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Spanish submersion poses challenges

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One thing is for sure, this is no Drury High School.

Here at the University of Granada, while all of you at DU have been in classes for well over a month, I would describe myself as still in the process of class shopping-or class stalking might be more accurate.

My schedule will have to be finalized by March 9th, but I have been going to various classes, checking them out, since February 19. It doesn't really matter if I'm officially enrolled in them or not yet, right now the biggest concern for me and many other international students is: can I pass this class?

To give you an idea of what classes are like here, imagine this: you go to the classroom, somewhere within the campus of your area of study (there are separate campuses all throughout the city) and you take a seat in a classroom completely filled with students. I would say there are about 30 to 40 in most classes I have been to.

From the minute the class begins to the minute it ends (usually an hour and a half), the professor lectures and the students take endless pages of notes, only occasionally stopping to breathe.

This will continue all semester until finals month when there is one large test over the class notes, the sole



Senior Kat O'dell (right) is studying abroad at Granada University in Granada, Spain poses with her roommate Silvia Leiva with the picturesque town of Ronda, Spain in the background.

determinant of your class grade. Of course this would be difficult enough in your first language, in my second language it is the hardest thing I have ever challenged myself to do.

Knowing this, other students and I have schemed and collaborated in almost obsessive detail about what classes to take and with what professors.

When my friend Shannon and I had to chase down a professor after class to ask for a copy of the syllabus, without stopping he told us to make a copy from one of the other students. We decided a more sympathetic professor would be better in the long run.

When some other friends and I found a professor who would chat with us for a few minutes after class without running for the door like the room was on fire, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. If a professor is the least bit understanding and speaks clearly, the class makes the cut and I tell all my friends who are searching for the same things. The things I have taken for granted the past 3 1/2 years.

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