



**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH, ITALIAN AND SPANISH**

**SPAN 321, Contemporary Hispanic Cultures
Fall 2011**

Location: SS012 Days : MoWeFr 13:00 – 13:50

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME and E-MAIL: Ana Val

OFFICE LOCATION and HOURS : Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00 to 3:00 or by appointment

TELEPHONE NUMBER : (403) 220-6738

DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to raise learners' level of language proficiency and expand their knowledge of the Hispanic world by integrating language and content instruction.

Spanish 321 will study some of the main current issues in the Hispanic world in their historical, cultural and social context. It will review the most relevant features of Hispanic countries, including their geographical characteristics, recent historical events, economic resources, social traits and artistic achievements.

The course involves extensive reading, comprehension, written activities and active participation. To take full advantage of the course it is essential that students arrive at class properly prepared, having done the tasks assigned for each class.

This course is not a conversation course. However students are expected to participate actively in class discussions. Classes will be conducted in Spanish.

Prerequisites: Spanish 203 or consent of the Department.

Outcomes:

Cultural Awareness:

- You will gain basic knowledge of geographical, historical, social and cultural aspects of each of the regions that form the Hispanic world.
- You will analyze cultural syncretism, economical and social challenges such as migrations, ecological issues, the impact of drug production and trafficking, poverty, and migrations as they affect the Hispanic world.
- You will have the opportunity to make thoughtful comparisons between your own culture and experiences and aspects of the Hispanic cultures. As a result you should increase your sensitivity to cultural differences.
- You will continue to develop your critical thinking by being exposed to complex and controversial ideas related to cultural and social topics.

Linguistic competency:

Due to the objectives of this course you will make improvements in the lexical domain and in reading abilities.

- Lexical domain: you will expand your active and passive vocabulary in areas related to celebrations and festivities, geographical terms, social life, the city and its monuments, sociopolitical challenges and human rights.
- Reading abilities: you will be able to understand the main ideas in authentic texts posted on the web and dealing with different subjects. You should also be able to apply an increasing number of reading strategies.

However you will also see improvements in your listening and speaking abilities.

- Listening: You will be able to understand the main ideas in authentic videos posted on the web.
- Speaking: You will be able to narrate personal experiences, explain traditions and customs and express opinions in a simple manner. You will expose in a simple but clear way the results of your own research dealing with a cultural topic.
- Writing: you will be able to write simple and relatively short texts of several paragraphs such as are found in brochures, summaries, etc.

DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES

3 Exams (20% + 20% + 10%)	50 %
2 Compositions (10 % + 10%)	20%
5 Vocabulary tests	10%
Oral Presentation	10%
Class Performance	10%

There is NO final written examination.

GRADING SCALE

A+ = 96-100 A = 91-95 A- = 86-90 B+ = 81-85 B = 76-80 B- = 71-75

C+ = 67-70 C = 62-66 C- = 58-61 D+ = 54-57 D = 50-53 F = 0-49

The official grading system (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) will be applied for the calculation of the final mark.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The material for this class will be available on Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

A good medium size Spanish-English/English-Spanish dictionary, such as Collins or Larousse.

COURSE WORK AND GRADING

This course, which integrates language and cultural content, has two main objectives:

- To give an overview of the current situation of the Hispanic world
- To raise your level of proficiency in Spanish

Cultural content

To understand the main current issues in the Hispanic world you need to have a certain knowledge of the geographical, historical, social, economical and political situation of the different countries which form it.

The most relevant features for each area are provided in the section *Área geográfica* in each chapter of the Blackboard course. More explanations about the countries and more specific cultural aspects are covered in the other sections.

This basic information, from which you can expand your knowledge of the Hispanic world, will allow you to understand more complex texts that you can (and are encouraged to) read in areas of your own interest dealing with Hispanic cultures.

Language abilities

This cultural content will be provided in Spanish and the reflection about the practices and perspectives of Spanish-Speaking people will also be done in Spanish. Therefore you have to increase your fluency in Spanish in order to succeed in the course.

The prerequisite for this course is Span 203. However you will start this class with different backgrounds: some will have completed only two semesters of Spanish, others will have three (if you have also done Span 301 and/or 303) and others will have learned some Spanish by traveling or spending time in a Hispanophone environment. Given this and your own personal gift for speaking, understanding, reading and writing, it is normal for you to be at different levels in these four skills. Each of you is aware of the abilities you need to improve on and it is your responsibility to do so.

Take advantage of the heterogeneity of the class by working with students who excel in the skills you lack.

- **Vocabulary:** Each chapter includes a vocabulary section organized topically. It is accompanied by exercises. Some of the vocabulary of the lesson is first presented in context in the first reading of each unit.
- **Grammar:** This course is not a grammar course (as are Span 203 or Span 301) and no grammatical

points will be presented during class time, unless the class as a whole has a problem with a specific grammatical point. However, you need to use grammar knowledge to communicate effectively.

- **Listening:** Each chapter includes a section on listening comprehension, but you will also practice listening during class time since the lectures will be conducted in Spanish.
- **Speaking:** Most of the activities done in class will be oral activities. The best way to overcome shyness is to come prepared to class. If you have done your readings properly, you know your vocabulary and you have something to say about the topic in question, you can practice at home and be ready to participate in class where you should try to speak Spanish at all times. It is normal to make mistakes but you will only learn by practicing. If class time is not enough to increase your level of proficiency in listening and speaking you can go to the *Centro de tertulia* in CHD 303 to practice more.
- **Reading:** this course involves a considerable amount of reading. Apart from the material posted on Blackboard which includes mandatory readings from the web, you should also expand your horizons by navigating on the web and finding authentic texts related to the Hispanic world in the areas of your own interest.
- **Writing:** Two compositions will be required during the course. You will also use this skill to summarize the content of the readings and to organize the information provided. Doing it in Spanish will help you to improve your fluency.

Your responsibilities as a student

Learning is not only the transfer of knowledge from one person to another. It is my duty, as your instructor, to try to guide you in the learning process and to provide you with a variety of learning opportunities (lectures, readings, activities, etc), but it is ultimately up to you to take full advantage of them. You, as a student, are responsible for your own learning.

You are responsible for:

- **Organizing your time** so you are prepared not only for writing your exams and handing the written assignments in on time, but also for participating fully in class. To help you with your organization, in the calendar posted on Blackboard, you'll find the week when the exams, tests and written activities are due. Remember that this is only a tentative schedule and that the dates might be changed according to the needs of the class.
- **Completing your homework on time.** In order for the class discussions and interactions to function well, it is essential that, prior to attending each class, you work on specific preparatory tasks assigned to you. The homework for each day will be posted on Blackboard, under *Assignments*.
- **Actively participating in class.** Everyone, not only the "best speakers" or most outgoing persons, should make positive contributions to the class.
- **Acknowledging your deficiencies and seeking help** to remedy them.
- **Sharing information with others.** Given the size of the class, very often you'll work in pairs or groups (which is less intimidating), and it won't be possible for me to listen to all your comments individually, so it is your responsibility to ask for input from your classmates and to provide it to them in turn. The heterogeneity of the class, mentioned above, should not be perceived as a threat but as a great opportunity to learn from your classmates in the areas where they are stronger than you. You should, of course, reciprocate and help them in the areas where they are weaker than you.

Grades distribution and evaluation criteria

Your evaluation will be based on the following components:

- **Exams (20% + 20% + 10% =) 50%**

There will be three exams during the course. The tentative days are already posted in the calendar of the course, but remember that this is only a tentative schedule and that the dates might be changed according to the needs of the class.

The exams will cover the cultural content and the quality of your language. They will include specifically questions on the arts, the history, the geography and/or the political and social situation of the Hispanic countries. Listening and reading skills may be also tested.

- **Written Assignments (10% + 10% =) 20%**

You will be required to write two assignments. The evaluation will be based on the cultural sensitivity and maturity of the ideas expressed, the organization of these ideas, the variety and accuracy of the

vocabulary and grammar used and the general presentation. These assignments should be typed double-spaced. 5% of the grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.

- **Vocabulary tests (5x2%=10%)**

There will be 5 short tests, one for each of the first five chapters, dealing with the vocabulary studied in each of them.

- **Oral Presentation 10%**

This activity will be done in groups of three/four people. Each group will prepare a Power Point Presentation dealing with a specific subject related to the Hispanic world. This activity is done in two stages:

Preparation:

- Form the group
- Discuss and choose a topic that is not covered in the material provided for the course.
- Do the research
- Choose three or four main points about the subject.
- Distribute the tasks (who is going to be responsible for what part).
- Meet a final time to make sure that all the material prepared by different people goes well together, that there are no repetitions, that you are not missing important points.
- Don't get lost in little details that nobody is going to remember. Put yourself in the place of your classmates. Each presentation should have three or four interesting and important points that all the class should be able to remember. The goal of the presentation is to make those points easy to remember for your classmates. It is a good idea to devote one or two slides to summarize those points.
- Send the complete Power Point to the instructor so she can correct spelling mistakes. The 40% of the mark assigned to content and organization will be given at this stage.

Presentation:

Each group will have around 15/20 minutes to present the topic and answer questions from other students or myself.

The second and third exam will include questions about the presentations.

The grade assigned for this component of the course will take into consideration :

- the interest of the content and the organization of ideas (40%)
- the clarity of communication (40%). Reading a previously written text won't be allowed.
- the visual presentation (10%)

Even though the preparation involves team work, students will receive individual marks according to their performance.

- **Class performance 10%**

Includes attendance and active, positive contributions in class.

The grade for this section will be granted as follows:

- Student participates regularly and always comes to class well prepared: 10%
- Student generally participates and comes to class well prepared: 8%
- Student sometimes participates and occasionally comes to class prepared: 6%
- Student seldom participates or comes to class prepared: 3%
- Student never participates and never comes to class prepared: 0%

Well prepared means that, before coming to class, the student has done the homework assigned by the instructor (which can include learning some vocabulary, reading and preparing specific texts, completing certain activities) so he/she can participate intelligently during the class period.

COURSE NOTES

1. The calendar for this class posted on Blackboard is not binding and can change according to the needs of the class.
2. Lack of attendance may adversely affect your overall performance and may have a negative impact on your final grade.
3. Please turn off your cell phones, iPods, Blackberries and similar devices during lectures.
4. Students are encouraged to communicate consistently in the target language and attend the Centro de Tertulia (CHD 303) to practice.
5. Not all material posted on Blackboard under Course Documents will be covered in class. It is the student's responsibility to study any such sections if they are required by the instructor to do so.

Aula Virtual de Español (AVE)

The Department of French, Italian and Spanish has purchased a license to the Aula Virtual de Español (AVE), Spanish online learning materials developed by the Instituto Cervantes. This great resource is available to students for free during the semester on the Internet at: <http://ave2.cvc.cervantes.es> (User: spanuofc, Password: 772686).

DELE

Students are strongly encouraged to take the Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE) during the semester. More information at <http://diplomas.cervantes.es>.

Late exams and Missed assignments

1. 5% of the grade will be deducted for each day a written assignment (activity or composition) is late if there is no written document to justify the absence or the failure to complete it. The Department's drop-box, located in the foyer area of the third floor in Craigie Hall between blocks D and C, is available for dropping off assignments and course work. The material placed in the drop-box will be collected and date-stamped at the beginning and at the end of the working day.
2. Attendance for all exams is compulsory. A student who is absent from a test for legitimate reasons must discuss an alternative course of action with the instructor. The instructor may request a Physician/Counselor statement form to confirm an absence for health reasons.
3. Do not make travel arrangements for the dates when exams are scheduled. Missed tests, assignments and examinations with no legitimate reason will be given a grade of F.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory

reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

DISABILITIES AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. Students with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre should contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Students are also required to discuss their needs with the instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION ASSEMBLY POINTS

Craigie Hall: Professional Faculties food court (alternate: Education Block food court)

Education Block and Tower: Scurfield Hall atrium (alternate: Professional Faculties food court)

Kinesiology: north courtyard, MacEwan Student Centre (alternate: University Theatres lobby)

For the complete list of assembly points please consult

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it.

Please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. The use of cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools is not permitted and they must be switched off in class.

SAFEWALK

To request a Safewalk escort anywhere on campus, 24 hours a day and seven days a week, please call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help Phones.

Web: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>

STUDENT UNION INFORMATION

Representatives and contact details: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/home/contact.html>

Student Ombudsman: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Writing skills should cross all disciplines. Students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office

(<http://www.efwr.ucalgary.ca/>) can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.

