

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
www.mlcs.ualberta.ca

**SPAN 407 A1: ADVANCED GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION**  
**2015-2016 (FALL TERM)**

Instructor: Dr. Yvonne Lam  
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Time: TR 12:30-1:50  
Place: T 1-113  
Office Hours: TR 11:00-12:00 or by appointment

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**Course Prerequisite:**

\*3 in SPAN at the 300-level numbered excluding 300 and 306, or consent of Department

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course is designed to further your knowledge of Spanish grammar and to practice different writing styles. The course is divided into two components: grammar and composition. The grammatical component focuses on describing how Spanish is used rather than on learning rules. The composition component emphasizes the creation of texts that are not only grammatically acceptable but also lexically rich and coherently organized.

By the end of the course students will:

- have a better understanding of the linguistic choices available to Spanish speakers
- understand the limitations of grammatical rules
- be able to produce a well-written text in different styles of writing

**Texts:**

No texts required. Worksheets will be posted beforehand on eClass. **You are responsible for bringing a copy of the relevant worksheets to each class.** Additional materials will be distributed by the instructor as needed.

Recommended resources:

Butt, John & Benjamin, Carmen (2011). *A New Reference Grammar of Modern Spanish*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. London: Hodder Education. [previous editions are also sufficient]

A dictionary of synonyms and antonyms for Spanish (several are available in the library)

*Diccionario de la lengua española* (22<sup>nd</sup> edition) and *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (1<sup>st</sup> edition) of the Real Academia Española are available online at <http://www.rae.es/>

**Additional Mandatory Instructional Fees (approved by Board of Governors):**

Yes       No

## Grade Distribution:

Component	Value	Due dates
Grammar assignments	45% (3 assignments x 15% each)	Sept 29, Oct 20, Nov 17
In-class grammar test	15%	Dec 3
Composition rough drafts	4% (4 drafts x 1% each)	Sept 17, Oct 1, Oct 15, Oct 29
Peer-editing	8% (4 sessions x 2% each)	Sept 17, Oct 1, Oct 15, Oct 29
Writing portfolio	3%	Nov 24
Final composition	25%	Nov 24

## Grading:

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages. Letter grades will be assigned only to the final distribution of mark totals for the course. "Grades reflect judgements of student achievement made by instructors and must correspond to the associated descriptor. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class." (University Calendar 23.4(4)) There is no pre-determined quota of letter grades (i.e. a "curve") in a course (University of Alberta Assessment and Grading Policy, <http://www.policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+	95-100%	4.0	<b>Outstanding:</b> Superior performance showing understanding and knowledge of the subject matter far exceeding expectations.
A	90-94%	4.0	<b>Excellent:</b> Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	86-89%	3.7	<b>Very good:</b> Clearly above average performance with complete knowledge of subject matter.
B+	82-85%	3.3	<b>Very good</b>
B	75-81%	3.0	<b>Good:</b> average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	70-74%	2.7	<b>Good</b>
C+	66-69%	2.3	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Basic understanding of the subject matter
C	61-65%	2.0	<b>Satisfactory</b>
C-	58-60%	1.7	<b>Satisfactory</b>
D+	55-57%	1.3	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
D	50-54%	1.0	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
F	0-49%	0.0	<b>Fail:</b> Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

## Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available:

- Exam registry – Students' Union  
[http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services\\_and\\_businesses/services/infolink/exams](http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services_and_businesses/services/infolink/exams)
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class or posted on eClass
- Other
- N/A

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes       No, not needed, no such projects approved

**Community Service Learning Component:**

Required     Optional     None

### **Required Notes:**

Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

### **Academic Integrity:**

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> ) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

### **Academic Honesty:**

All students should consult the information provided by the Office of Judicial Affairs (<http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/Students.aspx>) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook <http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/en/Students/UndergraduateHandbook.aspx> and Information for Students <http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/Students.aspx> ). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” Students should also be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences. While consulting with one’s classmates is not discouraged (keeping in mind that your classmates are not always right!), it is strongly recommended that students prepare their assignments individually in order to avoid the potential for cheating. Students are ultimately responsible for their own work.

Students must also note that assignments that have been submitted or are being submitted for credit in a course may not be submitted for credit in another course and constitutes a form of “cheating”, with resulting negative consequences (Code of Student Behaviour, section 30.3.2(2)d).

An instructor or coordinator who has reason to believe that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the Academic Discipline Process (<http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/TheDisciplineProcess.aspx> ).

## **Learning and Working Environment:**

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students, faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment safe and free of discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels this policy has been or is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Student Ombudservice (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca>). Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110>.

## **Student Accessibility Services:**

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let the instructor know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Accessibility Services, contact their office immediately (1-80 Student Union Building; email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); phone 780-492-3381; online <http://www.ssds.ualberta.ca> ).

## **Recording of Lectures:**

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

## **Attendance and Absences:**

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify the instructor by email within two days. Approval for an excused absence from term work is at the discretion of the instructor. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result consult sections 23.3(1) and 23.5.6 of the University Calendar. Unexcused absences may result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed in or completed as a result. Regardless of the reason for an absence, the student is responsible for the material covered in class.

## **Policy for Late Assignments and Tests:**

All assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the scheduled class time and all tests must be written on the specified date unless arrangements have been made **in advance** with the instructor. An assignment is considered submitted when the instructor has it in hand. In cases of medical or other emergency, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor by email within two days, and written documentation may be requested. The instructor reserves the right not to accept a late assignment or to deduct up to 5% per day of lateness. No assignments will be accepted once they have been returned to the class and/or the answer key posted on eClass. There will be no “extra” assignments for “extra” marks.

## Description of Assignments and Tests:

### GRAMMAR

The grammar assignments and the in-class test will involve analysis of the use of the Spanish structures that we examine in class. Your responses must be written in **Spanish**; however, you will not be graded on the “correctness” of your Spanish, as long as it’s comprehensible.

### COMPOSITIONS

Each composition will be approximately **500 words** in length, typed, double-spaced (including drafts, please). **Please indicate the number of words** at the end of each composition. Remember that longer isn’t necessarily better!

The composition topics will be left open; you may write on any topic you wish, as long as you observe the required stylistic criteria. Given the short length of each composition, it is recommended that you write on topics that you are familiar with. It is not necessary to conduct "research" for the compositions. However, if you do, you must cite your sources; otherwise, you will be committing plagiarism. Also note that while you may write on a topic that you have dealt with in another course, you may not submit the same assignment, or a substantial portion of the assignment, for credit; such an act constitutes an act of cheating. If in doubt, please ask the instructor, or consult the Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook (<http://www.osja.ualberta.ca/en/Students/UndergraduateHandbook.aspx>).

Rough drafts: For each of the four compositions, a rough draft is due on the date indicated. You will receive 1% simply for having prepared a **complete** rough draft (unfinished drafts will receive a grade of 0). The draft must be ready **at the beginning of the class** or no credit will be given, unless arrangements have been made with the instructor before the due date. In the case of illness or other emergency, the student must contact the instructor within two days. For all other absences, no credit will be given for the rough draft.

Peer-editing: During each of the peer-editing sessions scheduled, you are required to comment on **two** of your classmates’ compositions using the comment sheet provided. You will receive 1% for each comment sheet completed, **to a maximum of 8%**. In the case of illness or other emergency, the student must contact the instructor within two days. For all other absences, no credit will be given for peer-editing. **It is your responsibility to keep and submit the comment sheets with your portfolio (see below) so that the peer editors can receive credit for this component.**

Writing portfolio: The writing portfolio will consist of the following components:

- rough draft of each of the four compositions
- peer editors’ comments on the draft of each composition
- **a revised draft of each composition** based on the peer editors’ comments and your own self-editing, **plus** a short description of what you changed in terms of content, organization and overall language use (don’t list every single thing you changed, but rather just give general comments on what you improved). The purpose of these comments is to help you recognize what has improved in your writing and what you need to work on in the future. (3%)

Final composition: From your writing portfolio, you will select **one** of the four compositions for grading. This composition will be worth 25% of your final grade. Attach a note explaining why you feel this is your best piece, and what strengths and/or weaknesses in particular you would like me to look at. See the

evaluation criteria for compositions posted on eClass. The composition will be graded holistically; there is no specific number of points assigned to a particular criterion, as the criteria are not exclusive, but rather the grade is based on the quality of the composition as a whole and how well it meets the criteria in general.

*A piece of advice:* It is in your best interest to work on the compositions throughout the semester. The more time you spend on writing during the semester, the more flexibility you will have at the end when you have to select your best composition.