

written communication

SPAN 301
(CRN #12584)

FALL 2018

MF
2:30-3:45PM

WELLES 210

SUNY-GENESEO
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES & LITERATURES



Final Exam: Wednesday, December 12, 12:00–2:30pm

about me

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Horas de oficina:

Monday 2:00–3:00pm,
Wednesday and Friday 10:30–11:30am,
and by appointment



Coffee on Fridays, 3:00–4:00 @ Starbucks

what's in this syllabus?

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Course Description and Objectives

Offers practice in expository writing with emphasis on clarity, structure and idiomatic expression, focusing on a variety of topical issues. Students are introduced to practical applications and provides a review of selected grammar topics. **Prerequisite: SPAN 202 or equivalent. Credits: 3(3-0)**

The goal of Spanish 301 is to achieve the ACTFL's Intermediate High level of proficiency in the area of written expression (see Appendix C).

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Effectively and idiomatically use some or all of the following grammatical concepts in written expression:
 - *ser, estar, and haber*
 - connectors
 - direct object & indirect object, reflexive, & reciprocal, possessive, demonstrative, and relative pronouns
 - *gustar* and similar verbs
 - commands
 - active and passive voice
 - preterite vs. imperfect
 - indicative vs. subjunctive in nominal, hypothetical, adjective, and adverbial clauses
 - false cognates

2. Be familiar with examples of some or all of the following written genres (and their component parts):
 - descripción
 - narración
 - ensayo analítico
 - ensayo argumentativo/persuasivo
3. Be familiar with and capable of structuring the following components of effective writing:
 - tone, tenor, and register
 - objectivity vs. subjectivity
 - introduction
 - thesis
 - development and types of supporting arguments
 - counterargument
 - conclusion



course resources

required text:

Conversaciones escritas.
Potowski, editor. (ISBN:
9781118744864)

course web site: [Canvas](#)

how to turn in work: Essays will be accepted and returned through Canvas or on [Google Drive](#). Please do not turn in paper copies!

for text reminders: text @genspan301 to [81010](#)



What can you expect from me?

An enjoyable, engaging classroom
Clear expectations for how to succeed
Availability to help when you need it
Fair grading
Timely return of graded materials
Professionalism and respect

A safe environment to experiment with language and make mistakes
Humility if (when) I make mistakes
Gratitude for your hard work!
Optimism that everyone is capable of learning Spanish!

What I Expect of You

Preparation and Participation (20%)

Refer to this explanation → of daily expectations for attendance, participation, and homework.

Plagiarism Workshop

Attendance at a plagiarism workshop any time in the last 4 semesters will earn you a 2% boost to your final grade.

Cultural Activities

You must attend a minimum of 4 cultural activities events sponsored by the Department of Languages & Literatures or the College.

(Attending fewer than 4 will lower your final grade by 2% per event.)

Quizzes (20%)

There will be periodic quizzes to test your knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary that we study.

Daily Class Expectations

Preparation and lively participation are the backbone of this course.

You are **not** expected to express yourself perfectly in Spanish — if you were, you would not be taking this course! You will, however, need to work hard to overcome fear of being wrong and making mistakes. **Taking risks and failing often are integral parts of language learning!** So speak up, ask questions, try to express yourself with sophistication! It is much better to make mistakes in class than on a scholarship application or at your bilingual office building!

You are responsible for preparing all assignments listed in the calendar before class. Good preparation does not mean reading, but rather **studying** the topics presented in the textbook so as to be prepared to practice your skills in classroom activities and on essays. **Most importantly, class will be more enjoyable (and far less confusing!) if you are well-prepared!**

Daily attendance is also essential for succeeding in this course. Our class is an interactive space where you will practice writing and related skills on a daily basis in order to develop the appropriate skills needed to succeed. You are allowed **two absences** before you begin to affect the maximum grade you are able to earn in the course without using tokens. **Arriving late, unprepared, without your textbook, or without completing your homework will equal ½ absence. More than 2 absences will lower your final grade by 2% per absence.**

If you do miss class, please check the syllabus, talk to a classmate, or come to my office (in that order) to find out what you missed!

What Else I Expect of You (aka. “Assignments”)

The grade in this course consists primarily of achieving proficiency in written expression. The keys to good writing are reading well-written texts, and **writing writing writing!** You will be writing continuously throughout this course, sometimes for a grade, and sometimes not. Below is a brief summary of the four major graded compositions that you will write. See the “Assignments” page and the Appendices for the complete Composition assignments.

Mini-Compositions (15%)

You will write two brief (1–2 page) essays during the course, each loosely based on themes explored in the readings. These essays are meant to be a place where you can take risks and experiment (within reason!) with language. You will have time to begin these compositions in class. I will provide the topics for each composition, but the goals will be determined by you, based on concepts that you identified as challenging in previous compositions.

Compositions (25%)

You will also write two longer (3-4 page) essays over the course of the semester. These will be similar to the mini-compositions, except that I will provide only a genre, and you will provide the topic. These compositions are an opportunity for you explore topics that interest you, and to show what you can do with confidence! More emphasis will be placed on the conventions of genre, and grammatical/linguistic control and correctness. See the rubric in Appendix A.

Mini-Comp #1	Mini-Comp #2	Comp #1	Comp #2
Resumen Asignatura: Escribir un resumen de una página de la Lectura 3, p. 17 Borrador: 7 de septiembre Peer edits: 10 de septiembre Versión final: 14 de septiembre	Comentario Asignatura: Escribir un comentario de dos páginas sobre la película <u>Pan y Rosas</u> . Borrador: 22 de octubre Peer edits: 26 de octubre Versión final: 29 de octubre	Narración Asignatura: Escribir un ensayo de 3 páginas sobre tu “biografía lingüística”. Borrador: 5 de octubre Peer edits: 10 de octubre Versión final: 15 de octubre	Exposición Asignatura: Escribir un ensayo de 3-4 páginas explorando un problema de salud que afecte una comunidad latina. Borrador: 5 de noviembre Peer edits: 12 de noviembre Versión final: 19 de noviembre

Final Composition (20%)

You will write your final composition in class during the final exam period. You will turn in a brief (1-page maximum) proposal, including a clear thesis statement, for your final paper on the second-to-last day of class.

Characteristics of Effective Writing

- Begins with a **clear, focused, and plainly stated thesis**.
- Don't save the thesis of your paper or of your paragraphs for the end. **Tell me at the outset what you plan to show, then show it.**
- If you can't identify your thesis, I probably can't either.
- Organize your paper into paragraphs, **each dealing with a single idea**.
- Only include ideas directly related to your thesis. **Mercilessly cut irrelevant information**, no matter how interesting it is.
- Plot summary should be minimal and included only when unavoidable
- Do not confuse **argument** and **opinion**.
- Be clear about who your **audience** is.
- **Avoid overgeneralizations**: Words like "everyone" and "forever" are usually impossible to prove, and harm your credibility.
- Also avoid **meaningless sentences** that don't contribute to your argument, like "there are many types of societies in the world."
- If your first sentence contains a generalization, **cut it and start with your second sentence instead**.
- **Every claim must be supported** by textual evidence/argument.
- Avoid the overuse of the verbs *ser*, *estar*, *haber* and *tener*. **Diversify your verbs!**
- **Avoid the use of the passive voice with *ser*** when there is the possibility of an active (or passive *se*) construction.
- Avoid *palabras comodín* such as "cosas", "personas", "gente", "lecciones", etc. Look for **more precise vocabulary** whenever possible.
- Use **transitions** and **connectors** between sentences and paragraphs.
- If you're not sure that you're saying what you mean to, you probably aren't!
- **Precise trumps pretty**. Never sacrifice clarity for turn of phrase.
- (Almost) Never use a big word when a small word will suffice
- **If you can cut the word, cut the word**
- Stick with either the past tense or the present tense within paragraphs, unless you have a good reason not to. Alternating between the two usually makes for a jarring reading experience.
- Never quote the dictionary/Wikipedia without a bulletproof reason.
- **Do not ever omit relative pronouns, especially *que***.
- If your sentence contains two separate ideas, **it is probably two sentences**.
- If your sentence extends beyond three lines, **it is probably two sentences**.
- **A single space after a period is standard!**

Some Tips for Success

- Write **only in Spanish** during class time. (I can see everything!)
- **Avoid the dictionary when possible. Vigorously practice circumlocution.**
- When you do use the dictionary, make sure you're saying what you think you're saying. Double-check with a monolingual dictionary.
- **Keep a log of useful words to use whenever possible.**
- Read everything that you can get your hands on in Spanish. Newspapers, novels, or non-fiction. Good writing comes from good models.
- Find a Spanish-language musician that you like. Memorize and sing along to his/her/their entire discography. Great source of fun and vocabulary!
- **Never ever study alone when you can study in a group!**
- **If you feel that any aspect of the course is not working for you, share your concerns with me!**

Calendario

Fecha	Tema(s) y Asignaturas
Lunes 27 de agosto	Presentación del curso
Viernes 31 de agosto	Capítulo 1
Lunes 3 de septiembre	¡No hay clase!
Viernes 7 de septiembre	Capítulo 1 (cont'd)
Lunes 10 de septiembre – Viernes 21 de septiembre	Capítulo 2
Lunes 24 de septiembre – Viernes 5 de octubre	Capítulo 3
Lunes 8 de octubre	Fall Break
Viernes 12 de octubre – Viernes 19 de octubre	Capítulo 4
Lunes 22 de octubre – Viernes 2 de noviembre	Capítulo 5
Lunes 5 de noviembre – Lunes 19 de noviembre	Capítulo 7
Viernes 23	¡Día de Acción de Gracias!
Lunes 26 de noviembre – Viernes 7 de diciembre	Capítulo 8
Lunes 10	Evaluaciones del curso
Miércoles, 12 de diciembre, 12:00– 2:30pm	Ensayo final (en clase)

Important Dates

Sept. 7/10/14: Mini-comp #1
(draft/peer edits/final)
Oct. 5/10/15: Comp #1 (draft/
peer edits/final)
Oct. 22/24/29: Mini-comp #2
(draft/peer edits/final)
Nov. 12/16/19: Comp #2 (draft,
peer edits, final)
December 7: Final essay
(proposal)
December 12: Final Essay (in
class)

Relevant Holidays

September 9-10: Rosh Hashanah
September 18-19: Yom Kippur
October 8: Día de la Raza (a.k.a.
Christopher Columbus
was a Bad Dude Day)
October 31: Halloween
November 2: Día de muertos

Tokens

To ease the stress of this course and build in a consistent measure of flexibility—as well as to maximize opportunities for learning!—you will start the course with 5 virtual tokens that can be “redeemed” for some leniency or opportunities for revision. Using a token will allow you to do one of the following:

- Erase an absence (or equivalent) from your record (limit 2);
- Revise and resubmit a final draft or error analysis;
- Turn in a mini-comp or final draft up to 48 hours late.

I will track your tokens throughout the semester. Exchanging them for absences will happen at the end of the semester using whatever remaining tokens you have.



1. Make an appointment with me.
2. Form study groups.
3. Get to know the Reference Desk.
4. Visit the Tutoring Center in Welles 2.
5. Visit the Center for Academic Excellence in Milne 218A.
6. Contact AOP, the Department of Languages and Literatures, or me to find a one-on-one tutor.

The Fine Print¹

Academic Honesty: We will observe the Academic Honesty Policy and its related process as stated in the most current *Undergraduate Bulletin* and in the *Student Handbook*.

Note: Any work submitted must be original work to the best of your ability without the use of tutors, Google Translate or other such aids/tools unless permitted by your instructor. Any unauthorized help or tool use will be considered both plagiarism and cheating because the end work is not yours.

Let me emphasize: using translators as translators is cheating, and using translators instead of dictionaries is a bad idea!!! If you do either, it may not be obvious to you, but it will be obvious to me. Plus, every time you use an online translator instead of a dictionary, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz gives you the death stare.



And for goodness sake, don't plagiarize! The college's punishment for academic dishonesty is not fun! Please contact me right away if you have questions about plagiarism!

Absence Policy: Our courses are interactive spaces where students practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking on a daily basis in order to develop the appropriate skills needed for success. Therefore, students are expected to attend all classes, turn in assignments by the

due date, and complete exams or other types of evaluations at the designated date and time.

If a student notifies the instructor **prior to or immediately following** a missed class or evaluation and provides proper documentation, alternative arrangements might be provided (at the instructor's discretion). The documentation must explain why the student was unable to attend and complete the work at the designated date and time. Students should consult with their instructor at the beginning of the semester about additional policies and expectations.

Electronic Devices Policy: Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor, the use of electronic devices (including audio, video, photography, internet, etc.) is prohibited. Exceptions will be made for students who bring proper documentation justifying their need to use such devices in class. Students who don't abide by this rule will be verbally reminded of it for a first incident and asked to leave the classroom in the event of a second incident.

What's Your Pronoun?

To both be more inclusive and promote the comfort of all everyone in class, let me know if you have a pronoun preference. Just keep in mind that while I will do my best to respect your preference, due to the nature of language courses, sometimes there is no direct equivalent!

Contacting Me

The best way to communicate with me is generally by email. I will do my best to respond promptly, but please be patient after 5:00pm and on weekends and holidays. However, if you have a question about an assignment, please speak to me after class or make an appointment to meet with me during my office hours. I am often in my office outside of class time, and would love to chat even outside of office hours (as long as my door is open).

Title IX Statement

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find a number of resources at geneseo.edu/affirmativeaction/students. Reputable off-campus resources include [Crisis Text Line](#) (text 741-741 to begin session), [Know Your IX](#), [End Rape On Campus](#), [SurvJustice](#), the [Clery Center for Security On Campus](#), and [Not Alone](#).

Accommodations

SUNY Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical (including pregnancy), emotional or learning disabilities. Students must contact the Director in the Office of Disability Services (Dr. Tabitha Buggie-Hunt, 105D Erwin) and their faculty to discuss needed accommodations as early as possible in the semester.

Course Grade Criteria

	A 94-100	A- 90-93
B+ 87-89	B 84-86	B- 80-83
C+ 77-79	C 74-76	C- 70-73
D 60-69	E 0-59	

¹ This syllabus influenced heavily by Tona Hangen's "[Extreme Makeover, Syllabus Edition](#)". All images in the public domain.