

The goal of this article is to describe how the Basque Studies section teaches Basque Culture at Boise State University. The article will examine the Basque diasporic community in Boise, its cultural development and the key role of Basque Studies at the University and within the Basque and community at large in Boise.

Keywords: Basque Culture. Intercultural. Education. Global Students. Community. Diaspora. Boise. Boise State.

Artikulu honen xedea Boise State unibertsitateko euskal ikasketen sailak euskal kultura nola irakasten duen deskribatzea da. Horretarako, testuak Boiseko euskal komunitate diasporikoa, honen garapen kulturala eta euskal ikasketen funtsezko eginkizuna aztertuko ditu unibertsitatearen barruan eta oro har Boiseko euskal komunitatean.

Giltza-Hitzak: Euskal kultura. Kulturarteko. Hezkuntza. Ikasle globalak. Komunitatea. Diaspora. Boise. Boise State.

El objetivo de este artículo es describir cómo la sección de Estudios Vascos imparte la asignatura de cultura vasca en la Universidad Estatal de Boise. El artículo examina la comunidad de la diáspora vasca en Boise, su desarrollo cultural y el papel clave de los Estudios Vascos en la Universidad y dentro de la comunidad vasca y en general en Boise.

Palabras clave: cultura vasca. Intercultural. Educación. Estudiantes globales. Comunidad. Diáspora. Boise. Boise State.

Le but de cet article est de décrire comment le département des études basques enseigne la matière de la culture basque à l'université d'État de Boise. L'article réalise un examen de la diaspora basque à Boise, son développement culturel et le rôle clé des études basques à l'université et au sein de la communauté basque, et en général à Boise.

Mots clés : Culture basque. Interculturel. Éducation. Étudiants du monde. Communauté. Diaspora. Boise. État de Boise.

# Basque Studies in a Global Context: The Case of Boise State University

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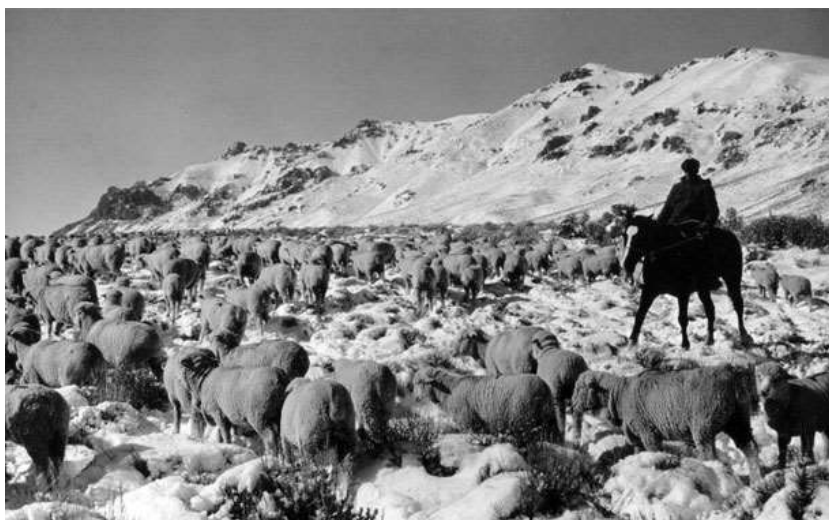
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## 1. Boise-Idaho: The Development of the Basque Diasporic Community

Basque studies faculty at Boise State, has the responsibility of honoring the history of the Basques in the American West, but also examining contemporary Basque culture and connecting it with the transnational, and global movements and cultural interactions that are happening in our everyday life. In that regard, the Basque Studies program teaches Basque Culture from an intercultural perspective. In order to better understand the work done at Boise State teaching Basque Culture, this article will examine the pivotal role of the diasporic community here in Boise to later explain how Basque Cultural Studies is taught at Boise State University.

The Basques started to arrive in the American West with the Gold Rush, in the 1850's. The first Basques arriving in California came from Latin America. To find a living in California was hard, in fact, William Douglass and Jon Bilbao (2005) noted that California was getting crowded and to find gold was not an easy task that's why Basques started to gravitate towards the livestock industry. The Basques later moved from the livestock industry into the sheep industry. As Iker Saitua examines, "in the 1890's, as sheep ranching expanded rapidly in the western states, the Basque Country became an important source of pliable labor to work in the western public rangelands" (2017, p.83). States such as Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho were the new frontier for many Basque immigrants that were eager to find a better future. Gloria Totoricaguena states that "Basques went to Idaho after the discoveries of silver in 1890. Repeating the patterns of Basques in California, Oregon, and Nevada, they stayed in mining only temporarily and shifted their labors to providing foodstuffs to the mining camps" (2005, p. 212). Sheepherding was considered a denigrant job that didn't require any knowledge of English or formal education. The majority of these men came as temporary sojourns, they wanted to make money and return to the Basque Country and sheepherding was an opportunity and a viable alternative for these Basque men. However, sheepherding was a lonely and isolating job. William Douglass (1995) argues that "in such a context there were formidable barriers to the formation of family life and assimilation into the American mainstream" (p.1). This isolation helped in many ways maintaining the cultural identity of the Basques since they did not have much interaction with other ethnic groups.



Euskal artzaiak Mendebaldeko Ipar Ameriketean.

For the first generation of Basque immigrants the Basque boarding houses played a key role. They were the closest thing to a home they had, they were sanctuaries for these newcomers, they could

speak their language, eat Basque food, enjoy the music, meet with friends and sometimes meet their spouses. At the boarding houses, these shepherders also learned about American culture. Meggan Laxalt states that “the boarding houses played a central role in the social, economic, and emotional survival of the first generation immigrants” (2018, p.20). These institutions operated in Boise until the 1970’s when Basques started to move towards other types of jobs. The boarding houses became living museums of the Basques in the American West, such as Cyrus Jacob/Uberuaga House in the Basque Block in Boise. Some of these hotels are now Basque-American restaurants that allow people to enjoy an “ethnic” experience.

Most of the first immigrants came as sojourners, but many decided to stay and build their new lives in Idaho. Most of the first generation immigrants married a Basque partner, “in one survey, only 5 of 119 Basques who immigrated to Idaho from 1989-1939 were married to a non-Basques” (Bieter & Bieter, 2000, 54). The second generation born in Idaho also known as the “hyphenated generation” (Bieter & Bieter, 2000) or “tartekoak” [in between] (Laxalt, 2018) was encouraged to become as American as possible. In many houses the parents did not transmit the language to their children, but they did transmit some Basque cultural aspects such as music, food or religion. Laxalt states that “tartekoak found themselves bridging gaps between two cultures” (2018, p.41). This generation born and raised in America became part of the American mainstream culture. It was in the 1950’s when some members of the community started to worry about the future of the Basque culture. In 1949, Euzkaldunak, the Basque Center of Boise was founded, a place to preserve the Basque culture, to maintain connected the Basque community through dancing classes, must card tournaments, monthly dinners and other cultural events. Euzkaldunak is the bridge between the Basque and American culture. A place where intergenerational and transnational relationships are the motor of an identity and a culture, as the motto of Euzkaldunak says, “izan zirelako gara, garelako izango dira” [because they were, we are and because we are, they will be].



Boise State University.

The third generation known as the “ethnic generation” (Bieter & Bieter, 2000) or “egungoak” [those of today] (Laxalt, 2018) embrace their cultural plurality. Laxalt states that “they worked hard to reestablish cultural identity by learning to speak Euskara, practicing ancient dance and music, and improving their knowledge of Basque history and politics” (2018, p.64). Institutionalization and

prestige of the Basque culture and relationship among diasporas, the Basque Country and the world in general, are the main characteristics of this generation. Good examples of this revitalization and institutionalization of the culture are the many Basque organizations created in the last five decades that have enriched the community. In 1960, the Boise Oinkari Basque Dancers was created. In 1973, the North American Basque Organizations (NABO) was established "with the intent of helping its member organizations to assist each other in the pursuit of the same objective: the perpetuation of "Basqueness" (Basque culture & identity)" (North American Basque Organization, 2013, para.1). The Basque Museum and Cultural Center (BMCC) was founded in 1985 and Boiseko Ikastola, the only Basque language Preschool outside of the Basque Country, was created in 1998 with the effort of a group of parents and the Basque Government. Cenarrusa Foundation, founded in 2003 is an organization created to promote Basque history and culture and assist with the creation of a Basque Studies program at Boise State University. Two years later, in 2005, the Basque Studies program was established at Boise State University. It is important to note that the idea to create the Basque Studies program already began in the 1970's. As Laxalt (2018) explains:

Egungoak educational efforts took a serious step in 1972 when Congress appropriated funds for the National Ethnic Heritage Studies Program Act. This paved the way for a \$52,285 grant through the National Endowment for the Humanities to establish a Basque Studies Program in Boise. The goals were to create a robust program with Basque language and cultural studies, a Basque library, and a six week summer study abroad program to the Basque Country (...) In 1974, Pat Bieter, his wife Eloise Garmendia, and others established the first study abroad program in the Basque Country in the Gipuzkoan town of Oñati (...) That fall, seventy five students, five faculty members, and the entire seven-person Bieter family became the first American academics to live and study on Basque soil. (pp. 66-67)

As a result of the effort of those Basque Studies pioneers and the hardworking Basque community in the Boise area, Basque studies at Boise State University went through a period of rebirth in 2004 when Dr. Sabine Klahr (Director of the International Programs, Boise State), Dr. John Bieter (Director, Cenarrusa Center for Basque Studies, Boise) Dr. Teresa Boucher (Chair, Modern Languages and Literatures, Boise State), Dr. Peter Buhler (Chair, Department of History, Boise State), and Patty Miller (Director, Basque Museum and Cultural Center, Boise) submitted a Title VI grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Education to establish the Basque Studies program at the University. Their work paid off and they were awarded the grant for \$158,589 over two years (2005-2007). During a following visit to the Basque Country, Sabine Klahr, John Bieter, and Pete Cenarrusa (former Idaho Secretary of State) met with Basque Government officials to discuss establishing a Basque Studies minor at Boise State University and to ask for support for this program. The Basque Government pledged \$50,000 per year for three years to establish an interdisciplinary Basque Studies minor at Boise State University. Thanks to these funds, Boise State University was able to get the Basque Studies Program up and running in fall 2005.

All these cultural platforms and institutions gained international presence, visibility and support when the Basque Government in 2006 and Etxepare Basque Institute in 2010 became allies and dedicated cultural and economic support to the educational programs and efforts. This transnational relationship between institutions helped the program promote Basque culture, language and contemporary Basque creativity. Building bridges for international cooperation and fostering exchange and communication between different universities, scholars, the community and other institutions.

## 2. Basque Studies at Boise State University

Basque Studies has played an essential role at Boise State University since 2005. It is geared towards a multi-disciplinary, advanced study of the Basque people involving language, the arts, history, politics, literature, and economics. The mission in Basque Studies aligns with the university's vision. The Mission Statement at Boise State explains that, "Boise State provides an innovative, transformative, and equitable educational environment that prepares students for success and advances Idaho and the world" (Boise State University, 2021, Mission Statement, para.1). Additionally, Basque Studies strives to form globally competent students by<sup>1</sup>:

1. Offering them a diverse and knowledgeable worldview.
2. Helping them to comprehend international dimensions of his/her major field of study.
3. Teaching them to communicate effectively in another language and/or cross-culturally.
4. Emphasizing the acquisition of cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptability.
5. Encouraging them to carry global competencies throughout life.

Boise State University, the largest university in Idaho with a total of 24,103 students<sup>2</sup> is a public metropolitan university that offers about 200 programs of study. Basque Studies is part of the Department of World Languages founded in 1940. This department offers courses in 12 languages: 3 majors (French, German, and Spanish) and 16 minors and certificates. The Department of World Languages is one of the 17 departments that are part of The College of Art and Sciences (COAS) at Boise State University. The mission of the COAS is "to enhance the scientific, ethical and cultural foundation of society through education, research, creative activity and community engagement, thereby improving our individual and collective quality of life." (Boise State College of Arts and Science, 2021). COAS is mathematics, sciences, humanities and the arts departments, different fields a priori, but working together and enriching the academic curriculum of Boise State students.

The desire of Bernard Etxepare, expressed in his popular poem, "euskara, jalgi hadi mundura" [Euskara, set out into the world!] comes to a realization at Boise State University where the program has great recognition and legitimacy among the different departments in the university. The program is formed by professor Nere Lete M.F.A, and assistant professor Ziortza Gandarias Beldarrain from the Basque Country with the collaboration of faculty from the history department. Basque Studies also has visiting professors from other American universities and the Basque Country. The program offers certificates in Basque language and culture, and a minor in Basque Studies. Basque Studies works with Communication, English, Anthropology, Sociology, Gender Studies, History, and Global Studies departments creating a diverse and inclusive environment where students are welcome to get involved with Basque institutions here in Boise and abroad. The program has agreements with different local and international programs that promote an active participation and engagement of our students in the community through volunteer work and credit-bearing internships.

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<sup>1</sup> These five characteristics are taken from the article "Globally Competent Students" written by Sandra L. Russo and Leigh Ann Osborne (n.d) for The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC).

<sup>2</sup> Data from Boise State University Fall Semester 2021: <https://www.boisestate.edu/about/facts/>

Thanks to very generous donors, Basque Studies is able to offer both need-based and merit-based scholarships to qualified students. Scholarships are available to students completing the Basque Language certificates, the Cultural Studies Certificate, and the Basque Studies Minor. Students enrolled in Basque language and culture courses (also cross-listed as History, Communication, Anthropology, Sociology, etc.) can also apply to these scholarships. The profits from the Basque Soccer Friendly group were used to create the Pete Cenarrusa Memorial Scholarship and Jimmy Jausoro Memorial Scholarships in honor of Pete and Jimmy, beloved and trailblazer members of the Basque Community in Boise. Warren Pepperdine sponsored the Pia Unamuno Anchustegui Scholarship in memory of his grandmother, and the Ascuaga family supports the Frank and Winifred Ascuaga Family Memorial Scholarship. Thanks to John Elorriaga's generous donation, Basque Studies has money for programming that is mostly used to bring professors from other North American Universities to the weekend workshops. Global Learning Opportunities receives scholarship funding from University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) to award to Boise State students participating in their programs. Ansotegui-Fereday Memorial supports students studying Basque language and culture in San Sebastian/Donostia and Bilbao. All these scholarships show that the community and families are committed to the Basque Studies program.

Since its foundation in 2005 there have been a total of 7,576 students and 30 Basque Minors (data from 2005-2020). The program's main focus is on the students, Basque Studies offers a varied curriculum that in addition to regular classes, it offers weekend workshops. A team of local and visiting professors from universities such as University of Nevada, Reno, North Carolina State, Michigan State, Indiana University NorthWest, University of Oregon, University of Missouri etc. All these professors have shared their expertise with our students and with the Boise Basque and non Basque community through public lectures. These professors have taught more than 50 different workshops on campus.

Seeing the impact that Basque Studies was having on the students, colleagues and the community in general, The Eloise Garmendia Bieter Chair in Basque Studies was created through an agreement between Boise State and the Etxepare Basque Institute of the Basque Government in July 2015. A professor is invited to teach graduate students, with the goal of increasing the study and research of topics related to Basque language and culture and to strengthen the academic presence of Basque culture at the university and Treasure Valley community. This is one of several chairs of Basque Studies maintained by the Etxepare Institute around the world. Since 2015 there have been 4 Basque scholars who have helped promote and expand our culture and made connections with other departments and scholars at Boise State.



Eloise Garmendia Bieter Chair 2022.

The Basque Studies program is not only focused on its teachings; in fact, community work and involvement is an important aspect of its agenda as well. Among the US Basque diaspora, there are ongoing projects with NABO and the BMCC offering their expertise on teaching methodology and document and exhibit translations. The faculty also works in advancing their research presenting their work at national and international conferences, publishing articles in national and international venues and Basque literature in translation. This fall semester (FA2021) professors of Basque Studies were invited to teach a course in the inaugural session of the Master's degree program created by the University of the Basque Country "Specialization in Basque Diaspora". They taught the class "Diáspora y género: el rol de la mujer" [Diaspora and Gender: The Role of Women] in Spanish. The faculty hosts the Basque music "Boiseko Taupada" radio show at Boise State student radio honoring Espe Alegria's radio show "The Voice of Basques" (1955-1982).





Taupada Irratia since 2017 Argazkian: Ziortza Gandarias Beldarrain and Nere Lete.

Basque Studies is connected with the history and memory of Idaho's Basque community, but it is also the bridge between the Basque World and the Global World, the past, present and future are always present in a program that has its foundations in the community and in the effort and collaboration of many that believe on the future and impact of this program.

### **2.1. What is Basque Studies and what does it offer to the students and the community?**

Basque Studies at Boise State University is a holistic multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary program. The hallmark of Basque Studies is its curriculum and pedagogy where the teaching of Basque culture and Basque language becomes the essence and the main pillar of the program's identity. The faculty comes from very different fields and backgrounds allowing the program to provide a robust curriculum and pedagogy. The complexity and multidimensionality of cultural identity, gender, class and religious diversity receives much attention. In fact, Basque Studies has developed intercultural competence and education as well as formation in the latest pedagogical approaches. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at Boise State University and Etxepare Basque Institute are some of the main resources for the curricular and pedagogical formation and development of the program's learning outcomes (PLO). Both institutions have been pioneers and leaders in the latest intercultural and transcultural education pedagogy.

The CTL (2006) was founded with the vision to be the nucleus of a university culture that values teaching and learning. The CTL supports, promotes, and enhances inclusive teaching and effective pedagogical practice to support student learning and success. The Etxepare Basque Institute (2010) is responsible for ongoing training for Basque studies instructors at our partner universities abroad. Working with universities and institutions in the Basque Country, Etxepare organizes

courses on methodology, strategies and resources for learning and teaching Basque as a foreign language.

Basque Studies strives to form whole and globally competent students by creating an inclusive classroom community where the students feel comfortable, included, safe, and respected by being who they are. This fall semester, 2021, students were able to enroll in different Basque cultural (3 credits) and language (4 credits) classes and Workshops (1 credit): Food and Culture: The Basque Case-380, Basque Culture through Cinema-380, Elementary Basque I-101 and Intermediate Basque I-201, and as for the workshops Globalization & Minority Lit-294/494, Culture & Tourism: The Basques-294/494, Introduction to Basque Culture-294/494, Basque Women: Then and Now-294/494, Genocide Studies: Basque Case-294/494, Resilience and Culture-294/494, Women in Basque Nationalism-294/494. The program is committed to a wide range of topics in relation to Basque culture. Basque cultural transmission and acquisition amongst the Boise State students is an essential part of Basque Studies identity. In fact, it is essential for the program to make bridges across disciplines for students to cross their own academic boundaries and connect and interact with other students and faculty.

As the National Education Association (NEA) (2021) describes on their website:

In order for students to succeed, we must meet their developmental needs and consider all the different factors that impact their experiences both inside and outside of the classroom. The whole student approach to education draws from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as foundational tenets for educators to provide students with a strong, supportive learning environment. Everyone on the education team plays an essential role in helping students reach their full potential. (paras.1-2)

Basque Studies believes that the journey of education and learning should be a lifelong process where professors and students go together, learn together, invite, struggle and listen. It is the goal of this program to provide a variety of resources and ways of teaching the material, so that each student can find their pathway of understanding and success. Kierra Hansen, former Basque Studies student stated (World Languages, 2019, Bilingual Bronco section):

Even though I only studied Basque for a year, it had a huge impact on my life. Basque has given me the chance to connect with so many people here in the community and from the Basque Country. I would see the Basque students from campus downtown or at my job and talk to them in Basque. I practiced at events like the "Sagardotegi" (Cider House). I attended a cultural event to see a film from the Basque country "Dantza" and got to meet the director and some of the dancers from the film in person which was an incredible experience. We also had a visiting art professor from the Basque Country at Boise State and he and some other Basque professors came to visit me at Pengilly's, so I was able to speak Basque while at my job! All of these little immersions into the culture make learning the language so much more meaningful and exciting. I am so thankful that I took Basque during my time at Boise State and I would recommend studying Basque to everyone. You'll make friends, become a part of an incredible community, and learn one of the coolest languages on the planet! (paras.1-2)

### **2.1.1. Intercultural education at Basque Studies and the formation of a whole and globally competent students from a small/peripheral/local approach?**

Institutions are adapting to a new global space: transnational and intercultural. Basque Studies wants to be the hallmark in bridging those spaces through culture and education. In fact, in the

Basque Studies Curriculum culture and education are intertwined. Being, therefore, intercultural education the main pedagogy strategy of the program. As the UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education states (2006):

Culture forges educational content, operational modes and contexts because it shapes our frames of reference, our ways of thinking and acting, our beliefs and even our feelings. All actors involved in education – teachers and learners, curriculum developers, policy makers and community members – invest their cultural perspectives and cultural aspirations into what is taught, and how it is conveyed. Yet education is also vital to the survival of culture. (p.12)

In this moving and changing world connections, community and belonging are very important concepts that must be taken into account. The university is the nest for the future generation, and it is necessary to provide the students with the best tools to be successful in the world. In Basque Studies, concepts such as, Language, Religion, Diversity, Heritage, Minority cultures, etc. are used to examine diverse, cross cultural, beliefs and values. Basque Studies can provide students a sense of community and belonging. Students can see, feel, eat, and get involved in the community. They can connect with a minority culture through their life experience and at the same time learn about their own culture. The goal of the program is to lead the students acquiring the tools to: learn to know, learn to do, learn to live together, and learn to be<sup>3</sup>. The UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education pronounces (2006):

Interculturality is a dynamic concept and refers to evolving relations between cultural groups. It has been defined as “the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect”. (p.17)

This flow of ideas, knowledge, resources, products, cultures, and people is part of the world we live in. It is therefore necessary to prepare our students for the complexity of this global and moving society. As Cheryl Hunter and Donna Pearson state (2015):

Intercultural is what occurs between two cultures, or cultural agents, when they engage socially. Interculturalization represents, more specifically, the subsequent experience that then must be understood in relation to prior accumulated learning. (p.2)

Authors such as Sherry E. Sullivan, Howard S. Tu, Sandra L. Russo, and Leigh Ann Osborne amongst others have examined the characteristics of globally competent students. Sullivan and Tu (1995) in their article “Developing Globally Competent Students: A Review and Recommendations” present and examine specific ways in which university professors can help students become more globally competent managers and citizens. They suggested seven skills that transnational managers should possess based on Adler and Bartholomew (1992) work: global perspective, local responsiveness, transition and adaptation, synergistic learning, collaboration, cross-cultural interaction, and foreign interaction. Sandra L. Russo, and Leigh Ann Osborne (n.d.) also analyze the globally competent student and they narrow those characteristics into five: diverse and knowledgeable worldview, comprehends international dimensions of his/her major field of study, communicates effectively in another language and/or cross-culturally, exhibits cross-cultural sensitivity and adaptability, and carries global competencies throughout life.

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<sup>3</sup> The four pillars of education are based on Jacques Delors report, “Learning: The Treasure Within - Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century” (1996).

In order to explore how Basque Studies help students become globally competent the seven characteristics promoted by Sullivan and Tu are used to demonstrate how the curricular and pedagogical project of the program is at the forefront of the latest educational trends:

**Global perspective:** Self-Knowledge is necessary for everyone. Questions such as, “Who am I?” Although simple *a priori* are key for our students to understand and examine their own environment in order to start their journey of life. In Basque Studies, the cultural and language classes become key courses for our students to learn not only about other cultures and languages, but also their own. These classes are a catalyst to open discussions, thoughts, and ideas about themselves and others. As Mariah Leland, one of the students stated (Basque Studies, 2021, Basque Studies Minor section):

From the very beginning, Basque culture and language engaged and enthralled me as a student. Fulfilling all the requirements for the Minor thrust me into a variety of learning environments unparalleled by any other subject. I was forced not only to understand a new culture but also to discover and embrace who I am; ethnic, culture, and genetic factors included. Through studying Basque, I have discovered my passions in life and in doing so have discovered who I am. Isn't that what college is really about? (para.5)

Annie Gavica, former Basque Studies student stated (World Languages, 2019, Bilingual Bronco section):

I felt that studying Basque was important to not only learn about my own identity and culture, but to better understand the Basque culture in general. So much of the Basque identity is related to the language that I feel without some sort of basic knowledge of it, I would always be missing something. Studying Basque was important for me to be fully immersed in my culture. It was a part of the puzzle that I wasn't able to complete until I started at Boise State University. (paras. 1-2)

**Local responsiveness:** The program has the latest materials/books/articles in Basque Cultural Studies and Basque language. It also offers weekend workshops, a minor and certificates (culture and language). Having the Basque Block so close to the campus gives the students a sense of connection between school and community and helps them connect. In fact, Basque Studies designs the courses, workshops and assessments centered on students' engagement. These classes invite reflection, feedback, and growth. This program acknowledges and learns about oppression of groups other than our own. It is aware that the Basque identity can impact others. In order to create a welcoming campus and a welcoming classroom environment the program works on strategies for an inclusive, diverse, and integrative environment in class and motivate students to learn important skills such as:

- Setting high standards and communicating with confidence with other students.
- Encouraging multiple perspectives in discussions.
- Avoiding assumptions and trying to anticipate possible situations.
- Connecting the course in a global/societal context.
- Using appropriate, personal anecdotes to create interest among students.
- Using materials that recognize diverse identities and experiences

They do not understand or see Basque as “the Other” but as part of Boise and themselves. Something intrinsically connected to Idaho's identity, culture and history, but at the same time as a transnational element that connects them to the world.

**Transition and adaptation:** What the students learn in Basque culture and language classes can be applied in other spaces and scenarios. Basque Studies doesn't want to be marketed as an isolated, exotic, and obsolete element, but as a useful tool for success. Dafydd Vaid, former student mentioned (World Languages, 2019, Bilingual Bronco section):

Studying Basque at BSU has helped me in so many ways. Firstly, as a linguist in training, knowledge of a language as unique as Basque proves incredibly useful when learning about the way different languages can work. And learning any language at all is a great way to sharpen a load of skills such as critical thinking, understanding global perspectives, perseverance, and many others. But to me, one of the most important things about learning Basque was that it helped me consider my connection to my own heritage. (para.1)

**Synergistic learning:** Every professor and student matters. Basque Studies considers teachers' education and its professional framework essential as well as the student centered teaching. The students' discourse, stories, are important for the professors and they are accountable for them. In Basque Studies the courses, workshops and assessments are designed centered on students' engagement:

- Professors acknowledge the importance of distinguishing the concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Professors are aware of how our positionality privileges certain learners and/or employees: such as the choice materials, choice of examples used in class, language, strategies, communication style, etc.
- ACTION<sup>4</sup> (Ask, Carefully, Tell, Impact, Own, Next)
- OTFD<sup>5</sup> (Open The Front Door to Communication)

**Collaboration:** Professors from different universities (national and international) come to Boise State every year. For the Eloise Garmendia Bieter Chair a Basque professor from the Basque Country gives a course in a graduate level class and teaches one of the Basque culture classes for a week every year. The students in the cultural and language classes go every semester to the BMCC to learn more about Basque culture, language, and diaspora.

**Cross-Cultural interaction:** Boise State University becomes an interaction zone between communities. Curricular and Extracurricular activities are part of Basque Studies curriculum and teaching pedagogy. Different activities and cultural projects have been carried out over the last years.

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<sup>4</sup> Acronyms from the workshop "Inclusive Excellence at Boise State: Creating an Environment that Values and Supports All Members" (september 21, 2018) presented by Professor Tasha Souza the Director of the BUILD Program at Boise State University.

<sup>5</sup> Acronyms from the workshop "Inclusive Excellence at Boise State: Creating an Environment that Values and Supports All Members" (september 21, 2018) presented by Professor Tasha Souza the Director of the BUILD Program at Boise State University.



Field trip with the student at the Basque Museum and Cultural Center in Boise, Idaho. Class event.

- **The Basque Places of Idaho Photo Contest:** In Fall 2019, Basque Studies held its opening of the exposition: “Basque Places of Idaho” Photo Contest. The photo contest was created with the objective of encouraging our Boise State students and Idaho high school students to reconstruct and integrate their conceptualization of the Basques in Idaho through the scope of a camera. Basque Studies wanted to create an organic bridge between high school students, university students, the community, the Basque Studies program and Boise State University. Idaho, also known as the 8th province of the Basque Country, treasures its rich history of Basque migrants and community. This photo contest wanted to serve as an academic and artistic cultural journey for the students to analyze Idaho’s “landscape” through unique and new perspectives. In fact, the main goal of the contest was to build and raise awareness of Basque ethnic places in Idaho and create a cultural bridge between communities through photography, encouraging students to creatively express cultural diversity by looking at place, language, and people.
- **International Day of the Basque Language [Euskara Eguna] (Every Fall):** In order to celebrate the International Day of the Basque Language, *Euskararen Eguna*, that takes place every 3rd of December, the Basque Studies Program organized several activities involving the Boise State community, the Basque community, and the Boise Community in general. These activities took place with the collaboration of many institutions, both local and international. Such as: Boise State University Basque Studies, Department of World Languages, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of World Languages, History & English, Global Studies, Idaho Film Collection; Etxepare Basque Institute; BMCC, The Basque Market; Epi’s Basque Restaurant; and Euzkaldunak Basque Center. In fall 2019, The Basque Studies Program brought from the Basque Country the movie *Soinujolearen Semea* [The Accordionist’s Son], this made Boise State University the first location that the

movie was shown outside the Iberian Peninsula. The event was a great success where the entire room was filled by students, professors, community members, etc.

- **Memory & Emotion, Women's Stories: Constructing Meaning from Memory:** In Spring 2018, Basque Studies was the cornerstone of the inaugural World Languages International Conference that sought to address the issues of Emotion, Memory, and Gender from the perspective of Cultural Studies. Hence, the organizers welcomed papers reflecting on the link between the aforementioned topics in disciplines such as literature, language, sociology, history, philosophy, ethics, global studies, visual arts among others.
- **Boiseko Taupada Radio Program** (since Fall 2017): The weekly radio shows carry on a Boise Basque radio tradition that was started many years ago by Espe Alegria. The radio program, presented in the Basque language and English, showcases a variety of Basque music and Basque cultural topics. It is one of the most listened to programs inside the University Pulse Radio at Boise State. This show was created by a Basque Studies student as an internship under professor Lete's guidance.
- **Collaborations and Workshops at the BMCC:** Basque Studies is very present and active collaborating with the museum. Professors teach cultural classes and participate in cultural events promoted by the museum.
- **Boiseko Ikastola:** Basque Studies has an internship agreement with Boiseko Ikastola. Mariah Leland made her internship at the Basque Preschool (Basque Studies, 2021, Basque Studies Minor section):

I was even able to complete an internship at the Boise Basque Preschool, Boiseko Ikastola. I honestly do not think I have the words to quantify the amount I learned in this internship. I built professional connections, refreshed my grasp of the language, and observed the socialization of children. (para.4)



Pintxo-Pote with the Basque Museum and Cultural Center at JUMP (activity center) Community event.

**Foreign experience:** Basque Studies has agreements with different local BMCC and Boiseko Ikastola, and international programs such as, Lazkaoko-Zornotzako Barnetegia (Etxepare Basque Institute) and Global Training that promote an active participation and engagement of our students in the community through volunteer work and credit-bearing internships. Renee Rohman, a Basque Studies Minor student testimonial (Basque Studies, 2021, Basque Studies Minor section):

As a student at Boise State pursuing a minor in Basque Studies, getting the opportunity to go to the Basque Country was like a dream come true! I was finally able to make connections between things I had learned in the classroom with how they worked in the Basque Country. (para.3)

Tim Johnson former students stated (World Languages, 2019, Bilingual Bronco section):

My minor in Basque studies inspired and gave me access to studying abroad on a scholarship with Etxepare Institute, to the hospitality of Basque people in Idaho and the Basque country (on both sides of the Spanish/French border) inviting me into their homes, to meeting famous writers and top-of-their-field academics, to hanging out with politically active Basque punk youth, to playing sax with a famous Basque rock band drummer, to talking to old men in a bar, to dancing all night in town parties, to seeing Gaztelugatxe and the tree of Gernika, to the beauty of the Basque coast, the mountains, the forests, to understanding (from the mouths of people who have lived the events) the history of resistance against fascist oppression and the fight to save a unique and ancient language and culture. Why do I study Basque? Because Basque inspires me...I would say give it a try! (para.1)



Basque Studies is based on students' success and engagement, in fact many of the students have gone on to further their study of the Basque language in the Basque Country. Others have taught English in high schools in the Basque Country. This program is an international, interdisciplinary area studies minor designed to complement majors in the arts, humanities and social sciences. And by the end of the curriculum our students will have a diverse, knowledgeable, and global worldview. For the program it is important that the classroom is dynamic and filled with connecting student centered learning through active participation encouraging students to extrapolate from the Basque reference the cultural impact in order to promote inclusion of other cultures. Providing facts and knowledge, and encouraging students for questions and an open forum for dialogue.

### 3. Conclusion

In summary, the Basque Studies section at Boise State University has been developed through years of hard work and community involvement that allows the Basque culture to be shared on multiple levels. The collaborative efforts of multiple organizations, institutions, and individuals who have believed in the capacities of the Basque language and culture have built strong foundations for success and the opportunity to evolve our program in an ever evolving global community. It is our goal that the Basque Studies program at Boise State University will continue to be used as a reference for the expansion and development of further Basque Studies.

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