

Beginning Spanish I

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: MADR 1001

Number of Credits: 5

Language of Instruction: Spanish

Contact Hours: 75

Instructor: Ainoa Polo Sánchez; ainoapolo@gmail.com

Course Description

This course aims to develop a basic understanding of Spanish grammar and vocabulary, enhancing the four language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—familiarizing students with the culture of Spain and Spanish America, and encouraging interactions in real communicative situations.

The focus will be on communication, and topics will include the ability to ask and answer questions relating to personal characteristics, needs, and items; to recognize expressions of formal and informal social interaction; to request information in various settings (e.g., shopping, restaurants, weather, etc.); to describe objects, places, and events in the present and past (basic); and to indicate preferences and personal taste, among others. The course is designed to facilitate the language acquisition process within an intensive immersion context.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand and produce written and oral Spanish at a beginner level enhancing all four skills—reading, writing, listening, speaking—bringing their communicative competence to the CEFR A1 Level.
- Expand their knowledge about basic grammar and vocabulary about their immediate personal context.
- Use basic language strategies that would facilitate their daily life interactions with native speakers.

- Establish connections between the Spanish socio-cultural reality and classroom contents.

Methodology

An action-oriented approach is utilized, in which the student is the center of the language class. The class is organized around a task-based approach, with emphasis on the use of language and communication.

The language of instruction is Spanish (English will be used if needed in some specific moments), and the course implements a communicative approach via task-based activities that exemplify real communicative situations. Grammar principles are also introduced, but class time revolves around these task-based activities which mainly focus on the development of the students' listening and speaking skills.

Required Reading / Materials

Find below the name of the textbook that we will use during the course. The learning material focuses on the variant of the Spanish spoken in Spain.

Aula internacional Plus 1 - Edición híbrida - Libro del alumno. Editorial Difusión.

Autores Garmendia Iglesias, J. Agustín- Soriano Escolar, Carmen- García Rodríguez, M. Eva- Corpas Viñals, Jaime- Neus Sans, S.L. ISBN: 9788419236043

This hybrid version of the textbook is priced almost the same as the standard edition but includes the added benefit of access to the publisher's online platform for one year, where students can participate in various online activities. The standard version is also valid.

Additional course materials and online activities compiled by the professor will be available every week via Moodle to improve the language skills.

Recommended Bibliography & Websites

Castro, F.: *Uso de la gramática española.* Editorial Edelsa, Madrid, 2011.

We will work with some exercises from this book that the teacher will share via Moodle. Find below some useful platforms to improve your Spanish:

- [Online Spanish dictionary](#)
- [Online dictionary](#)
- [Online activities with videos & visual grammar](#)
- [Videos to learn Spanish: Video ELE A1](#)

- [Videos to learn Spanish: NEEM A1 and A2](#)

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

Find below a summary of how grades are weighted. Active participation and the completion of all assigned tasks are crucial for the rapid development of oral expression. In class, we will create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, with interesting and practical tasks for life in immersion in Madrid so that students feel comfortable and lose their fear of speaking.

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Class participation and Tasks	20%
Oral assignment: Mi familia o Mis amigos	10%
Written assignment: Mi rutina diaria	10%
Midterm	30%
Final exam	30%
Overall grade	100%

Assignments

Written Exams (60%)

During the semester, students will take two scheduled written exams: midterm (30%) and final (30%). The professor will provide a Study Guide with information about each exam on the Campus platform. Additionally, she will propose review activities in class and online quizzes at the end of each unit.

Oral Presentation (10%)

Students in this course must prepare an oral presentation with relevant graphic/visual support to apply the content covered in class, which they will present to their family or friends. They may use photos and a brief script, which they should not read from. The student will receive a study guide to prepare the presentation with the key points.

Written Assignment (10%)

Students in this course must prepare a written assignment about their daily routine in Spain and in the United States to put into practice the content covered in class. The student will receive a study guide to prepare the assignment with the key points.

Active Participation and Assigned Tasks (20%)

Completing daily assignments is essential to being prepared for the next class. The grade is based on several components: individual participation, preparation for class as demonstrated by the completion of assignments, and the use of Spanish in the classroom.

Course Content

The content for level A1 is spread across 9 units in the book. The book always serves as a reference for classwork. Not all activities from each unit will be completed. The schedule is approximate. We will do a recap lesson before midterm exam and final exam.

Unit 0

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **Aprender a presentarnos: preguntas básicas**
- **Recursos para preguntar cosas en clase**
- **Saludar y despedirse**
- **Los números**
- **El abecedario**
- **Sonidos del español**

Unit 1

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **Dar y pedir datos personales: preguntas básicas: hablar sobre uno mismo y sobre otros**
- **Los verbos ser, tener y llamarse**
- **Nacionalidades y profesiones**

- El número: singular y plural
- El género: masculino y femenino
- Los artículos: determinados e indeterminados
- Las tres conjugaciones (-ar, -er, -ir)
- Los tratamientos en español: *tú* o *usted*

Unit 2

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **Hablar de las actividades de ocio**
- **Expresar intenciones: verbo querer**
- **Explicar los motivos de lo que hacemos**
- Hablar de lo que sabemos hacer
- El número y la concordancia
- El artículo determinado: el, la, los, las
- Los pronombres personales sujeto
- El presente de indicativo: verbos regulares e irregulares
- Usos de *a*, *con*, *de*, *por*, *para* y *porque*

Unit 3

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **Describir lugares: la clase**
- **Expresar existencia y ubicación**
- **Hablar del clima: el tiempo**
- El verbo *estar*
- Usos de *hay*

- Partículas interrogativas: *qué, cuál(es), cuántos/as, dónde, cómo*
- El superlativo

Unit 4

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **Comprar en tiendas: preguntar por productos, pedir precios, etc.**
- **Hablar de preferencias**
- **Expresar necesidad: *necesito + infinitivo***
- **Expresar obligación: *tener que + infinitivo***
- Los colores y las prendas de vestir
- Los demostrativos: *este, ese, aquel*
- El verbo *preferir*
- El/la/los/las + adjetivo
- *Qué + sustantivo / cuál / cuáles*
- Los números a partir del 100
- El verbo *ir*

Unit 5

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- **La familia: hablar de relaciones personales**
- **Hablar del aspecto y del carácter (adjetivos)**
- **Expresar y contrastar gustos e intereses**
- **Preguntar sobre gustos**
- Los adjetivos y pronombre posesivos
- El verbo *gustar*
- Los cuantificadores: *muy, bastante, un poco*

- Usos de *también*, *tampoco*, *a mí sí*, *a mí no*

Unit 6

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- Expresar frecuencia: días de la semana y partes del día
- Preguntar y decir la hora
- Hablar de actividades diarias y hábitos
- Presente de indicativo de verbos irregulares
- Los verbos reflexivos
- Usos de *yo también*, *yo tampoco*, *yo sí*, *yo no*
- Secuenciar acciones: Primero/Después/Luego

Unit 7

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- Pedir y dar información sobre comida
- Ir el restaurante
- Hablar de hábitos y gustos sobre comida
- La forma impersonal con *se*
- Los verbos *poner* y *traer*
- Los pronombres de OD: *lo*, *la*, *los*, *las*

Unit 8

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- Describir lugares: barrios y ciudades
- Hablar de lo que más nos gusta de un lugar
- Adjetivos para describir pueblos, barrios y ciudades

- Los cuantificadores: algún/a, ningún/a, poco/a, bastante, mucho/a, varios/as
- Preposiciones y adverbios de lugar: a, en, al lado de, lejos, cerca

Unit 9

Content: Functional Grammar & Vocabulary

- Hablar de experiencias pasadas: Pretérito perfecto
- Hablar de acciones en el pasado: Pretérito indefinido

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students must arrive on time and attend all classes. Attendance is mandatory and affects the final grade. It is understood that emergencies and other personal situations may arise during the program. Therefore, each student is allowed a maximum of **two (2) excused absences** per class per semester, which can be used when necessary. Absences are considered excused if they are due to an official program conflict, such as appointments with internship centers.

Each student is responsible for their attendance and classwork. Missing a class, whether excused or not, does NOT justify skipping an assignment, submitting work late, or having the opportunity to retake an exam.

If absences exceed two classes, there may be deductions in the final grade. Professors reserve the right to lower the grade by up to 5 percentage points for each absence (for example, from 92% (A-) to 87% (B+) as a final grade).

Out of respect for classmates and the professor, tardiness may also be penalized. After 10 minutes into the class, the professor may choose to either: a) not admit the student, or b) admit the student but mark their attendance as a "half-class absence." Multiple tardies may be combined to constitute an unexcused absence.

Other specific circumstances or absences must be addressed directly with the professors. If there is any disagreement between students and professors regarding excused absences, please inform the program director, who will have the final say on whether an absence is considered excused or not.

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](#).