

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH
LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

CARLETON LANGUAGE LEARNING MISSION STATEMENT

Language is the way in which members of a culture organize and encode their thoughts, allowing them to communicate with each other. Moreover, language shapes one's relationship with other people, and different languages will shape that relationship differently.

At Carleton we think that a liberally educated student should understand the way language is embedded within cultural practices and worldviews. To this end, we expect students to cross linguistic borders, experiencing another language "from the inside", learning to perform a language as well as understand it. In addition to the practical benefits a degree of competency in a language can offer (including basic communication, the ability to read foreign texts, and more), the study of a foreign language provides students with a fuller understanding of the role played by their own native tongue. Also, crucially, it requires each student to experience the challenges of dealing with other cultures and peoples on their own terms. Language learning at Carleton, therefore, aligns well with, and advances, the stated values and goals of the college's Mission Statement.

SPANISH LEARNING AT CARLETON

The Spanish Department seeks to provide students with proficiency in Spanish as a language, as well as to offer them in-depth study of the literature and culture of other peoples in Spanish.

Students continue or embark on the study of Spanish because, in general, they want to achieve fluency in a foreign or a second language. Spanish is one of the most frequently studied second languages in the world; it can be beneficial to learn it to enter professions in business, law, journalism, international affairs, science, social services, education or politics. At the same time, considering that over 10% of the population of the U.S. is of Hispanic origin, the Department seeks to affirm, within the liberal arts tradition of the college, the importance of Iberian and Latin American cultures for a nation which is increasingly aware of the wealth of its own rich Hispanic heritage. Also, whatever one's major or immediate interests, the pleasure of reading great literature in the original Spanish can remain as a meaningful experience throughout life. Finally, we believe that the knowledge a person can acquire about other peoples and cultures while studying a second language helps her or him better understand her or his own self and culture.

In our language, literature and culture courses, we address universal themes and concerns, but we also try to uncover what is peculiarly "Hispanic", "Spanish" or "Latin American" about the items we deal with. In the Spanish 101-204 sequence, students study the full range of

grammar as well as a substantial vocabulary, based on oral and written sources. At the end of four terms our students should be able to communicate in Spanish using both simple and compound sentences. They should also have acquired a substantial everyday vocabulary and be competent to function in a variety of cultural situations. They should also be able to read and appreciate short literary texts and other cultural items produced in Spanish. These learning outcomes are assessed primarily through assignments embedded in the appropriate courses. Some Spanish 204 sections include a service-learning component, aimed at enriching students' understanding of course material by integrating academic study with public service. While in most of our upper-division courses the approach is mainly literary, we always attempt to open up the discussion and reflection to an interdisciplinary dimension. Representative works are analyzed and discussed not only for their aesthetic worth, but as human documents that speak clearly of the social political, economic, philosophical, religious, psychological and general cultural reality of each region or country.

The Spanish department offers a varied curriculum that is designed to achieve these goals for both majors and non-majors, supplemented by extracurricular programs, and one academic program in Mexico and one in Madrid.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT IN THE LANGUAGE SEQUENCE: SPANISH 101 THROUGH 204

This sequence is designed to provide students with a usable proficiency in Spanish. Students are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in Spanish.

Speaking

Expected Outcomes. Students should be able to communicate orally in a variety of social situations. More specifically students can:

- Initiate, sustain, and close a conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics.
- Narrate and describe in present, past, and future, on a variety of familiar topics.

Assessment of Speaking Skills

- Students are evaluated by the instructor daily when participating in small groups and pairs.
- Students are evaluated periodically on more formal presentations to their peers.
- Students' oral skills are evaluated at the end of the sequence in an oral exam given individually or in pairs on topics that have been studied in class.

Listening

Expected Outcomes. Students should be able to understand discourse on a variety of topics dealing with present, past, and future situations. More specifically students can:

- Understand explanations, short lectures, questions and directions given by the instructor or peers.
- Understand a face-to-face conversation with a native speaker on subjects related to family, school, work and other topics of interest.
- Understand classroom presentations given by an instructor and peers.
- Understand technologically mediated discourse by native speakers.

Assessment of Listening Skills

- Students are evaluated by the instructor daily when participating in small groups and pairs.
- Students are able to answer questions orally and in written form.
- Students' aural skills are evaluated at the end of the sequence in an oral exam given individually or in pairs on topics that have been studied in class.

Writing

Expected Outcomes. Students should be able to fulfill a variety of practical writing needs. More specifically students can:

- Write journals, and take notes on familiar topics, write short paraphrases and summaries of personal, work and school experiences.

Assessment of Writing Skills

- Students write journals, diary entries and summaries on topics discussed in class which are evaluated by the instructor.
- Students' writing skills are also evaluated on exams.

Reading

Expected Outcomes. Students should be able to read a variety of texts. More specifically students can:

- Understand simple authentic texts that concern basic personal and social needs about which they already have some knowledge.
- Understand (without complete accuracy) more sophisticated texts that include description and narration. Types of texts include newspaper and Internet articles, other cultural products, and literary texts of varying lengths (poems, short stories, play, novelette).

Assessment of Reading Skills

Students' reading skills are assessed through classroom discussion, journals and written and oral exams.

The Culture Component

Expected Outcomes for the Culture Component

- Students should demonstrate an understanding of Hispanic cultures and perspectives based on the cultures' practices and products.
- Students should be able to present information about the perspectives, practices and products of Hispanic cultures to their classmates along with appropriate commentary and analysis and reflection.

Assessment for the Culture Component

- Students should be able to cite key cultural perspectives and discuss their relationship to specific products and practices. For example, students should read and summarize a newspaper article, and then contextualize the article within the target culture and relate its contents to other cultural topics.
- Students should be able to compare perspectives from Hispanic cultures with their own heritage perspectives. For example, students read and analyze short stories, and then they compare and contrast the cultural practices reflected in the stories with their own cultural heritage.
- In conversation with their peers, and in writing, students should be able to respond to stereotypes about the target culture with specific examples from its practices and products.

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT OF ADVANCED WORK IN SPANISH

More advanced work in Spanish focuses on consolidating the skills listed above, while providing the foundation for a solid competence in dealing with a variety of considerably more complex literary and cultural materials.

Spanish 205 and 207 are designed to develop the student's spoken and written mastery of the language. Student performance is assessed through full-length compositions and intensive oral work based on reflection and discussion of relevant social issues.

In classes above 207, we examine literary works for both their aesthetic and human values. In our literature courses we attempt to refine and expand students' linguistic ability in Spanish, to broaden their cultural understanding of Hispanic cultures, to improve their ability to engage in literary analysis, and to enhance their knowledge of Hispanic literary history and criticism. These learning outcomes are assessed primarily through assignments embedded in courses numbered higher than 204 (such as full-length essays, research reports, presentations of projects, and exams.)

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT FOR THE MAJOR IN SPANISH

In addition to required course work, Students who decide to major in Spanish further demonstrate their mastery of these skills in the department's senior integrative exercise.

Expected Outcomes

With Regard to Knowledge of the Field. Majors should be able to

- Comprehend major currents and concerns in Hispanic literature over time.
- Understand the nature of literary and cultural creations and phenomena within their specific context.
- Understand and examine the continued pertinence of the primary texts within the field of Hispanic literature.

With Regard to Specific Skills of Inquiry, Analysis, and Expression. Majors should be able to

- Read, discuss, present, and write in the language at the level appropriate for advanced students in a B. A. program.
- Locate (with the appropriate searching tools) and cite (in the format specified by the department or instructor) primary and secondary sources.
- Use primary sources as evidence of thesis-driven argument.
- Use secondary sources to situate work in the context of the discipline.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, the results of their own research and the research of others.
- Write thesis-driven and descriptive essays on sophisticated themes that are pertinent to the study of literature in the context of the cultures in which it is produced.
- Recognize and understand the strategies and structures that constitute a literary text.
- Recognize and locate individual texts within the cultural, historical, aesthetic traditions from which they arise.
- Recognize and critically examine key assumptions underlying exemplary texts in Hispanic Literature.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes and Skills

Achievement of these skills and this knowledge is gained through repeated exposure and practice with the language, the texts, and the cultures. Our curriculum and requirements are designed to introduce students to literary and cultural analysis and lead them into advanced courses where they read, discuss, analyze, and write on exemplary texts within the Hispanic literary tradition. At the advanced level (300 level courses) students perform research, generate bibliographies, and write thesis-driven essays. Student learning is continually assessed within the

courses through discussion, presentations, and written assignments. Our students are encouraged to study abroad as part of their major experience.

The students' career culminates in the senior integrative exercise, an exercise that requires implementation of the knowledge and skills gained over time through the course work and that builds on but goes beyond the course-based work already completed. In addition to the written essay itself, students present to the campus their research and their results.

Assessment Measures:

These outcomes are measures with SAT II tests in Spanish 204, assessment of Spanish 204 student work using the rubrics below, and assessment of comps projects using the final rubric below.

RUBRICS FOR SPANISH 204

ORAL ASSESSMENT AND PROFICIENCY LEVELS

RUBRIC FOR ORAL ASSESSMENT

	Superior	Good	Poor
PAST TENSES	Employs a variety of past tenses accurately	Uses a variety of past tenses, but not always accurately	Poor use of preterit and imperfect

RUBRIC TO INDICATE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Advanced	Intermediate	Novice
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can narrate and describe in the past, present and future time.• Can handle a complicated situation or transaction.• Accuracy: good control of frequent simple constructions and some complex constructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can create with language.• Can ask and answer questions on familiar topics.• Can handle a simple situation or transaction.• Accuracy: partial control of only the most frequent constructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No functional ability.• Speech limited to memorized material.• Accuracy: except for memorized material, minimal control of even the most frequent constructions.

**Spanish Department Language Committee
Assessment**

Assessment Span 204: Reading

Outcome: Students can read and understand a short (one page) newspaper article (topic piece or essay type)

Tool for assessment: Students read the newspaper article and are able to explain in English the main idea and make inferences.

Assessment format: 4 questions

1. **Main Idea:** Explain the main idea and give examples.
2. **Inferences:** Students will be given three sentences from the article in Spanish. They will explain what the sentences mean in English.

Rubric for assessment:

	Superior	Good	Adequate	Poor
Comprehension of newspaper article	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of main idea• Explanation of all three inference questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of main idea• Explanation of two inference questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of main idea• Explanation of one inference questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explanation of main idea

As part of our assessment of the major, we have chosen to focus on the issue of our students' ability to demonstrate an understanding of the nature of literary and cultural creations and phenomena within their specific context as demonstrated in their senior comprehensive exercise. We will use the following criteria in the assessment of our students' achievement in this area.

The student...	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Adequate	Good	Exceptional	N/A*
Selection						
Recognizes the genre or aesthetic movement to which the texts belong.						
Selects the criteria that apply to the particular texts given the applicable genre or aesthetic movement.						
Incorporates significant background to understand the text(s) within a particular historical, political, and/or cultural context.						
Application						
Incorporates and applies appropriate critical terminology to identify and analyze the texts.						
Situates the texts within the larger scope of the field of Hispanic literature and culture.						
Identifies and situates the text(s) within a particular historical and aesthetic context.						
Integrates evidence pertinent to the cultural and aesthetic nature of the text(s).						

* Depending on the nature of the particular project—those involving archival research, for example—not all of the above criteria will apply.