Spanish 1230 Course Structure and Grading Policies

DESCRIPTION

Spanish 1230 is a 4-credit-course that meets four days per week (Monday through Thursday). The goal of this low-intermediate course is to achieve a higher level of comprehension as well as to advance oral and written expression in a cultural context. Small classes are conducted entirely in Spanish and the language is used in communicative, creative, and critical thinking activities. Students engage in linguistic and literary analysis of texts to acquire new vocabulary, complete analytical exercises, and develop reading strategies. Students continue to develop writing skills by writing and editing compositions on various subjects and review grammatical structures on their own, although the instructor may clarify as needed. Oral presentations, daily preparation, and active participation are required. The Cornell Code of Academic Integrity applies to Spanish 1230; all the assignments submitted must be 100% your own work.

LEARNING GOALS: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- demonstrate development in listening, reading, writing, speaking, and intercultural strategies; show an increasing ability to identify and use a limited variety of language registers.

- interact verbally with an increasingly complex and precise vocabulary and idiomatic expressions; ask extensive questions; begin to produce connected discourse of paragraph length; further develop the ability to use cohesive devices.

- write multi-paragraph short essays on familiar topics about themselves, their immediate world; compose reflective responses to a fictional or non-fictional texts and films with increased fluency; show an emerging ability to use a variety of cohesive devices.

- locate events and narrate with increased consistency in different time frames, both in spoken and written language (control of aspect may be lacking at times; use of subjunctive mood is emergent).

- gradually increase the ability to express, defend and support opinions, and produce simple hypotheses.

- comprehend level-appropriate authentic spoken and written language, e.g. fictional and non-fictional texts, and audiovisual material.

- identify central practice in target culture; compare, contrast and reflect on cultural differences; acquire new perspectives on L2 and L1 culture.

In class, we use only Spanish and practice the vocabulary and structures of the language with activities that require you to work in pairs and small groups to exchange information. Coming to class well prepared is essential to your learning. All the materials assigned in the syllabus for each class should be done in advance. Read the syllabus, Programa, (located under “Preparación diaria” on the course website), to know what to prepare before class. Your instructor will not lecture about grammar in class, but rather prepare exercises and activities that will help you practice the material. Daily preparation is essential in a second-language class. You will need to spend 2 hours reviewing what was covered in class and preparing for the next class.
The grading for the course is based on points, not on a curve.

- **Daily Preparation**: Assignments related to readings, listening exercises, videos and movies. They are designed to reflect about the chapter topic, to practice the vocabulary and structures we study, and to develop reading, listening, and writing skills. They are marked in the syllabus with this symbol: ✶

- **Graded Assignments**
- **(Almost Daily) Quizzes**
- **Tandem Exchange Emails**
- **Tandem Exchange Skype Conversations**

- **Writing Competence (compositions and reflections)**

- **Oral Competence**:

- **3 minutos de fama (Presentation)**
- **Cultural Presentation**
- **Presentation: Tandem Exchange**

- **Chapter tests**

- **Final exam**

**NOTE**: NO EXTRA CREDIT WILL BE OFFERED

The final letter grade will be determined according to the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100 - 96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96.4 - 92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92.4 - 89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89.4 - 86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86.4 - 82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82.4 - 79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79.4 - 76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76.4 - 72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72.4 - 69.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69.4 - 66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66.4 - 62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>62.4 - 59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.4 - 0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DAILY PREPARATION**

**Graded Assignments**: Assignments related to readings, listening exercises, videos and movies. They are designed to reflect about the chapter topic, to practice the vocabulary and structures we study, and to develop reading, listening, and writing skills. They are marked in the syllabus with this symbol: ✶

**Quizzes**: 5 minutes long and **almost daily**: based on textbook, workbook (both written and listening comprehension), as well as literary readings and other assignments; **no make-ups will be given to those who arrive late or were absent**: do not ask your instructor for special allowances. The first 2 quizzes do not count towards the final grade. The 3 lowest quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

**Tandem Emails and Skype Conversations**: After the first chapter test, you will be paired with a student at the University of Caldas, Colombia. In this virtual exchange, you will communicate with your partner via email once a week and via Skype every other week. The goal of this exchange is to provide you with a context to improve your listening, speaking, reading, writing, and intercultural skills. More information will be posted on the course website.

Please carefully read the document: **How to approach your homework** (on the course website: Evaluación y estrategias).

By doing and correcting your daily assignments as indicated in that document, you will not only be better prepared for each class, but are also more likely to participate and make progress in Spanish and, as a result, do better on every aspect of the course. To succeed in any language class, it is very important to be well prepared daily. In every class we will build upon what we studied before. If you do not complete your assignments daily and let unstudied vocabulary or grammar concepts accumulate, very soon you will find yourself facing an overwhelming pile of things to catch up on. The more consistent your work, the more enjoyable it will be to learn Spanish, and the better you will do in this course.

Do not hesitate to ask questions in class. Each time someone asks a question, the whole group benefits. If after asking your question, you still feel that you do not fully understand, please ask again after class or go to your instructor’s office hours. Please do not wait to the day before the exam to try to understand the concepts.

This is a 4-credit-class. That entails **2 hours of daily preparation per class**. If you spend more than 2.5 hours on a daily basis or you experience difficulties, please go to see your instructor during office hours to talk about language-learning strategies.
WRITING COMPETENCE

Compositions and Reflections
They are designed to further explore and reflect critically about the cultural content of the chapter and the exchange with students at the University of Caldas, Colombia. They also provide you with a context to practice the vocabulary and structures that we study, and to develop your writing skills throughout the semester.

Please read carefully the grading criteria (posted on the course website under Evaluación y estrategias). Your instructor will use a code to mark and indicate the type of error. Please correct and analyze the errors carefully on your compositions and use your instructor’s comments to improve your writing.

Under no circumstances will any assignments be accepted late. If you foresee being absent on the day an assignment is due, please talk to your instructor to make any necessary arrangements. Students in university teams must provide an official copy of their event schedule.

The Cornell Code of Academic Integrity applies to Spanish 1230. All assignments are to be done individually. Do not use electronic translators (such as Google Translate) or ask native speakers, students, tutors, other instructors, friends or family members for help writing or correcting your written work before you hand it in. If you do, you will receive an F for that assignment.

CHAPTER TESTS. There will be four chapter tests throughout the semester. Students with documented disabilities need to contact his/her instructor and the course coordinator as soon as possible to discuss the necessary arrangements.

The questions will test the material covered (vocabulary, structures and cultural content) on the chapters indicated. There will also be a reading and/or listening comprehension and a writing section. To prepare for the tests:

• Study and complete your homework everyday and ask questions. Do not let unstudied material or concepts you do not understand accumulate.

• Practice the grammar and vocabulary that we study as much as possible: use it in class, in your homework (especially in the open-ended questions, the compositions, and the reflections); practicing everyday is key; please do not wait to the day before the exam to study and practice the material.

• Watch the videos, read the cultural and literary texts carefully, and participate actively in the related class conversations.

FINAL EXAM

It will test the content covered during the semester and will include sections in reading and listening comprehension.

ORAL COMPETENCE

3 minutos de fama: an individual, 3-minute-long, presentation about a trip, a hobby or an experience from your life. More information is posted on the website under Evaluación y estrategias.

Cultural presentation: an interactive presentation, with visuals, where the audience will be active participants. It will be presented to the class by groups of 3 to 4 (depending on enrollment) on a topic related to Hispanic culture. One of the goals of the project is to research and share information related to the topic followed by small group and whole-class-discussion. Another objective is to review the vocabulary, grammar, communicative strategies learned throughout the semester, and to test student’s abilities to communicate this information in a meaningful context. The grading criteria, as well as detailed instructions for preparing the presentations, will be posted on the course website under the tab Presentaciones culturales.

Tandem Exchange Presentation: Designed for you to tell your classmates about your Colombian tandem exchange partner and to reflect critically about what you have learned this semester through the exchange. The instructions will be posted in the course website later in the semester.

Please check the course calendar (posted under Preparación diaria) and avoid scheduling conflicting events for the chapter tests, cultural presentations or final exam. NO MAKE UPS WILL BE OFFERED.
Participation is crucial in learning a foreign language. This entails active, on-task participation in group/pair activities, listening attentively to the instructor and classmates, being prepared when called on, initiating communication with your instructor and peers, finding ways to expand on a finished activity instead of sitting silently, and using Spanish for all communication. It is important that you take charge of your learning process by making full use of class time to actively practice Spanish. Please avoid the use of English in class by using the vocabulary, expressions and structures that we study. With everyday practice, you will acquire many strategies that will help you improve your oral communication in Spanish. If all students make an effort to use only Spanish, the whole group will develop better oral skills. Please keep in mind, learning a second language involves risk-taking and that making mistakes is a natural part of the process.

It is essential that you familiarize yourself well with the material assigned for each day before coming to class. That way you will be able to actively participate, and you will reinforce and integrate the material you prepared.

Please read carefully the participation criteria and note that if performance is consistently below the expectations, 5% will be taken from the top of the final grade. The expectations are based on both the quantity and quality of your participation. The criteria is posted in the course website under the tab Evaluación y estrategias.

Important: Texting, emailing and surfing the web is not allowed during class and will have a negative impact in your participation grade.

ATTENDANCE is mandatory. There are no medical excuses at Cornell, but you will be allowed 3 absences for illness or an emergency. Each subsequent absence lowers the final grade 0.5%. Arriving late disrupts the class environment and everyone’s learning, therefore it counts as half of an absence. Unless you have a documented medical condition, please refrain from leaving in the middle of class. Please inform your instructor in advance of any necessary absences. Cornell’s policy for officially excused absences includes religious holidays and university athletic/extracurricular events. If you are to miss a class because of a university related activity (e.g. sports) or a religious holiday, please inform your instructor beforehand (for sporting events, please provide your instructor with the team schedule). It will be the student’s responsibility to find out if any announcements were made in his/her absence and to catch up on the covered material.

Please use your instructor’s office hours as needed or ask for an appointment if you have a schedule conflict. If you experience difficulties, please go see your instructor and ask him/her about strategies on language learning.