Comprehensive Course Syllabus

Course Title
Spanish III (WLG 230)
2009-2010

Course Description:
In Spanish Level III, students continue to build communication skills developed in Levels I and II. Specifically, students participate actively in extended oral and written discourse, using compound and complex sentences to provide information in a coherent and fluent manner. Students narrate and describe past and present events; they predict future events. They develop critiquing skills. Students explore options in a given situation, and handle difficulties and unexpected events. They also learn to initiate and sustain a conversation, discussion, or debate. Students demonstrate these language functions in various contexts (personal, social, political, socio-economic, scientific, literary, artistic, historical and philosophical). Students keep a journal throughout the school year as a reflective process and assessment tool. Some of the topics covered in Spanish III are music, Latin-American cultures and their celebration of death, family, friendship and love, politics, environment, and poetry.

INSTRUCTOR
• Name: Sra. Maria Atienza
• Office number: A 134
• Telephone number: 630-907-5877
• E-mail address: mgabas@imsa.edu

Meeting Days, Time and Room(s):
Section I: A/C days 7:30-8:40 am; and B/D days 7:30-8:15 am
Section II: A/C days 9:35-10:45 am; and B/D days 9:35-10:20 am
Section III: A/C days 2:15-3:25 pm; and B/D days 2:15-3 pm
Room A 135

Text(s) / Materials:
No single textbook will be used. The instructor will provide all materials including many teacher-generated handouts, different literary selections, news articles, reading books, etc. You are expected to have:
• your own Spanish-English dictionary (if you have a choice of editions, we recommend *The University of Chicago Spanish Dictionary*),
• a 3-ring binder with loose-leaf paper and 7 dividers: *composiciones*, *gramática*, *tarea*, *lecturas*, *vocabulario*, *críticas*, *evaluaciones*.
• a journal or notebook,
• black or blue pen and a different color pen for corrections and editing, and
• one or two highlighters for reading comprehension and vocabulary.
Essential Experimental Aspect:

At the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®, one of our main objectives in teaching foreign languages is for students to engage, on a deep, intellectual, and personal level, in new ways of seeing, thinking, interacting, and communicating. In order for this objective to be realized, students must encounter a communicative system and cultural perspectives different from their own. It is essential for our students’ growth that they engage in immersion-based learning experiences where they are supported in going beyond normal comfort levels, and where they learn to function within a system that is unfamiliar to them, thereby developing real-world proficiency in another language and in other cultures.

As a result of language learning, our students think and act globally, are cosmopolitan in their outlook, and international in their understanding. They will be ethical leaders who advance the human condition. When one speaks another language, he or she thinks and acts differently. One’s perspective is widened and horizons are expanded. Students have a greater capacity to empathize, to make friends, to imagine “what it would be like” to be in another person's shoes. Imagination is stretched. Students no longer see "aliens" or "others", but rather they see real people with differences and similarities. If students stop studying a language, they may forget the words and grammar details. However, learning another language and its culture(s), learning how to effectively communicate with other human beings, and learning how meaning is constructed through words other than one’s native tongue, will remain for a lifetime.

The IMSA World Language Learning Standards, in which the five unifying concepts (communication, cultures, communities, comparisons, and connections) are embedded, are the guiding principles of the program. Our standards are adapted from Standards for foreign language learning: Preparing for the 21st century, National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996.

Students studying foreign language at IMSA will:

A. communicate in multiple modes (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational).
B. understand the relationships among the practices, products, and perspectives of the cultures studied.
C. reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.
D. acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.
E. understand the nature of language through comparisons of their own language and the language studied.
F. understand the concept of culture through comparisons of their own culture and the cultures studied.
G. use knowledge of language and culture both within and beyond the school setting for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

In addition, the WL team guides students in the development of their metacognitive skills, their ability to collaborate, and their ability to accurately assess learning--skills which are applicable to all of their learning experiences.
Standards of Significant Learning Outcomes:
The following SSL’s, correlated with learning outcomes, will be targeted and assessed in this course, according to the following pattern: FA (formally assessed), IA (informally assessed).

IA. Students are expected to develop automaticity in skills, concepts, and processes that support and enable complex thought by
- engaging in oral and written discourse FA, IA
- providing and obtaining information FA, IA
- expressing feelings and emotions FA, IA,
- exchanging opinions FA, IA
- decoding written and spoken language on a variety of topics FA, IA
- presenting information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics FA
- controlling the linguistic system (syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics, lexis) FA
- using strategies that enhance the effectiveness of communication FA
- compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background FA
- recognizing and interpreting how cultural perspectives, embedded in the artifacts of the culture, give meaning to language FA
- directly accessing knowledge and information generated by other countries and cultures IA
- communicating with people from other countries and cultures IA

II. A. Students are expected to identify unexamined cultural, historical, and personal assumptions and misconceptions that impede and skew inquiry by
- recognizing the existence of other peoples' world views, their unique way of life, and the patterns of behavior which order their world FA
- demonstrating mutual cultural understanding and respect FA, IA
- assessing the linguistic and cultural differences that contribute to the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures FA, IA
- identifying patterns among language systems FA
- recognizing that language learning is not simply a word-for-word translation process, but rather the acquisition of an entirely new set of concepts FA, IA

IV.B. Students are expected to write and speak with power, economy, and elegance by
- engaging in oral and written discourse on given topics FA, IA
- providing and obtaining information FA, IA
- expressing feelings and emotions FA, IA
- exchanging opinions FA, IA
- decoding written and spoken language on a variety of topics FA, IA
- presenting information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics FA
controlling the linguistic system (syntax, morphology, phonology, semantics, lexis) FA
- using strategies that enhance the effectiveness of communication FA, IA
- compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background FA, IA

IV.D. Students are expected to develop an aesthetic awareness and capability by

- recognizing that language learning is not simply a word-for-word translation process, but rather the acquisition of an entirely new set of concepts FA, IA
- recognizing that people of other cultures view the world from a perspective different from their own IA
- identifying patterns of behavior among people of other cultures IA
- applying knowledge of the perspectives, artifacts, and practices of a culture IF
- experiencing more fully the artistic and cultural creations of other cultures IF

V.A. Students are expected to identify, understand, and accept the rights and responsibilities of belonging to a diverse community by

- recognizing the existence of other peoples’ world views, their unique way of life, and the patterns of behavior which order their world IA
- applying knowledge of the perspectives, artifacts, and practices of a culture IA
- assessing the linguistic and cultural differences that contribute to the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures IF
- engaging in oral and written discourse IF
- providing and obtaining information IF
- expressing feelings and emotions IF
- exchanging opinions IA
- compensating for linguistic inadequacies and cultural differences when they occur, and applying knowledge of cultural perspectives governing interactions between individuals of different age, status, and background IA
- explaining the process of stereotyping and the role stereotypes play in forming and sustaining prejudice IA
- demonstrating mutual cultural understanding and respect IA
- engaging in meaningful direct interactions with members of other cultures IA
- sharing their knowledge of language and culture IF

Instructional Design and Approach:

World Languages teachers establish an immersion classroom where the goal is correct, uninhibited, creative expression and communication in the target language. "Communication" includes speaking, reading, listening, and writing within a cultural context. We denote, and help students to develop skills in, three modes of communication: presentational, interpersonal, and interpretive. Our instructional design provides the opportunity for students to develop core competency learner characteristics. We empower and enable students to discover what they personally need in order to acquire and use a foreign language; we place responsibility on the individual student to
collaborate, utilize problem-solving skills, and critical and creative thinking. We ask students to persist through frustration, and to maintain a tolerance for ambiguity; we demand that they look at problematic situations from various viewpoints and perspectives, and we design instruction so that they must develop and go beyond automaticity, actively construct meaning, seek connections and interactions that deepen understanding, and appreciate the value of knowledge from multiple sources and perspectives. We help students develop the cultural sensitivity that is necessary to guard against miscommunication or misunderstanding. We assume that students will display the motivation, maturity, and personal responsibility necessary to participate in this sort of language acquisition environment.

Spanish III is built around a premise of “learning together” in which students become active participants in every aspect of learning and instruction. In practice, this means that:

- a) active participation in all learning activities is required and expected,
- b) frequent and ongoing interaction with other students and the instructor are integral components of each lesson,
- c) pair activities and small group interactions for practicing the language are the most common instructional arrangements,
- d) frequent choice of instructional formats (individual, pair, small group), assessment types (presentations, skits, discussions) and media (audio, video, pictures, music, etc.) are built into the course,
- e) self-reflection is promoted by means of self-assessments for video projects, the design of rubrics by the students themselves, the administration of a learning-styles questionnaire, and the identification of strategies to enhance individual learning.

Students are always involved in assessing their own learning. Video assessments, beginning with a baseline video in the first few weeks of instruction, identifies areas of individual strength, and sets personalized goals for future performance.

**Student Expectations:**

One of the objectives of the World Language Team is to enable students to discover what they personally need in order to communicate in a foreign language. This places a greater responsibility on the individual student and assumes that you will display the motivation, maturity and personal responsibility necessary to participate in this sort of language acquisition environment.

You are expected to be in class daily, be punctual, be well prepared with all your class materials, and participate fully in class activities. Unnecessary use of English in class will have a detrimental effect on your language acquisition and your grade. In addition, you are expected to speak Spanish informally with your instructor, classmates and upper level students and with anyone who speaks the language. Remember, practice makes perfect!

Timely completion of homework is essential for successful participation in class. You should understand that assignments are not necessarily only written documents, but also include thinking about the language, practicing, learning, studying, reading, and
memorizing. All assignments must be handed in on time. If you miss a class, call or e-mail a classmate or your instructor to find out what was assigned for the next day.

The amount of time outside of class that a student needs to spend in order to acquire proficiency in Spanish varies from individual to individual. A reasonable expectation is 20 to 30 minutes per day. Shorter daily study sessions are much more conducive to language acquisition than one or two longer periods during the week.

Active class participation is essential to your success and to the success of the course.

Academic Integrity
I follow the Academy's academic honesty policy; refer to the Student Handbook/Planner pages 9-10). We will discuss academic honesty in class.

Active class participation is essential to your success and to the success of the course.

Attendance Policy
The WL Team follows the Academy’s attendance policy (pages 11-13). It states that three unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence, and four unexcused absences may result in the student being withdrawn from the course.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to communicate with me to obtain the necessary information/class work/homework, etc.

Assessment Practices, Procedures, and Processes:

Assessment in Spanish III involves both the teacher and the student. The teacher provides regular feedback on student performance. The student follows through on the teacher’s feedback, and engages in self–assessment. Emphasis is on continued efforts to improve student’s language proficiency.

Students are assessed daily on the production of written and spoken language, and on reading and listening comprehension. Essential elements of effective communication are the creative use of vocabulary in context, and grammatical and syntactical accuracy. Written assessments include journal entries, compositions, short writes, summaries, peer responses, quizzes, and exams. Written performance assessment includes orthography, diacritical markings, legibility, punctuation, organization, and style. Oral performance is assessed through informal conversations, individual and group work, and formal and informal in–class presentations, and video and audio recorded assessments. Oral performance assessment includes quality of pronunciation, intonation, and fluency.

Oral assessments

There will be formal and informal oral presentations including, but not limited to, skits, debates, films and readings discussions, demonstration speeches, news reports, PP presentations, teaching assignments, poetry declamation, etc. Some of these presentations will be video recorded for self-assessment purposes.

Formal video assessments take place throughout the year (one each unit), with the fourth quarter’s video assessment being the oral component of the final exam.
Quizzes
There will be frequent graded and non-graded quizzes. Most of them will be used as pre-assessments for essential learning in each lesson of study.

Homework
There will be daily meaningful homework in different formats. Homework is an essential part of your learning experience: do it with that purpose in mind. If you need help with it, come and see me before your next class.

The following are the cut-off values for quarter and semester grades as calculated by PowerSchool:
A    92.5
A-   90
B+  87.5
B   82.5
B-  80
C+  77.5
C   72.5
C-  70

Grading Scale (approximate):
Oral assessments (video assessments, class oral production, presentations, skits):      20%
Written assessments (compositions, short stories, poems, news reports, and exams): 20%
Comprehension (listening and reading) assessments:         20%
Homework, cultural assessments, miscellaneous:         10%
Quizzes              10%
Formative assessments (oral and written class activities/work completed)      20%

Sequence of Topics and Activities
Further explanation, including targeted SSLs, grammar, vocabulary, and culture, will be provided at the start of each unit. Number of weeks indicated for each unit is an estimate.

   Video assessment: 1) group presentation on a topic related to the theme of the unit. For example: Instruments in a Mariachi band. Traditional dances of a target country, etc.

II. *La familia, la amistad y el amor. La casa en Mango Street.* Family, friendship, and love. The House in Mango Street (6 weeks)
   Video assessment: a group debate on a controversial family/adolescent issue.

III. *Las culturas precolombinas en América Latina. El significado y la celebración de la muerte.* Ancient precolombian cultures in Latin America. Celebration and meaning of death. (7 weeks)
Video assessment options: a group presentation on a topic related to the theme of the unit. For example: a discussion, interview, etc. on the mummification process during the Inca Empire.

IV. El medioambiente. Problemas, consecuencias y soluciones. The environment: problems, consequences, and solutions (6 weeks)
   Video assessment: An open discussion or debate on a relevant issue affecting our environment and a practical solution to solve it.

V. Poesía y poetas hispanos. Poetry in Spanish (5 weeks)
   Video assessment: 1) Analysis and critique of a poem including connections with the poet’s personal background.

VI. Las noticias: periódicos y revistas. News: newspapers and magazines. Formats, sections, editorials, etc. analysis and critiques (4 weeks)
   Video assessment: News broadcast simulating a Spanish channel

To reference IMSA’s World Language Learning Standards: 
www.imsa.edu/learning/standards/wlang.php