SPNS 321.01: Advanced Conversations

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REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Recommended materials:
(Collins, Simon & Schuster International or Larousse).

COURSE DESCRIPTION/GOALS:
The emphasis in SPNS 321 is on improving communicative oral competency in Spanish by
providing a space for regular oral practice of basic patterns and vocabulary while
exchanging views on a broad range of subjects of current interest. SPNS 321 offers a review
of the most important topics in Spanish grammar, expansion of your active vocabulary with
readings and written exercises besides improving oral comprehension by listening to live
speech, and short videos. To do well in this course, you need to have already taken at least
FOUR SEMESTERS of COLLEGE SPANISH (or the equivalent) as well as participate in lively
conversations in class. Your oral Spanish should improve significantly during this semester.
Toward the end of the course you will be required to give a fifteen-minute oral
presentation on a topic of your choice (in consultation with me) that is not covered in class
and without using any written material(s).

Course Outcomes:
After completing SPNS321, the student can expect to be able to:

1) Carry on a conversation in Spanish both in formal and informal occurrences on any
   familiar topics
2) Use common verb tenses with familiarity and fluency
3) Express your opinions and convictions in current events by using key vocabulary to
   comment successfully on a diverse variety of topics in Spanish
4) React with ease to most unanticipated circumstances and unexpected situations
5) Be able to sustain discussions with confidence regarding a variety of topics, such as
   local, regional and even international news and matters of concern
6) Surprise the classmates with a fifteen minutes oral presentation without the use of
   written materials on a theme related to the Hispanic world
7) Understand special grammar points considered difficult, like ser vs estar,
   subjunctive vs. indicative, preterit vs. imperfect, conditional clauses, the use of
   prepositions, etc.
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

ASSESSMENT: There are the subjective and objective foundations assigned towards your progress and final grade:

- Participation/Attendance: 15%
- Preparation/Homework: 20% (Bienvenidas/tareas)
- Midterm: 10%
- Group Presentation: 20%
- Final Oral Presentation/Project: 20%
- Final Exam: 15%

GRADING SCALE:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>83-86</td>
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<td>0-59</td>
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</tbody>
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ATTENDANCE is essential to acquire the skills needed to learn a language and is also related to participation, preparation and work in general. Students are responsible for assignments they miss. Your cumulative final grade will be lowered by two points for every absence after the third absence. If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate and find out what was done in the class you missed and what is due in the next class. Coming to class is not only important for your grade, but as a courtesy to your classmates, who benefit from the interaction with their peers.

PARTICIPATION AND PREPARATION: A satisfactory participation and preparation grade assumes that you come to class each day prepared to be actively engaged in all class activities. You will have the responsibility of reading over a new grammar point or learning new vocabulary on your own before we go over it in class so that class time can be used to answer questions and practice but not to reiterate what is explained in the book. As part of your participation grade each student will sing up to give the Bienvenida at the beginning of a class during the semester. The Bienvenida will take 3-4 minutes and must include the following: 1) a brief welcome to the classmates, 2) the date and weather, 3) a current event in the city, state or world, 4) some answers to get-to-know-you questions posed by your classmates. NO WRITTEN NOTES.

GROUP SKITS: we will have group presentations/skits. We will determine the order of presentations in advance. You and two other classmates will get together outside of class and decide on a topic for your presentation. (Suggestions include a parody of the material we cover in class or other topics of interest to you and your classmates: politics, art, civil rights- you and your classmates may even write and perform an original play). Make sure
that you have my approval on your topic before beginning. You will then perform a skit about that topic for the rest of the class that lasts at least ten minutes but no more than fifteen minutes. You may not read anything nor may you have notes; everything you say will be well-rehearsed. You will be graded on creativity, length, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. If any member of your group is absent on the day of the presentation, you must be able to improvise. If you miss your group presentation, you MUST provide a documented, verifiable excuse to be allowed to do an additional individual oral presentation to make up for your group skit. Otherwise, your grade will be a 0 for your group presentation.

**INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS/PROJECTS:** During the last two weeks of the semester you will be doing a fifteen-minute individual oral presentation. The topic of your presentation must pertain to some cultural aspect of the Hispanic world. Possible topics could include a famous painter, muralist, writer, or musician. You MUST check with me before you begin. I would like to encourage you to use the vocabulary and grammar that you are familiar with when doing your presentation.

Your presentation is much more than just your personal opinion. You need to analyze and synthesize. Be sure that you have at least three sources (an article, a book, a review, an essay, etc.) on which you can rely. You must turn in a written bibliography the day that you present. You will also need an insightful conclusion. Please do not abruptly end saying that you have run out of time. Plan your talk so that you can offer a well thought out summary that highlights the mayor points of your presentation. You will also need to write unfamiliar vocabulary on the board so that your classmates can better understand your presentation. Your talk should last fifteen minutes. On the day of your presentation, you MUST turn in a detailed outline to me before you begin. Should you forget part of your talk, I will be able to help you. You may not read anything nor may you use notes. Everything you say will be well rehearsed.

Please take notes during each presentation as the material that your classmates cover may appear on the final exam.

**EXAMS:** The midterm and final exams will cover the material of the textbook, and they will have a vocabulary section, a grammar section, and an essay.

**EXAMS DATES:**
- Midterm: March 9th
- Final Exam: May 9th

There are no make-ups for the midterm. If you miss it, your final exam grade will be duplicated in its place.
DISABILITY SERVICES FOR STUDENTS
If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, contact the Disability Services for Students (DSS), located in the Lommasson Center, Room 154, x2243. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and DSS. The instructor will request a letter from DSS verifying your right to reasonable accommodation.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Academic misconduct is subject to penalty. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. Please note that the code includes (but is not limited to) plagiarism, copying from another student’s work, giving examination information to others, etc. The Code is available online for review at: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

STUDENT CONDUCT
“Faculty members have the independent authority to exclude a student from any class session in which the student displays disruptive behavior that threatens the learning environment or safety and well-being of others in the classroom.” http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php
Please note that this includes hate speech, disruptive talking, disrespectful behavior, etc.

IMPORTANT NOTICES
No grade of “I” (incomplete) will be given.
For information on how to drop/add this class or change your grading option, please reference the Registrar's website. http://www.umt.edu/registrar/default.php
Personal situations will not be addressed in the classroom. Please make the effort to discuss your concerns with the instructor during office hours.