

SP 350: Conversation and Composition

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Office: 207 Wesleyan Hall, 765-4390
Hours: M,W,F 1:00-3:00; T, R 11-3

Required Text: Nichols, Pennie A. and Jane A. Johnson. En Comunidad: Comunicación y conexión. McGraw Hill, 2009.

Recommended: 501 Spanish Verbs. Collins Spanish/English Dictionary.

Grading: The primary means of assessing reading and writing abilities will be through the journal, homework assignments, and the final composition. Speaking and listening abilities will be assessed on an ongoing basis, with frequent feedback in class and in office hours, as well as through presentations, the class project, and a proficiency interview. In addition, you will take the **Webcape Placement Exam twice**: once during the first week of class, and once again during the final week of class. This will provide me, and you, a measure of your achievement and appropriate placement level for continuing study in the language.

Presentation #1	25%	Class Project	10%
Presentation #2	25%	Final (Composition)	30%
Journal	10%		

Absences: Punctual attendance is important in this class. Four absences are allowed for your emergencies. After four absences, each missed class equals to 2 points which will be deducted from your final average.

Presentations: Two oral presentations are required. They will be graded based on the Evaluation Criteria for Presentations and Compositions in this syllabus. Presentations must be between 8 and 10 minutes in length, and **they may not be given late**.

Journal: Please get a couple of Blue Books to jot down your thoughts in Spanish. You should have an entry (at least a couple of good, meaty paragraphs) during each week. We will have two journal checks during the semester (see class schedule).

Class Project: During the semester we will have the opportunity to interview native speakers of Spanish using a questionnaire that I will give you. You will synthesize the information you collect and write down your findings.

Composition: A composition is required. It will be graded based on the Evaluation Criteria for Presentations and Compositions in this syllabus. **THE COMPOSITION MUST BE TYPED ON 8½ x11 PAPER in readable ink. It will not be accepted late.**

SPANISH SPEAKING POLICY: Everyone should first attempt any questions in Spanish. Don't worry if you don't express yourself perfectly, the fact that you are trying to speak in Spanish is what matters! Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.

 In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University offers reasonable accommodations to students with eligible documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. Under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities as compared to an average person in the population. It is the responsibility of the student to contact Developmental Services prior to the beginning of the semester to initiate the accommodation process and to notify instructors within the first three class meetings to develop an accommodation plan. Appropriate, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow each student to meet course requirements, but no fundamental or substantial alteration of academic standards will be made. Students needing assistance should contact Developmental Services.

- I. SP 350 OBJECTIVES: To enable students
- A. To further develop knowledge in the application of phonology, orthography, morphology, vocabulary and syntax of Spanish;
 - B. To speak in a normal conversational tempo;
 - C. To acquire knowledge of Spanish daily life, customs and cultural patterns;
 - D. To read and comprehend general materials;
 - E. To understand cross-cultural differences;
 - F. To understand descriptive linguistics;
 - G. To use sound and grammar patterns;
 - H. To develop skill in writing general, non-technical prose in Spanish;
 - I. To present talks on practical subjects related to travel and daily life; and
 - J. To listen to and understand a proficient speaker.
- II. SP 350 PROCEDURES: To accomplish above objectives
- A. By conducting the class in Spanish and requiring appropriate oral and written responses from students;
 - B. By engaging in daily oral discussions and exercises;
 - C&D. By reading and discussing current Spanish articles dealing with various aspects of Spanish daily life, customs and cultural patterns;
 - E. By discussing and comparing cross-cultural differences in articles, magazines, movies and other realia;
 - F. By using descriptive linguistics to explain language problems;
 - G. By requiring oral participation, written work and grammar exercises;
 - H. By requiring short homework essays and a written composition in Spanish;
 - I. By requiring regular oral presentations on practical topics; and
 - J. By employing video and audio tapes with native voices, by bringing native speakers to class and by using an instructor with native fluency.
- III. SP 350 EVALUATION: To verify progress made toward objectives and to evaluate effectiveness of procedures:
- A. By daily assessment of oral and written performance; and
 - B. By periodic oral presentations and a written composition.

EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of SP 350, students will have a command of the vocabulary and language structures involved in the chapters covered in En Comunidad, and will be able to apply this knowledge in conversation and composition in Spanish. Upon completion of SP 350, it is expected that students will be performing at ACTFL Level Intermediate-Mid (ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). The guidelines this organization has developed for measuring language competency have been adopted by academic, governmental, and commercial institutions involved in foreign language instruction. As regards the targeted four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, this proficiency level reflects competency as follows:

Listening:

Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned utterances on a variety of topics. Content continues to refer primarily to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and somewhat more complex tasks, such as lodging, transportation, and shopping. Additional content areas include some personal interests and activities, and a greater diversity of instructions and directions. Listening tasks not only pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations but also to short routine telephone conversations and some deliberate speech, such as simple announcements and reports over the media. Understanding continues to be uneven.

Speaking:

Able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated, basic, and communicative tasks and social situations. Can talk simply about self and family members. Can ask and answer questions and participate in simple conversations on topics beyond the most immediate needs; e.g., personal history and leisure time activities. Utterance length increases slightly, but speech may continue to be characterized by frequent long pauses, since the smooth incorporation of even basic conversational strategies is often hindered as the speaker struggles to create appropriate language forms. Pronunciation may continue to be strongly influenced by first language and fluency may still be strained. Although misunderstandings still arise, the Intermediate-Mid speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

Reading:

Able to read consistently with increased understanding simple, connected texts dealing with a variety of basic and social needs. Such texts are still linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make minimal suppositions and to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples may include short, straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things written for a wide audience.

Writing:

Able to meet a number of practical writing needs. Can write short, simple letters. Content involves personal preferences, daily routine, everyday events, and other topics grounded in personal experience. Can express present time and at least one other time frame or aspect consistently, e.g., nonpast, habitual, imperfective. Evidence of control of the syntax of non-complex sentences and basic inflectional morphology, such as declensions and conjugation. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on a given topic and provides little evidence of conscious organization. Can be understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives.

Course Objectives and Assessments

OBJECTIVE	ASSESSMENT
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)1.(i) Knowledge of grammatical organization (phonology, orthography, morphology, vocabulary, and syntax) and textual organization (cohesion, coherence, and rhetorical organization) for receiving and producing original and accurate messages in the target language.	Exercises using En Comunidad and exercises in conversation text. Quizzes/Tests/Exams. WebCAPE. Exams and assignments based on conversation topics. Homework. Modified oral proficiency interview. Class discussion.
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)1.(ii) Knowledge of pragmatics (the effect of context on language) for appropriate usage of the target language in different language-specific settings.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)1.(iii) Knowledge of travel and study opportunities in the target culture or in pseudo-immersion experiences for maintaining and improving proficiency.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics. Quizzes/Tests/Exams.
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)2.(i) Ability to receive and produce original and accurate messages in all three modes (interpersonal, interpretive, presentational), employing knowledge of grammatical and textual organization of the target language.	Quizzes/Tests/Exams. Homework exercises.
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)2.(ii) Ability to use pragmatics to receive and produce messages in the target language that are appropriate for different situations and for different people.	Quizzes/Tests/Exams. Homework exercises. Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.
290-3-3-.11(2)(a)2.(iii) Ability to observe similarities and differences between languages when immersed in authentic	Quizzes/Tests/Exams. Homework exercises. Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.

language settings.	
290-3-3-.11(2)(b)1.(i) Knowledge of target culture practices including daily life, customs, and cultural patterns.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.
290-3-3-.11(2)(b)1.(ii) Knowledge of target culture perspectives including values, patterns of thought, beliefs, and cultural assumptions.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.
290-3-3-.11(2)(b)1.(iii) Knowledge of target culture products including art forms; geography and history; social, economic, political, and religious institutions; ecology, and technology.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics.
290-3-3-.11(2)(b)2.(iii) Ability to use tools of inquiry to discover similarities and differences between native and target culture products such as geography, political institutions, and ecology.	Exams and assignments based on conversation topics. Quizzes/Tests/Exams. Homework exercises.