

Medical Spanish

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: SPAN 3044

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: Spanish

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: Professor María Dolores Romero, Ph.D.

Course Description

This class is designed for students at the advanced Spanish level who want to learn specific medical vocabulary, concepts, and expressions used in Spanish language health systems. An additional goal of the course is to improve students' knowledge about Spanish society and culture because of the key role this plays in working effectively as a health professional in such a context.

Course Objectives

After this course, the students will:

- Be familiar with and be able to use Spanish medical vocabulary in a professional environment
- Understand differences in the use of medical terms between Spain and other Spanish-language countries
- Improve their ability to communicate in Spanish using correct grammatical structure
- Have experience reading texts on medical topics in a variety of Spanish-language publications
- Obtain general understanding on Spanish society and culture useful for relating with patients and other medical personnel
- Have used Spanish in different clinical cases
- Have practiced dealing with “patients” through simulation exercises

- Gain confidence in their understanding and ability to use Spanish in their professional careers by engaging in different situations through role playing, peer exercises, debates, and case studies

Methodology

In class, written and oral exercises will be carried out so that the student practices and assimilates the acquired knowledge. During class, students will speak exclusively in Spanish. Attention will be given to both oral (speaking, listening) and written skills (writing, reading). Emphasis will also be placed on the extension and precision of clinical vocabulary.

In addition to the completion of the midterm/final written exams and oral presentations, students will have daily homework. All students in this course must carry out the assigned activities inside and outside of class.

Course Organization

This course is organized in two integrated parts. The first has a theoretical focus (specific medical Spanish vocabulary/advanced Spanish grammar). In the second, more practical part of the course, students will demonstrate the knowledge acquired in class through role-playing exercises or debates that are carried out in class among peers.

In class, students will carry out formal reflection activities, debates, and reading comprehension tests (both written and oral), and simulations, individual exercises, and tasks in pairs. Also, during the semester, students will interview people from Spain and Latin America on different medical topics. Thus, the students will listen to different accents and approaches within the medical environment.

In addition, students will listen to medical specialists giving presentations and carry out an exchange with them on their areas of expertise. The purpose of these exercises is to have direct contact with Spanish medical professionals who will explain their work and how they relate to patients.

Required Reading / Materials

The professor will provide exercises, interactive readings, or videos to the students through the Moodle platform of the Fundación Ortega Marañón (FOM).

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Attendance, participation, and homework	20%
Oral presentation I	25%
Mid-term written examination	15%
Oral presentation II	25%
Final written examination	15%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

- **Attendance, participation, and assignments (20%).** The participation grade will be based on several components: individual participation, preparation for class as evidenced by in class-performance, tasks in pairs, and use of Spanish in the classroom. For homework, the students should complete the exercises and reading assignments indicated by the professor. *See attached document in Spanish with explanations on several activities.
- **Oral presentations (50%).** All students of this course must prepare two PowerPoint presentations. (1) The first presentation will be about a mild or moderate illness. The students must explain the characteristics, symptoms, remedies, etc. of one illness. The presentation should also contain relevant information about how the doctor should deal with this illness. Finally, this presentation will include a hypothetical dialogue between a doctor and the patient. (2) In the second presentation the student must talk about a serious disease and explain its characteristics, symptoms, remedies, etc. In addition, the presentation should include the type of data a medical specialist would use to make a diagnosis. The grade in both presentations will be based on clarity in the exposition, use of broad relevant vocabulary, coherence and fluency in speech, and ability to engage with other students and the professor in a question-and-answer session following each presentation.
- **Written examinations (30%).** During the semester, students will take two scheduled exams: one mid-term and one final exam.

Course Content

Unit 1

Characteristics of the Spanish Medical System

- Introduction to and explanation of the program
- General introduction to the Spanish healthcare system
- Differences in the use of medical terms between Spain and other Spanish-language countries
- Cultural norms in Spanish language medical contexts: e.g., *Tú/Usted* and *Vosotros/Ustedes*
- Interactive exercises
- Medical terminology: main training process
- **Reading and discussion: la organización del cuerpo humano**

Unit 2

Mild & Moderate Illness

- Mild and moderate illness vocabulary
- ***Enfermedades leves y moderadas más comunes de los españoles: hipertensión, colesterol alto, ansiedad...***
- Review the use of Preterit tenses: *Preterito Perfecto; Indefinido vs. Imperfecto*
- **Reading and discussion: hipertensión arterial**
- Role playing

Unit 3

Aspects of General Practice

- Goals and principles of primary health care
- Services of general practice
- English and Spanish medical terms: differences and similarities
- Writing medical reports
- *The subjunctive (Part I): Express influence and emotional reaction*
- **Reading and discussion: niveles altos de colesterol en la sangre**
- Nonverbal communication between patient and doctor

Unit 4

General Practitioner

- Reading and discussion. *Ansiedad: otros nombres, miedo, nerviosismo*
- Conference by visiting general practitioner
- Question and debate with visiting doctor
- Telemedicine: methods and modalities
- **Oral presentations I**
- Midterm exam

Unit 5

Serious Diseases

- Serious diseases vocabulary
- Symptoms and remedies of some serious diseases
- **Reading and discussion: ¿qué es un coronavirus?**
- COVID-19 symptoms, protection measures, treatment, tracking, strains, vaccines, etc.
- *The subjunctive (Part II)*; talk about possibilities and opinions
- *(Infinitivo vs. Indicativo/Subjuntivo)*
- Interactive exercises

Unit 6

Aspects of Specialized Medicine

- Classification of medical specialization
- Activities of clinical specialization
- **Reading and discussion: ¿qué es el cáncer? Tipos de cáncer**
- Types and use of Spanish conditional. Express hypothetical situations.
- Interactive exercises
- Advantages and disadvantages of telemedicine
- Role playing

Unit 7

Specialist Doctor

- **Reading and discussion: Infarto de miocardio**
- Conference by visiting specialist doctor
- Question and debate session with visiting doctor

- **Oral presentation II**
- **Final examination**

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. The professor reserves the right to modify the contents of this program if the dynamics of the course or the needs of the students so require. Any changes will be notified to students well in advance.

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).