First Year Spanish and Culture: Course Guidelines

Instructor: Lisa Valdez
Office: Walker 149
Phone: 487-3273
E-mail: llvaldez@mtu.edu

Required Texts and Materials

Course Objectives
This class is the first of a three course sequence designed to help you in starting your exploration of the Spanish language and culture. By the end of this quarter, you will have acquired the basic skills necessary to use Spanish in both oral and written communication. Also, you will have developed a pretty good sense of the various cultures, nationalities, and ethnic and social groups that make up the Spanish speaking world. You will make continuous use of a variety of sources to expand and solidify your skills: your "basic" textbook, the tapes, videos, and CD-ROMs that are in the language lab (Walker 114), and the World Wide Web.

The communicative activities you've learned since last fall include greeting, taking leave, introducing yourself and others, talking about your family and family relations, making phone calls, doing party small-talk, ordering meals in a restaurant, talking about traveling, holidays, and leisure activities, describing everyday activities (household chores, "beauty/personal hygiene rituals," running errands, etc.), and visiting a doctor's office. At the end of this term you will also be able to effectively communicate at a post office, in stores, and at gas stations, to ask for directions, to find a place to live, to do some Spanish car-talk, and to converse about college activities and careers.

In terms of grammar we'll continue and conclude our high-speed exploration of the complete basics of Spanish grammar and usage.

Your Responsibilities
Learning a language is a rewarding and challenging enterprise. The key to success is curiosity, open-mindedness, the willingness to take risks, and, above all, continuous practice. For our class, you are expected to
- Attend and actively participate in each class.
- Come prepared to class. Preparation is absolutely crucial; otherwise, you'll soon be lost...
- Ask for clarification whenever you feel lost. I am more than willing to help each of you to be the best student you can be. However, I am not a mind-reader. You need to let me know what you need....!
- Spend at least one hour per week in the language lab, where you will complete the appropriate lab activity section of our workbook and check out the lab's excellent selection of additional materials available for extra practice and fun :-) Make sure you fill out the attendance slip each time you visit the lab and have it signed by a monitor. I will check your lab attendance and workbooks on a regular basis.
- Set aside 4-5 hours per week (at least 45 minutes per day) to study outside of class.
- Behave like responsible adults. This is a university "not" a high school and I expect you to behave accordingly.
A Note on Attendance and Participation

Every day I will circulate a sign-up sheet or take roll during the first minutes of class. Make sure you’re in on time. Otherwise, you will be considered absent for that day. For every day of class you will get one point for attendance and one for participation. If your are late or unprepared, or if you aren’t actively involved in the class, you will lose the participation point for that day.

Interaction and communication are absolutely crucial for successful language learning. Therefore, you will not pass this course if you miss more than 4 classes without an official excuse (a doctor’s note or a note from the dean of students). Since the flesh is weak and the winters up here are long, I grant each of you 1 (ONE) unexcused absence. Note, however, that you cannot make up for any test, quiz, or other assignment you’ll miss that day.

Your Grade

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Midterm</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests and Quizzes</td>
<td>45 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

- 93-100 A
- 70-76 C
- 92-89 AB
- 65-69 CD
- 88-82 B
- 60-64 D
- 81-77 BC
- < 60 F

Tests

The tests will generally cover 2 lecciones each. The late midterm (Test # 2) will include everything you have studied in and out of class for the first four lessons. There will be no make-ups unless you have an official excuse for being absent on the day of the test.

Assignments

Submit your assignments at the beginning of class on a clean sheet of paper. Please staple sheets of paper/workbook assignments together. Make sure to write out the whole sentence and to write both the questions and the answers. Otherwise, you won’t be given credit. I will collect your homework randomly, so be prepared. Late assignments will not be accepted and there will be no make-ups unless you have an official excuse. Feel free to contact me if you need help with any assignment.

Notes

- If you face circumstances that could affect your performance in this class, please see me ASAP so that we can make appropriate arrangements.
- MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students at 487-2212. For all other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office at 487-3310.
- The syllabus and course schedule may be revised during the term in response to the needs of the students and the course. You will be notified of such changes should they occur.

Virtual PS

A good starting point for explorations of Spanish on the Web is http://globegate.utm.edu/spanish/span.html