lost, twisted, or misunderstood because we haven't been specific enough in our communication or we haven't asked clarifying questions. These role plays are designed to demonstrate the value of being specific in communication...TO others and in what is received FROM others.

2. Flipping the Switch (Time: 30 Minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to encourage youth to discuss the different types of communication they might use in different situations and environments. It introduces the idea that **language/communication varies by context** – and that it's important to understand what might be acceptable and expected in one setting may not be appropriate in another.

3. Oh, Puh-leeeeeeeze! (Time: 20 Minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to help youth gain a better understanding of how **non-verbal communication** (both intended and unintended) can be interpreted by others...and **the impact and effect of this form of communication**.

4. Listen Hear!! (Time: 15/20 Minutes)

This quick activity is designed to get participants to start thinking about **the importance of two-way communication**.

5. Quit Talkin'! I Know What To Do! (Time: 15 Minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to discuss the importance of **understanding directions** before you start a task. Participants will examine the pros and cons of different types of direction – and decide which type of direction they are most comfortable with and how to receive that type of direction as often as possible.

UNIT 2: SOFT SKILL ENTHUSIASM & ATTITUDE

The activities in this section seek to teach participants about the importance of enthusiasm and a positive attitude in the workplace. Participants will hear strategies for **turning negative thinking into positive thinking** and displaying and discussing enthusiasm during an interview and on the job.

6. Never Underestimate the Power of Positive Mental Attitude (Time: 20 Minutes)

Positive Mental Attitude, is one's ability to maintain the belief that he or she can transform or change a tough situation into something better. This activity will help participants take difficult situations and **find ways to EMPOWER themselves to turn negative thinking into positive thinking**.

7. Life is Full of Hard Knocks - Success or Failure? (Time: 20 Minutes)

Failing is a part of life. In fact, it accounts for many, many successes – for without failing, success is almost impossible. Learning how to bounce back from failure is not always easy, but it is necessary. Enthusiasm for goal attainment is a necessary characteristic for success. This activity helps participants **understand that failure is not something to fear and in fact often a necessary step on the path to success**.

8. A Super Ball and a Raw Egg (Time: 20 Minutes)

One difference between **people with a positive and enthusiastic attitude** and people with a negative attitude is that the former look at failure as an opportunity to try again. This activity offers an opportunity to use everyday objects to demonstrate this valuable outlook.

9. Believe It or Not: Your Attitude and Enthusiasm Just Might Get You the Job / Interview Role Play (Time: 30/40 minutes)

According to many sources, the enthusiasm you display on a job interview can make the difference between **getting the job and not getting the job**. Some even say that attitude can account for up more than 40% of your rating! This activity will focus on the different attitudes that can be (and have been) displayed during a job interview. In a job interview, enthusiasm comes across as showing a genuine interest in the job.

10. Translating Features to Benefits (Time: 30 minutes)

Marketing executives translate features to benefits when they are preparing to sell products and services. For example, your cell phone plan offers call forwarding (a feature). This means you will never miss another important call (a benefit). In another example, the new car you want to buy has a built-in GPS system (feature). The salesperson probably tells you that with built-in GPS you will never get lost or need to print out Internet directions again (benefit). The purpose of this activity is to help participants list and **explain the positive personality traits** (or personal features) they possess and **how to communicate those traits to an employer**. Remember: **Features tell...benefits sell**.

UNIT 3: SOFT SKILL TEAMWORK

The activities in this section seek to teach participants about the **importance of teamwork** to workplace success and the specific role each individual on a team may play. Participants will learn about positive teamwork behavior and discover how their **own conduct can impact others on a team**.

11. There is No "I" in Team (Time: 15/20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to enrich participants' understanding of **what it means to be part of a team** and why being a good team player is important for career success.

12. I'll Give You Some of Mine if You Give Me Some of Yours - Elements of Teamwork (Time: 30 minutes)

Part of becoming a functional member of a team is **learning to understand what you bring to the group and what you might need from others**. This exercise is designed to help participants begin to identify their individual strengths and needs regarding teamwork.

13. The Good, the Bad, and the Reasonable (Time: 25 minutes)

Teamwork can be tough. Dealing with different personalities and compromise is not necessarily easy. So, what do you do when you are part of a team and there are barriers to the team's success? This could be a sports team, a team at work, or a group working on a school or community project. The purpose of this activity is to engage participants in a discussion of some of the **barriers to effective teamwork** and the strategies they may be able to put in place to **create positive outcomes**.

14. How Many Shapes Does it Take? (Time: 20 minutes)

It takes all types of team members to create a balanced, cohesive team. This activity will give participants the opportunity to gain a better **understanding of the roles different people play** on a team and **the importance of each role**.

15. Teamwork on the Job (Time: 20/30 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to help participants **understand how teamwork is managed on the job** – both from the perspective of the boss and from the perspective of the employee.

UNIT 4: SOFT SKILL NETWORKING

The activities in this section focus on the process of networking and its relevance and importance to career development. Participants will learn about **taking initiative and overcoming fear**, informational interviewing, as well as potential guidelines to consider when using social networks, texting, and email for networking purposes.

16. An Introduction to Networking (Time: 20 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to introduce participants to **the process of networking** and to help them begin to understand its relevance to the career development process.

17. You Expect Me to do WHAT? TALK to People? (Time: 20 minutes)

Traditional networking (talking to people) can be a pretty frightening activity. In fact, it can be so overwhelming for some that they may never attempt it! This activity will allow participants to initiate the three Ps (prepare, practice, and pull yourself together!) to **overcome any fear of networking**.

18. Using Social Media to Network (Time: 20 minutes)

Google, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, WeChat, TikTok. These names have all become synonymous with social networking in the early 21st century. In fact, **social media has become so popular it has its very own language!** For example, you can "Google" or be "Googled." You can "friend" or "unfriend" someone on Facebook. And you can send tweets to update people on your every activity every moment of the day using your Twitter account. [Believe it or not, in the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, "text," "tweet," and "Google" are all listed as verbs!]

19. Text Vs. Email...Does it Really Matter? - Professional Email Etiquette (Time: 20 minutes)

Though many teens and young adults consider email an "adult" way to communicate and would rather communicate in real-time with texting or other forms of social media, when it comes time to apply to college or for a job, email skills will most likely be necessary. Therefore, an **understanding of "email etiquette"** is worthy of discussion. This activity will offer participants the chance to challenge themselves to translate text to English/Spanish and then discuss some of the classic rules of email.

20. It's a Small World - Degrees of Separation (Time: 30/40 minutes)

This activity will get participants thinking about different relationships and how those relationships start to **"weave a web"** of networking. It will help them begin to realize how to use their current networks to broaden their future networks. After all, **it's all about whom you know...who knows someone...who knows someone...and so on**.

UNIT 5: SOFT SKILL PROBLEM SOLVING & CRITICAL THINKING

The activities in this section focus on **learning how to solve problems** in a variety of ways in the workplace. Participants will hear about how to properly tell the difference among criticism, praise, and feedback and reacting appropriately. The section will also review strategies for **making ethical decisions**, solving problems on a team with others, and learning how to take into account others' perceptions when assessing actions or statements in the workplace.

21. Praise, Criticism, or Feedback (Time: 20 minutes)

In a work setting, we give and receive many different types of information. The purpose of this activity is to help participants determine the differences between **criticism, praise, and feedback** – not only how to offer it, but how to receive it as well.

22. Workplace Ethics - Case Studies - Steps to Solving Ethical Dilemmas (Time: 20 minutes)

We all have **our own set of values or standards of behavior** that we operate by on a daily basis. However, we may not always feel we can apply these same principles or standards while at work. The purpose of this lesson is to help participants learn some of the steps necessary to **make ethical decisions on the job**.

23. Problem Solving on a Team (Time: 30 minutes)

Working together to solve problems is not always easy. The purpose of this activity is to have participants explore **how effective teams might address problems** that occur among its members.

24. Perception vs. Reality (Time: 15 minutes)

Perception is one's ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through our senses. It is **a way of understanding or interpreting something**. Sometimes the way we perceive the actions or statements of those around us may or may not reflect what is actually intended. This is generally due to our previous life experiences and/or what we believe. The purpose of this activity is to get participants to reflect on and consider different perceptions and how to be proactive in making decisions based on those perceptions.

25. Tell Me About a Time When... (Time: 30 minutes)

Thinking on your feet is an important part of getting and keeping a job. Interviewers will often ask "behavioral" questions in addition to technical questions about actual job skills. Often times, these **open-ended questions** will begin with, "Tell me about a time when...." Being prepared for these types of questions – and having a plan for answering them – is an important skill. The purpose of this lesson is to introduce **a strategy that participants can use to answer these types of questions calmly and effectively**.

UNIT 6: SOFT SKILL PROFESSIONALISM

The activities in this section focus on each of the five individual soft skills presented in this publication (communication, enthusiasm/attitude, teamwork, networking, and problem solving/critical thinking), but in a broader framework. This is because professionalism, is not one skill but **the blending and integration of a variety of skills**.

26. Professionalism in Today's Workforce - The Cultural Divide (Time: 30 minutes)

The face of the workplace is constantly evolving as one generation begins to retire and another moves up to take its place. In 2010, an office may have a mix of baby boomers (and older), Gen X-ers, and Gen Y-ers (Millennials) all working together. In addition to **generational differences, differences in education, upbringing, social norms, and values may create cultural gaps** that may lead to misunderstandings or conflicts at times. In reality, a variety of perspectives in the workplace can actually benefit and strengthen an organization. The purpose of this activity is to have participants discuss **how to bridge generational, cultural, and other diversity gaps** in order to build a new standard for professionalism in the workplace.

27. Professional Work Attitudes - Examining Work Attitudes (Time: 30 minutes)

As an employee, your attitude at work contributes to your work environment and how you get along with your co-workers and supervisors. A positive attitude can improve morale and increase productivity for all. The purpose of this activity is to generate a discussion about **workplace attitudes** (of both supervisors and co-workers) and **how these attitudes impact those around us**.

28. Teamwork – An Essential Element of Professionalism (Time: 20 minutes)

Part of understanding professionalism is figuring out how each of our individual actions impacts the actions and work of others. This activity is designed to give participants a quick way to rate themselves and their **own professional actions**. It also gives them the opportunity to reflect on the positive behaviors they demonstrate, and to **how these behaviors impact others**.

29. Is it Considered "Professional" to Have Friends in the Workplace? (Time: 15 minutes)

Working with friends can make work lots of fun. Sometimes, though, it may not always be the best situation. The purpose of this activity is to get participants to discuss the benefits and potential drawbacks to **working on a job alongside friends**.

30. Self-Reflection: Professional Problem Solving at it's Best - The Career of Your Dreams (Time: 30/40 minutes)

Problem solving is an important skill in work and life. Though there are many ways to solve problems, **learning the skill of self-reflection** as part of career decision-making can be extremely helpful. The purpose of this activity is to have participants see themselves in the future – and then **reflect on how the decisions they made got them to where they are**.