

SPANISH 301: **Advanced Comprehension and Conversation**

Instructor: Timothy Wilson
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Office hours: T/Th 2-3

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Class time and place: Tue & Thu 9:45am- 11:15am in GRUE 203
Prerequisites: COMM 131X or 141X; SPAN 202 or equivalent* (see below).

DESCRIPTION

This advanced Spanish class builds in a more focused way on the general Spanish communication skills that students practiced at the 100 and 200 level. Along with the other 300 level classes such as grammar, composition and reading, this class targets a specific skill: its focus is on increasing listening and speaking proficiency. Discussions, presentations and exercises will enhance verbal comprehension and competence. The course will be conducted in Spanish.

COURSE MATERIALS

Our main "text" for the class will be the conversations that we have in every class period. The class will be intensely oral, and students should be prepared to take notes. Students are **required** to buy a small notebook or journal for the express purpose of writing down vocabulary from this class. It should be a notebook dedicated to this class only, not a large notebook or binder containing several classes' notes, etc. In addition, the instructor will provide supplemental readings and vocabulary. Students will be responsible for keeping these handouts in a folder, creating a coursepack (*carpeta*) to which we will often refer.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Course goals

- provide students with a Spanish speaking environment in which to interact, enabling them to use and increase their Spanish speaking skills
- help students gain confidence in their oral abilities and converse more comfortably
- train students in extensive new vocabulary for specific communicative purposes
- encourage greater ease in public speaking

Expected student learning outcomes

- Students will achieve the fluency that is only possible through regular practice
- Students will communicate with increased confidence
- Students will gain the skills to interact in a variety of real world situations such as shopping, restaurants, and travel
- Students will be able to present ideas in an organized way in Spanish, presented to their peers

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This is a communicative language class, and as such, there will not be a significant element of lecture. Rather the professor will act principally as a resource, and as a facilitator of interaction. There will be whole class interaction, small group interaction and pair work. There may also occasionally be some (educational) games or songs.

PLACEMENT

Students **must** have taken SPAN 202 at UAF; **or** have transfer credit from another university; **or** have AP credit. If you don't have any of these, you **MUST** take the CLEP test. You can receive up to 16 UAF credits by taking the Spanish CLEP test.

To take a CLEP test, visit:
Testing Services Office
207B Gruening
474-5277
www.uaf.edu/testing/

hours:
Mon/Wed/Thurs 1pm or 3pm
Tues/Fri 9am or 11am
or call for appointment.
Cost: \$90

LANGUAGE LAB

Gruening 609, hours TBA. We have computers with internet and printing access available for language students. We also have language-specific tutors who can help you with your work; many of them are native speakers, and are happy to act as a conversation partner with you. I will announce their hours.

EVALUATION

Important note on grading: Students will **NOT be graded on their speaking skills as compared to a native Spanish speaker, nor compared to their classmates, but rather on an individual basis taking into account enthusiasm, dedication, and willingness to improve during the course of the semester. To measure the expected learning outcomes, we will use the following resources:

A. *Participación/participation*

Learning a language is not done in isolation. Speaking, listening, and interacting with others are essential parts of the learning process. Therefore you will be graded on your classroom performance—not necessarily on whether you get the “right answer,” but on whether you are in class, with your materials, prepared and willing to speak. Participation will be evaluated regularly (See “PARTICIPATION GRADE CRITERIA” below). From 0-5 points will be awarded for every week. *Warning:* As participation figures as a large percentage in your evaluation, you might be surprised to see the damage that regularly receiving 3 points or 0 points will do to your final grade.

B. *Noticias*

You will be responsible for researching and presenting a current event topic one or two times during the semester (depending on number of students in class). This presentation will be brief (5 minutes or so) and should be interesting and designed to stimulate discussion. This presentation is briefly described here; for a more complete explanation with detailed instructions, see the “GUÍA PARA LAS NOTICIAS” below. Also see “GENERAL PRESENTATION GUIDE” below for some more ideas about how to present.

Each student will present one or more news articles to the class during the course of the semester (you will sign up for a time slot or slots during the first weeks of class). The article(s) presented must come from a periodical in Spanish (i.e. a newspaper or a magazine) which can be found easily online (see “PERIODICOS EN INTERNET” below for some ideas of internet sites to use). The article you choose to present must be **IN SPANISH**, of substantial length (more than a few paragraphs), of international interest, and discussion-provoking. Please use judgement in choosing the articles. You will be graded not only on your presentation, but on the relevance of the article, and whether or not it can lead to discussion. ↓ beseech you to carefully look over the detailed information on how to give a successful noticias presentation (See “GUÍA PARA LAS NOTICIAS” and “GENERAL PRESENTATION GUIDE” below). The two guides are chock full of helpful ideas.

C. *Pruebas de vocabulario/vocab quizzes*

Brief weekly quizzes will be administered at the very beginning of class on Tuesdays. The purpose of these is to test students' acquisition of new vocabulary. No make-ups are offered. These vocabulary quizzes will test words from two sources: 1) a list of vocab provided by the instructor, and 2) a list based on “favorite words” submitted by students (see *Lista de vocabulario* below).

D. *Lista de vocabulario/vocab lists*

You are expected to keep a notebook in which you jot down any interesting vocabulary you hear in class. This journal may occasionally be checked by the instructor. Additionally, at the end of every week, you will be responsible for submitting, on paper or via email, a list of the 10 words you found most useful during that week. Failure to complete this task or take it seriously will detract from your final grade.

E. *Ponencias en panell panel presentations*

The culmination of your experience will be two short panel presentations/discussions with your peers, to take place roughly at the middle and at the end of the semester. This will be discussed more in detail later in the semester.

Components of the Final Grade and weight by percentage

Participation	30%
Noticias	20%
Vocabulary quizzes	15%
Vocabulary lists	5%
Panel presentation I	10%
Panel presentation II	20%

Grading scale

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-60
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

COURSE POLICIES

Student responsibilities

- **Participation** in class interaction is a principal element of the course and is required. See Evaluation below.
- **Preparation.** When material is assigned for home review, students must come prepared. Your preparation will have a direct effect on your participation, which is graded, and on your quiz grade. See Evaluation below.
- **Attendance.** It goes without saying that you cannot participate if you are not present. Allowances will be made for a few reasonable and unavoidable absences, but unexcused absences will detract heavily from your grade. As dictated by the standard policy for all Spanish classes, beyond the first 2 absences, each additional unexcused absence will lower your *FINAL* course grade by 1.5% (and missing 14 hours of class or more will result in an automatic "F"). Therefore, if possible please let me know ahead of time if you will have to miss.

Number of Allowable Absences and Amount Grade is Lowered for Excessive Absences

	3 credit classes			5 credit classes	
	total # of contact hours in semester	42 hrs			70 hrs
# of hrs must be present to pass (2/3 of semester)	28 hrs			47 hrs	
# of hrs absent that results in an F (1/3 of semester)	miss > 14 hrs			miss > 23 hrs	
How often class meets	1 day/wk	2 days/wk	3 days/wk	2 days/wk	4 days/wk
# of missed days allowed	1	2	3	2	4
% that final grade is lowered for each add. absence (-1% for ea. hour missed)	3%	1.5%	1%	2.5%	1% or 1.5%

- **Missed class.** If you miss class, it is YOUR responsibility to check with the instructor or a classmate to see if you missed any assignment, schedule change, etc.
- **Communication with instructor.** Fulfillment of class requirements is the student's responsibility. The syllabus is very clear and complete, with all assignments spelled out, so there is no excuse for not doing them on time, etc. In other words, the grade you get is completely your responsibility. With that said, students' learning is my first priority—I want to do anything I can to help you succeed. I am available very often in office hours (or contact me for an appointment), and I welcome questions, doubts and problems of all kinds. If there is anything you feel uncomfortable, worried or unsure about, chances are, we can straighten it out by talking it over. If you don't come talk to me, you have no one but yourself to blame.

Appropriate class behavior

- You are welcome to bring a drink or snack to class, as long as you clean up after yourself.
- Side conversations are not acceptable.
- Class time is to be used paying attention to me and your classmates. Please do not use it doing homework for either this class or another class.
- I expect you to be courteous to classmates and professor at all times.
- As a courtesy, you should sit up so your face is visible to others in the class
- Cell phones and other personal devices must be **turned off**, and there will be NO texting or answering phones in class. See "PARTICIPATION GRADE CRITERIA" below for dire consequences.
- students who arrive more than 10 minutes late *or who leave the room* for extended periods will be counted absent; see me if you know that you will frequently need to arrive late or leave early.

Students with disabilities.

UAF makes appropriate accommodations for individuals with disabilities who have been documented by the Office of Disability Services (203 Whitaker Building, 474-7043). Students with learning or other disabilities who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to obtain the appropriate documentation if they do not have it. Please meet with me during office hours so that I can collaborate with the Office of Disability Services to provide the appropriate accommodations and supports to assist you in meeting the goals of the course.

Student support services.

UAF is committed to equal opportunity for all students. Students who are the first in their families to attempt a four-year college degree, or students whose incomes are low, have opportunities for tutorial and other forms of support from the office of Student Support Services. Please make an appointment with Student Support Services at 474-2644.

Student code of conduct.

As a UAF student, you are subject to UAF's Honor Code:

"Students will not collaborate on any quizzes, in-class exams, or take-home exams that will contribute to their grade in a course, unless permission is granted by the instructor of the course. Only those materials permitted by the instructor may be used to assist in quizzes and examinations.

Students will not represent the work of others as their own. A student will attribute the source of information not original with himself or herself (direct quotes or paraphrases) in compositions, theses and other reports.

No work submitted for one course may be submitted for credit in another course without the explicit approval of both instructors.

Violations of the Honor Code will result in a failing grade for the assignment and, ordinarily, for the course in which the violation occurred. Moreover, violation of the Honor Code may result in suspension or expulsion."

GUÍA PARA LAS NOTICIAS

1. Select an article from a newspaper or magazine in Spanish that is both interesting to you and of **international importance** (please don't bring the weather report from Ecuador, or an article about pets in Chile). What this means is that you must be able to justify why people around the world should know the information that you have chosen to present. Can you complete this sentence? "This topic is important to a lot of people because..."
2. THE WEEK BEFORE the presentation you must e-mail your instructor for approval of the topic. (Friday morning at 9:45 at the latest). Anyone who does not do so will lose points as explained below. Do not wait until the last minute to start researching!! In your email you need to include:
 - the title of your article and what periodical it's in
 - a direct link (make sure it works), or at least a copy of the article with source citation
 - a brief summary (2-3 sentences)
 - a vocabulary list with definitions (see #4 below)
 - your ideas for leading the class into discussion.

Failure to do so **will result in an automatic 10% deduction** from your noticia grade.

3. **The day of your presentation** you must hand in to your instructor a hard copy of the article, and to the class, hand out a list of new and useful vocabulary words with their definitions in Spanish.
4. Read the article a few times and highlight any unfamiliar vocabulary words (look them up). **Brainstorm** a list of vocabulary words (whether they are in the article or not) **that you think would be helpful to your classmates to understand your presentation and to discuss the topic**, thinking specifically about words that would be generally useful to have in one's Spanish vocabulary. Include the **Spanish** definitions of these words on your list and hand a copy to your instructor and the class before your presentation, along with the title of the article and your source. You should NOT include obscure words just to fatten up your list. It doesn't matter if you find few new words in the article itself—**your list should contain words which you think would be useful to the discussion**. (If you're presenting an article about gun laws, you should add "control de armas" to your vocab. list, though it doesn't appear in the article.)
5. During your presentation, you should highlight the main ideas of the article, and paraphrase them in your own words—be brief. Go over the main ideas in your head so you won't have to read your presentation directly from the paper. **READING PRESENTATIONS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AND WILL RECEIVE A POOR GRADE.**
6. Ask yourself if you actually understand the article. Are there allusions to historical figures or places unfamiliar to you? If so, you will need to familiarize yourself with these references in order to fill in your audience before or during your presentation (example: if the article is about Pinochet's extradition to Spain, who is Pinochet? what did he do? why did he overthrow the Chilean government? why does Spain want him?—find out as much as possible before your presentation). **YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL REASONABLE QUESTIONS ASKED DURING AND AFTER YOUR PRESENTATION.** "I don't know" or "It wasn't in the article" are not acceptable as answers.
7. It is important that you prepare and present your news item in such a way as to create interest in the topic. You need not stick to only what is presented in the article. Feel free to explain **background** information, or put the news in perspective by showing how the incident is part of a larger phenomenon. If you present it right, students will be intrigued and will WANT TO ask questions, and the presentation will lead to discussion.
8. Formulate the following thoughts for your presentation: why did you choose this article? This statement is a good way to introduce your presentation to the class. After you present your article summary, you should also include a statement about why you believe this article is important internationally, along with your brief personal viewpoint on the article—for example: do you agree? was the article fair in its presentation of the topic? was anything left out? is there another side?

9. Your presentation itself (not counting discussion) should last approximately 5-8 minutes. Don't forget to ask for questions at the end! "¿Hay preguntas?"
10. Again: If you start looking for an article at the last minute, chances are you won't find anything interesting, and you will be really sorry. Please don't embarrass yourself and your audience by presenting some obscure thing that no one cares about, just because you didn't have time to find anything interesting. Don't wait til Saturday night or Sunday morning!!!

GENERAL PRESENTATION GUIDE

Now that you have fulfilled the requirements for your *ponencia*, before you present, here are some questions to ask yourself:

Does the presentation have a coherent main idea or focus? Please know what you are presenting on, and stick to that topic. It is very helpful if you know what you want to accomplish with the presentation: have a goal.

Is there a well thought-out and logical organization to the presentation in general? Unless you are a natural born entertainer—and perhaps even then—it is a very good idea to make an outline to follow during you presentation, so as to avoid rambling.

Is the presentation an explanation? Your job is not to simply look up a lot of boring facts and then reading off a superficial laundry list of ideas. Please do not tell us a lot of dates and other difficult-to-digest information, especially if the facts do not help us to understand some important point. Your goal should be to bring the class to a better understanding of some concept. Know what it is you want us to learn, and help us get there.

Does the student's treatment of the topic indicate that the student has *thought about* the topic and attempted to develop it in depth? That is, are all the ideas that are presented explored sufficiently? Please avoid superficiality.

Is the presentation given in a free conversational style, rather than READ VERBATIM? Unless you are a professional speaker, and you bring your own teleprompter, you MAY NOT READ your presentation! You may use bullet points or index cards, etc, as a prompter, but any report that is simply written and read will receive a very poor grade. It is deathly boring to listen to such a presentation; please do not subject your classmates to one!

Are slides or other visual/tactile aids used? It is a very good idea to supplement the aural part of the presentation with some artifact that helps with visualization and comprehension. One good way to make slides is to place one or several color photos on a sheet of paper and make a color photocopy onto a transparency, which can be shown on an overhead projector. An item can also be passed around the class, but **please do not pass around photos**, as it is very distracting, and many won't be able to see them till much later. Also, do not show **too many** photos, as instead of a supplement, they can be a distraction from the presentation.

Does the presenter try to involve the listeners in some way? It is vital that you keep the listeners' interest, and a good way to do that is to have some interactive component to your presentation that will involve your listeners.

Does the speaker care about what is being presented? I assume since you chose your own topic, it is something you are interested in. Please try to show an interest, or develop some aspect that IS interesting to you—if YOU are bored, we will DIE of boredom!

PERIODICOS EN INTERNET

Argentina

Clarín: <http://www.clarin.com>
La nación: <http://www.lanacion.com>

Chile

El Mercurio: <http://www.mercurio.cl>

Colombia:

El tiempo: <http://www.eltiempo.com>

España

El país: <http://www.elpais.es>

ABC: <http://www.abc.es>

El mundo: <http://www.el-mundo.es>

México

El nacional: <http://www.el-nacional.com>

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

(This schedule may be adjusted to fit class needs)

Semana 1

3/9 introducción al curso

Semana 2

8/9 actividades

10/9 modelo de noticias, actividades

___profe___

Semana 3

15/9 Prueba #1, actividades

17/9 actividades

Semana 4

22/9 Prueba #2, noticia/noticia

_____ / _____

24/9 actividades

Semana 5

29/9 Prueba #3, noticia/noticia

_____ / _____

1/10 actividades

Semana 6

6/10 Prueba #4, noticia/noticia

_____ / _____

8/10 actividades

Semana 7

13/10 Prueba #5, noticia/noticia

_____ / _____

15/10 actividades

Semana 8

20/10 1ª ponencia en panel (*Panel presentation I*)

22/10 1ª ponencia en panel (*Panel presentation I*)

Semana 9

27/10 Prueba #6, noticia/noticia _____ / _____

29/10 actividades

Semana 10

3/11 Prueba #7, noticia/noticia/noticia _____ / _____ / _____

5/11 actividades _____

Semana 11

10/11 Prueba #8, noticia/noticia _____ / _____

12/11 actividades

Semana 12

17/11 Prueba #9, noticia/noticia _____ / _____

19/11

Semana 13

24/11 Prueba #10 _____ / _____

26/11 Día de acción de gracias—**NO CLASSES**

Semana 14

1/12 noticia/noticia _____ / _____

3/12 actividades

Semana 15

8/12 2ª ponencia en panel (*Panel presentation II*)

10/12 2ª ponencia en panel (*Panel presentation II*)

Final Exam: 8-10 a.m., Thursday, Dec. 17

PARTICIPATION GRADE CRITERIA

Very good: 5 points

- arrives for class on time
- speaks exclusively in Spanish, including greeting people and taking leave using Spanish expressions
- often responds to the instructor's questions
- often *initiates* interactions by responding to classmates' comments
- works on comprehension skills by listening attentively when others speak
- participates in all activities with enthusiasm and a *positive attitude*
- often asks questions when something is not clear
- contributes actively during group activities

Satisfactory: 4 points

- arrives for class nearly on time
- usually greets and takes leave using Spanish expressions
- almost never uses English
- during whole group discussion, participation is only sometimes limited to answering the instructor's questions
- is usually an active listener when not participating during whole class or group interactions and only rarely does not listen while others talk
- participates in all activities, sometimes enthusiastically
- usually asks for help in Spanish when something is not clear, but not always

Unsatisfactory: 3 points

- arrives 5 minutes late for class period, or has not prepared well
- sometimes uses English during group activities, but always uses Spanish in whole class activities
- during whole group discussion, participation is often limited to answering the instructor's questions
- is usually an active listener when not participating during whole class or group interactions and only rarely does not listen while others talk
- sometimes contributes actively during group activities
- sometimes contributes to getting the task done in group work
- does not bring the necessary books or workbooks to class

Unacceptable: 0 points

- arrives 10 minutes (or more) late, leaves early, or leaves the room for extended periods during class
- often uses English when speaking with the instructor or class members
- does not listen while others talk
- does not contribute much to getting the task done in group work
- contributes to the failure of activities by not completing small group or individual assignments
- works on assignments for other classes and/or Spanish HOMEwork
- displays a *negative attitude* or otherwise disrespects the instructor or classmates
- anyone caught texting in class will be "texted" a zero for that day

PARTICIPATION GRADE

Nombre: _____

Instructor: Prof. Wilson

WK	Self-score	Prof's revision	Professor's comments	absences to date
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

*Please note that you are allowed 2 absences, after which your **final grade** (not participation grade) will lowered 1.5% for each additional unexcused absence.*