

HISP500: ADVANCED SPANISH I

Placement note: In order to register for this course you must fulfill one of the following minimum requirements: HISP400 or a score of SATII (600-660), AP (4), Brown Placement Exam (491 – 570.)

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the advanced level, there is often a complaint of getting stuck at a “plateau”, since progress is less obvious as in lower levels. First of all, it is important to realize that the objectives for an advanced student shift. While it is still important to continue to learn new words and structures, the main goal is being able to use the language you have already learned fluently, accurately and appropriately (in terms of register.) This is only achieved through extensive practice, both as exposure to and analysis of authentic language (reading and listening) and through its use both orally and in writing. Secondly, advanced students must become independent and direct their own learning in order to achieve their personal goals.

Therefore, the main objectives of the course are:

- to continue to develop Spanish communicative proficiency through comprehensive work in listening, reading comprehension, speaking and writing.
- to expand passive and active vocabulary and reinforce grammar learned in previous courses through targeted review.
- to expand and deepen your knowledge of Hispanic cultures and societies through texts, music, film, Internet resources and class discussion.
- to become an independent and reflective learner: setting personal goals and identifying areas of interest, seeking and learning to use resources and materials to achieve those goals, reflecting upon one’s own learning and taking steps to address any issues promptly.

In order to achieve these goals we will work with our textbook as well as other supplementary materials (movies, video segments, articles, etc.) In addition, you will have opportunities to explore topics of your own interest through in-class discussions and presentations. You will also be encouraged and guided to become an autonomous learner.

II. COURSE MATERIALS

- García-Serrano, M. Victoria, Cristina de la Torre, and Annette Grant Cash. *¡A que sí!*. 4th ed. Boston, MA, USA: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2013. Print. (Text and Activities Manual)
- English/Spanish bilingual, Spanish monolingual and Spanish thesaurus dictionaries. There are some good dictionaries available on line and we encourage you to use them wisely. Please check the Resources section of Canvas for links to these and other useful tools.

- Canvas site for HISP500. This will be a major source of information and resources throughout the course. Get to know it early and check often for assignments, announcements, handouts, etc.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Important! Read this syllabus carefully and make sure you clear any doubts with your instructor immediately, as the guidelines and policies here described will be strictly followed in all HISP500 sections in order to ensure all students are treated fairly and equally. Any exceptional circumstances not covered in this syllabus must be reported to the instructor immediately, accompanied by any relevant documentation.

Attendance and punctuality

A significant amount of language work conducive to advance language proficiency is carried out in class. Therefore, active participation in class work is essential, and individual performance is evaluated. Any absence represents an important block of experience lost; no extra work can replace classes missed. Therefore **attendance is obligatory**.

Note the following policies:

- Attendance will be counted as of the fifth day of class.
- You are allowed four non- penalized absences at your discretion for the semester, for any reason **including** illness, travel, job/school interviews, sports, heavy work schedule, etc. No excuses are required. Nevertheless, use them wisely. You should still keep all relevant documentation in case it is needed later.
- Each absence above this number –even if for a good reason- will result in 1 point per hour of class taken off the participation segment of your final score.¹ Any student missing 25% (¼) of the total number of class meetings will result in an automatic NC for this course.²
 - Note that absences due to religious holidays are excused and do not count towards the four absences allowed.
- In case of exceptional circumstances leading to frequent or prolonged absences or to an absence on an important class period (e.g. a test day), the student must present proper documentation³ and discuss the absence **immediately** with the professor to discuss the course of action. In the case of lengthy absences, alternative work may be assigned, and in the case of a missed exam or graded work, make-up plans will be arranged. Note that it is ultimately the

¹ Participation is 15% (or 15/100 points) of the final grade. If your final participation score is 85%, you'll have completed 12.75 of 15 points counting toward your final grade. Say you have 6 absences, then for each of the 2 extra absences we will subtract 1 point per hour of class missed from your participation score worth 12.75. This means that your participation will be 8.75/15 points.

² This includes cases of extended illness since attendance and participation in class activities are really necessary for language development.

³ Documentation should clearly indicate you were not able to attend class and/or submit due assignments on the specific day(s) missed.

course supervisor's decision whether or not these alternative arrangements may be granted and what the conditions will be for such arrangements.

- As the course policy on attendance is applied without exception to all students, Varsity athletes must provide the professor with the away game schedule at the beginning of the semester (and be sure to have their coach contact the instructor if the schedule changes). In addition, athletes are responsible for keeping up with course work and handing assignments in on time. In case of particularly tight scheduling, they should request extensions from the instructor IN ADVANCE.
- Missed exams and presentations cannot be made up or late work accepted, except in the circumstances described above. Please, do not ask your instructor to make exceptions, since your request involves putting the rest of the students in the course in a disadvantageous position.
- When you miss class, it is your responsibility to get in touch with a classmate to find out what you missed, including announcements, assigned homework, etc.
- You are expected to arrive on time, since late arrivals disrupt the flow of class, for both your instructor and fellow students. Note that tardiness will also result in a lower class participation grade. In fact, we take 1 point off your weekly participation grade of 10 points for each time you arrive more than 5 minutes late.

On academic honesty

We expect that you have read, understand and are prepared to abide by the Brown University policies on academic honesty. We therefore expect students to follow all ordinary and specified procedures for testing and to prepare and write their own compositions and any other work; **copying sentences or larger texts from the Internet or other sources without using proper references, using electronic translators or getting help from Spanish-speaking persons is strictly prohibited**. If you would like to **consult with a friend or tutor, you can ask about general issues, but not specifics about work you are going to submit for a grade** (e.g. a friend or tutor can review with you the differences between imperfect and preterit, but not correct or help you select verb tenses for your work.) Brown U. considers academic dishonesty a very serious matter and requires instructors to report it to the Dean of the College. Please ask your instructor if you have any doubts or questions.

A note on learning needs

We try to make HISP500 accessible to all students and we would like to continue to enhance the course's accessibility and welcome specific suggestions and constructive comments on the presentation of course materials. We encourage you to speak with your instructor as early in the semester as possible about anything that might affect your interaction with the class material (e.g., learning disabilities, ADD or ADHD, psychological conditions, chronic illnesses, different learning styles, extraordinary personal circumstances, etc.) We hold this information in highest confidentiality.

IV. COURSE COMPONENTS

Participation and daily preparation

Active participation is an essential part of any language course. Therefore, all students are expected to engage and participate in class activities, which in turn require to fully complete the tasks assigned for daily preparation. Note that the role of the instructor in this course is to organize and guide activities, but it is the students' responsibility to work together to complete these activities, take part in discussions and debates and, sometimes, students will even lead activities.

In order to adequately participate in class, it is absolutely necessary to prepare as instructed by completing the assigned readings and exercises in “¡A que sí!” as well as any other tasks assigned by the instructor, and studying the grammar and vocabulary in each lesson. Participation will be graded starting on the third week of the semester so that you have a chance to familiarize yourself with the format of the course. Please, see the Participation Grading Criteria in Appendix A. Participation grades will be posted weekly on Canvas. Sometimes, lower participation grades result from a misunderstanding of what is required and can be easily fixed. Make sure you discuss with your instructor any questions about your participation grades immediately.

Based on previous student evaluations, the daily time requirement for this course is about 6 – 8 hours a week. Naturally, this time will vary by learner. It is a time consuming course but one where daily effort and time devoted to the course most directly affect the development of your proficiency.

Exams

There will be 3 written tests throughout the semester. They will include grammar and vocabulary exercises. Two of these exams will also include oral sections to be completed in small groups. There will not be a final exam.

Essays

You will write 3 essays following the assignments posted in Canvas. You will turn in a first version of the essay and receive thorough feedback on content, organization and language use. You will then revise your essay and turn in both versions to your instructor. See Canvas for specific guidelines, grading, and other important documents. Late essays (whether first or second version) handed in within 24 hours of the deadline will be accepted for 50% credit. Any work turned in after this grace period will not receive credit.

Temas de interés

Throughout the semester each student will present a short article or piece of news related to the Hispanic world that s/he considers relevant to the course and of interest for the class, and then lead a discussion about it. These *Temas* are an opportunity to further explore the topics that we are discussing in class or to expand our program with other topics relevant to the course. More details and complete

guidelines are available in Canvas, please be sure to read them carefully and ask your instructor if you have any questions.

Proyectos de investigación

You will work in small groups on a research project that includes both the gathering of information from available sources as well as original research or creative work. The topics must be related to the Hispanic world (i.e. social issues, politics, culture, etc.), and your research must involve interactions with Spanish speakers. You will turn in a short paper (or other alternative materials, see guidelines in Canvas for examples) and do a formal presentation in class.

At this level, we expect work to the standards assumed in any other Brown U. course, particularly with regards to content, preparation and presentation. The objective is to prepare you for advanced courses in Hispanic Studies, study abroad courses or professional presentations in your future career. Although there is much flexibility on the format and content of the final project, it must be approved by the instructor.

More details and complete guidelines are available in Canvas, so please be sure to read them carefully and ask your instructor if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: As much of our class time will be devoted to activities prepared by students (*Temas de interés*, etc.), it is extremely important that everyone meets the specified deadlines for outlines, distribution of handouts, etc. Not doing so may result in not being allowed to present and receiving a zero for that assignment. Please see assignment guidelines for details. If a student is absent on a day s/he is scheduled to present or lead an activity, s/he may not have the opportunity to do it on a different date.

Graded homework and grammar study.

The approach to grammar study in HISP500 may significantly vary from how grammar is covered and practiced in less advanced courses and it might take you some time to adjust.

Since HISP500 is an advanced course, prior knowledge of Spanish grammar is assumed. Therefore grammar work in HISP500 consists of both observation and analysis of structures we come across in texts, class activities, your own writing, etc. and individual review and practice of grammar topics in our Activities Manual. We have scheduled some class time for every chapter where you will have a chance to go over difficulties, ask questions, etc. But do note that your instructor's role is not to repeat the information in your book or give lectures about grammar. Instead, the explanations will be determined by specific students' needs (questions in class, difficulties in the practice exercises, etc.) If you feel that your level of grammar is lacking or you have identified areas that require improvement, please find extra materials in Canvas (*Gramática y ejercicios*), and go to your instructor's office hours where you can get more individualized attention and resources for extra practice. You might also want to consider working in study groups outside of class.

Work on your Activities Manual and other materials assigned by your instructor (e.g. other grammar practice handouts, short written assignments) will be part of your grade. For Activities Manual exercises, you are expected to complete the exercises assigned, check your answers in the Answer Key (available in Canvas), mark and correct your errors with a pen of a different color and bring your work to class on the dates marked in the course calendar, without exception.

Your instructor will look over your exercises and credit will be given as follows:

- 1** – Complete, careful work and self-correction.
- 0.5** – Complete but not carefully done, OR complete, but not self-corrected, OR missing a few exercises (assuming the rest is carefully done and self-corrected.)
- 0** – Incomplete, missing more than 30% of the exercises.

Note that grammar discussions are based on the homework you have completed before class. Therefore, it is crucial that homework be completed in a timely manner and brought to class. Late homework will not be accepted for credit.

V. GRADING

Please note that your instructor will be posting your grades on Canvas throughout the semester. This will give you the opportunity to follow closely your performance in the course. If you would like to improve your performance or if you see discrepancies between the scores in your work and online, please speak with your instructor immediately.

You will earn your grade through many different components; this approach is consistent with the principle that languages are acquired through continuous practice. At the same time, it also provides you with plenty of opportunities to work toward a good grade.

● Participation	15%
● Exams (written + oral)	25%
● Essays (3)	25%
● <i>Tema de interés</i>	12.5%
● <i>Proyecto de investigación</i>	12.5%
● Homework	10%

The grading scale for all Spanish program courses is:

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89.99
C	70 – 79.99
NC	below 70

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Please be advised that there will be no re-writes or extra-credit work, and there will be no curving or rounding up of grades. We urge you to discuss any questions or issues related to your grades right away. Grades will not be negotiated at the end of the semester.

- Students in Spanish language courses are advised that, in accordance with Hispanic Studies departmental policy, instructors will award the grade of "S with Distinction" to S/NC students whose work is of extraordinarily high quality (a minimum grade of 93).

Appendix A- Participation criteria

Scores will be posted weekly on Canvas starting on week 3 of the semester. Note that careful daily class preparation, high quality of contributions and accurate use of advance linguistic structures and vocabulary are all key components of participation grades.

A (9 – 10) - Outstanding

The student:

- demonstrates exceptional preparation of the assigned readings/ homework for the day.
- furthers the learning of self and others with relevant and insightful ideas, questions, comments and analysis of the discussed topics. If this person were not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would be markedly diminished.
- actively participates and often takes initiative in group and class work, contributes significantly to dynamic interactions and encourages peers by asking for elaboration, etc.
- uses complex structures and advanced vocabulary, and makes a great effort to express him/herself with precision and accuracy.
- often asks questions when something is not clear and seeks instructor's help during office hours as needed.
- always arrives to class on time and stays on task during class.

B (8 – 8.5) Good

The student:

- is well prepared for class and demonstrates that s/he has completed the assigned readings/ homework for the day.
- contributes adequately to discussion, but may limit her/himself to responding to the questions posed without much further elaboration or analysis.
- actively participates in pair and group work; often asks and responds to questions during group and class discussions.
- makes a good effort to use advanced structures and vocabulary regularly and accurately.
- frequently asks questions when something is not clear and seeks instructor's help during office hours as needed.
- arrives for class on time, may occasionally arrive a couple of minutes late.

C (7 – 7.5) Fair

The student :

- prepares the minimum required and/or not carefully, s/he fails to show evidence of more than superficial reading of the course materials.
- contributes moderately to discussion; contributions tend to lack substance, insight or depth of analysis. If this person were not a member of this class, the quality of discussion would not be significantly changed.
- may take a passive rather than active role, participating only as needed to complete the task; responds to instructor's questions, but rarely volunteers.
- tends to rely on short, simple structures and general vocabulary, pays little attention to accuracy and/or may use English.
- rarely asks questions or seeks instructor's help during office hours.
- is late for class frequently and/or more than a couple of minutes late.

NC (below 7) Inadequate participation

- Some or all the criteria stated above for Fair participation is not adequately met.

Notes:

- Showing up for class and not participating adequately does not warrant receiving any participation points.
- You may bring your computer for class related work. Being engaged on other activities (checking e-mail, doing work for other classes, etc.) is not allowed during class.
- The use of cell phones is not allowed either, neither as phones nor for other purposes (e.g. to check e-mail).