Course Goals and Description

This course provides intensive composition and conversation practice in Spanish. We will use a variety of Spanish texts and films produced by authors from different national and cultural backgrounds to explore themes such as social justice, love, life and death, immigration, human rights, and the relationship between men and women, among others. Our goal is to expand your command of Spanish grammar and vocabulary, to develop your communicative and rhetorical skills, as well as your fluency and pronunciation, and to reflect critically on different approaches to and experiences of our themes, particularly within Spanish-speaking communities across the world. Though the main emphasis is on speaking and writing, we will also focus on listening and reading. The course is taught exclusively in Spanish, and it includes two 50-minute Practicum sessions with a native Foreign Language Assistant. Prerequisites: Intermediate Spanish 2 or its equivalent. 1 unit.

Required Texts


These two textbooks are **bundled together for a reduced price at the HC Bookstore.** If you already have a used copy of *Revista* (3rd ed) and/or *Taller de escritores*, you will still need to purchase the supersite codes to access the online activities and assignments. The supersite codes can be ordered from the Vista Higher Learning website:

[http://vistahigherlearning.com/students/store/](http://vistahigherlearning.com/students/store/)
Attendance, Participation & Extracurricular Activities

1) **Attendance is mandatory**, both in regular class and in Practicum. You are allowed a **maximum of three unexcused absences**. Additional unexcused absences will result in a lower course grade. An excused absence requires a written document (e.g. a note from your doctor, coach or class dean). Practicum Foreign Language Assistants may not grant excuses for absences. Permission must be granted by the professor. Three late arrivals by more than 10 minutes equal one absence. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for handing in your assignments online, via e-mail or through a classmate.

2) **To participate successfully**, you must prepare for each class. **BEFORE EACH CLASS** you should look at the weekly schedule on Moodle and complete all the assigned homework for that day (readings, grammar review, etc.). This is a fast-paced course, and we will cover a large amount of materials. You should spend at least two hours studying and preparing for each hour spent in class. Bring any questions or doubts to class or to my office so that I can help you.

3) **Extracurricular Spanish Activities**: As an aid to developing oral skills and cultural exposure, students are expected to participate in at least two social or extra-curricular activities in Spanish during the semester. You may choose, at your convenience, from the different events advertised in the Spanish Calendar of Events: la mesa española (have lunch at Lower Kimball with the FLAs while you converse in Spanish); la tertulia (join Spanish FLAs and faculty for an espresso and some good conversation); el ciclo de cine (watch a Spanish movie with the FLAs and enjoy some popcorn); or any other social/cultural activity advertised in the Spanish calendar. **If you attend an event/activity that doesn’t have a sign-up sheet, please hand in a 3-4 sentence summary of what you did.** Attendance at these events will count towards your classroom grade.

Practicum

The Practicum involves **two 50-minute sessions** per week with a Foreign Language Assistant (FLA) from Latin America or Spain. Many of these Practicum sessions will focus on short films (cortometrajes) or role-plays (situaciones) from Revista. You should plan to watch the short films at least one time outside of Practicum and complete any assigned activities on the Revista website or in the textbook.

**Practicum attendance is mandatory**, and you may **not** alternate sessions from week to week. FLAs evaluate your performance in terms of attendance, preparation, participation and language use. FLAs may assign additional homework for Practicum, but they **may not relay your messages to me or reschedule exams or assignments**. Students who are going to miss a practica session for sports, Montserrat, etc. must notify **both their Professor and their FLA** about their absence.

Oral Exams

There are two oral exams: a **midterm (week of Oct. 1-5)** and a **final (week of Dec. 11-15)**. Your grade will be based on your vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency (speed & ‘naturalness’ of your speech), and your overall communicative skills (your ability to get your message across and to understand the person with whom you are speaking), as well as content and preparation. The exam is **in pairs** (or in groups of 3, in the case of sections with an odd number of students). You must **sign up in advance with a classmate who is in your same Practicum A. If you miss your appointment** for an unexcused reason, you will receive a 0. More detailed instructions will be available on Moodle.
**Revista & Taller de escritores Vista Supersite**

Our Revista and Taller de escritores textbooks have a centralized website where you will access many of the videos and materials we will be using this semester. To access these on-line resources, you will need to purchase a new edition of Revista and Taller (which comes with the access code on the inside cover).

1. Go to the Student Registration page at [http://www.vhlcentral.com/register](http://www.vhlcentral.com/register)
2. Choose your username and password, and enter your contact information.
3. Enter the 6-letter Supersite Code printed inside your Revista and your Taller de escritores textbooks. Each book has a different code – you will need both!
4. Find your school by selecting Colleges/Universities in Massachusetts.
5. Select College of the Holy Cross from the list of schools.
6. From the list of courses, select SPAN 301 (and YOUR SECTION) taught by Prof. Franco.

**Homework Assignments**

This course reviews key points of Spanish grammar relevant to our goals. Since this is supposed to be a review of materials that you have already seen before, our main goal is to practice the grammar, not to provide detailed in-class grammar presentations. For this review to work, before each class you should study the assigned grammar explanations in Revista and Taller and then complete all assigned exercises electronically (on the Vista website).

- These on-line exercises provide you with immediate feedback so that you can check how well you know the corresponding grammatical points.
- After you write your responses, the on-line corrector will automatically correct and grade your assignment.
- You are responsible for adding accent marks (missing accents = incorrect answer).
- For some activities, you will be allowed multiple opportunities to correct your answers. For others, you will only have one chance.
- All assignments have a due date. You must complete the exercises by the deadline or you will not receive credit for that particular activity.
- If you need extra practice, feel free to complete any of the additional on-line exercises. They will not affect your grade directly (although the extra practice will definitely improve your performance on the written exams!)

**IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY DIFFICULTY ACCESSING THE REVISTA OR TALLER WEBSITES OR IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH A PARTICULAR ASSIGNMENT, TELL ME IMMEDIATELY SO WE CAN RESOLVE THE ISSUE! IF YOU WAIT MORE THAN A WEEK, THE WORK LOAD MAY PILE UP EXCESSIVELY AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO CATCH UP.**
Compositions

Each composition should be **typed** and **double spaced**. You should **type all accent marks and tildes** on your composition. Do not add them manually. The **grade** will be based on content, organization, grammar (sentence structure, verb conjugations, agreement, articles, etc.), vocabulary (variety, precision and word choice) and spelling (including accents, capitalization, etc). Detailed instructions for each composition will be given in class and posted on Moodle. **Late compositions will not be accepted.** Extensions are available only under exceptional circumstances (e.g. illness or family emergency). Unless told otherwise, you should always hand in a **hard copy, not an electronic version.**

1) Description (present tense)
2) Personal narration (past tense)
3) Movie review of a Spanish or Latin American film
4) Narrative essay or **other composition genre of instructor's choice**
5) Essay on a controversial issue

The first three compositions will be written in **two drafts** which are weighted differently. **Only the final version of compositions #4 and 5 will be graded.**

**FIRST DRAFT:** You **must write the first draft on your own.** You should not ask for assistance of any kind (e.g. suggestions, comments, corrections) **from any other person.** You should **cite any source(s) of information** (books, magazines, etc.) on the last page of your composition or as footnotes. The first draft will be worth ¾ of the grade for that particular composition.

**SECOND DRAFT:** After I correct and hand back the first draft, you will have 1 week to **rewrite** the composition. The second draft will make up the remaining ¼ of the grade for that particular composition. For the **second draft** you may obtain help from the Spanish Writing Workshop in the Multimedia Resource Center. **No one outside of the workshop should help you** with your written assignments.

**Academic Honesty**

All written assignments handed in during the semester must be written by the student alone. You **may not receive help from the Spanish Writing Workshop or a Foreign Language Assistant in the first draft.** And you should always **cite all sources** for ideas or specific language used in the composition (including encyclopedias, articles, books and ALL on-line materials). **Compositions deviating from these guidelines** violate the College’s Academic Honesty policy and are **subject to a grade penalty.** Please consult the **Academic Honesty Policy** in the College Catalog for more information.

**Written Exams**

The written exams cover the materials practiced in class (grammar, vocabulary, etc.). They combine **traditional grammar and vocabulary exercises** (e.g. completing sentences or paragraphs) with **open-ended questions** and **mini-compositions** on topics covered in class. **No make-up exams will be given without a written excuse** (from your doctor, Dean or coach).
Experiential Learning Project & Journal

One of the major goals of this course is to develop your communicative skills, as well as your fluency and pronunciation in Spanish. During the semester, you will spend a mere 2.3% of your entire week speaking Spanish in class and in the Practicum. To help you achieve this fundamental course objective, you will be asked to find a native Spanish speaker (relatives, friends, co-workers, someone on campus or in the Worcester community) who is willing to meet with you, one-on-one, to talk in Spanish on a weekly basis throughout the semester. You can get together for coffee, play sports or board games, chat while you are working together, do service work, mentor, volunteer for a local Latino organization. There are many possibilities but you are encouraged to find a person that you can commit to and an activity that you enjoy. The only requirement is that you speak in Spanish. You can talk to me about suggestions or recommendations.

Each week, you will write a brief journal entry in Spanish about your experience. Each entry must be dated and can range from 1 paragraph to 1 page (no longer). You do not need to summarize every detail of your conversation; rather try to write about something you discovered that was interesting, unexpected, humorous, inspiring, or challenging. I will collect your journals biweekly (dates listed on daily program). These journals will also be an excellent resource as you prepare to write your fourth composition (a narrative essay based on this experiential learning project).

Debates

At the end of the semester we will have three in-class debates. Your grade will be based on your preparation and performance not only as a main presenter (in one of the debates), but also as a participant (in the other two). If you miss a debate for an unexcused absence, you will automatically receive a 0.

As a main presenter (in one of the debates), you will...

- Choose the role you would like to play according to the theme of the debate
- Prepare the arguments for the position you are representing, anticipating some potential counterarguments that your opponents may use.
- Write a 5-minute opening statement for the debate, post it online before the debate so that others can preview it (and so that you can also preview your opponents' statement).
- Deliver your opening statement on the day of the debate and defend your position in the open debate that will follow, engaging your opponents and fielding questions from the audience.

As an active audience member (in the other debates), you will...

- Read all the opening statements posted online by the main presenters before each debate.
- Prepare questions and/or critiques for the main presenters, and be ready to ask your questions or make your critiques during the debate.
- Evaluate how effective the main presenters were in persuading their audience.
Grade Distribution

- Compositions: (5) 30%
- Written Exams (2) 15%
- Grammar Exercises (Vista) 10%
- Oral Exams (2) 15%
- Debate Presentation & Preparation 10%
- Experiential Learning Journal 5%
- Classroom Grade* 15%
*Includes attendance, preparation, and participation in regular class & Practicum; two (2) extracurricular Spanish activities

Grade Scale

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