

# Spanish 200-level Instructors' Manual

(Updated 8/09)

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## **Roles and Responsibilities in Multi-section Courses**

### ***Responsibilities of 200-level Director***

The primary responsibility of the 200-level director is to insure consistency in goals and assessment tools across sections. In addition, she will promote flexible consistency in classroom methodology, defined by the “Best Classroom Practices” document in this manual. In order to ensure such consistency, the director will:

1. Write syllabus,
2. Oversee composition of exams,
3. Ensure consistent grading criteria for assessment of oral exams, compositions, and written exams,
4. Observe classes, read course evaluations, and provide feedback (see observation policy below),
5. Track some grade distributions for exams and other assignments.

### ***Responsibilities of 200-level Instructors***

Each instructor teaching in the 200-level series is responsible for providing his or her students an experience consistent with all other sections of the same course in the classroom and on evaluation tools including exams and compositions. In order to insure such consistency, each instructor will:

1. Know and apply all policies articulated in this Manual;
2. Follow the syllabus and stay on schedule;
3. Give common exams;
4. Use grading criteria consistent with other instructors for oral exams, written exams, and compositions;
5. Support the program;
6. Promptly report grade distributions when requested;
7. Attend course meetings;
8. Inform director of any different policies or procedures in your sections.

## **Grading Standards**

Instructors should expect a C/C+ average on written exams. Assignments prepared at home (compositions, oral exams) will probably weigh in somewhat higher (B average). Final grades for the course should average B-.

## **Missed Classes and Substitutes**

Early in the quarter or before, you should identify someone who can cover your class(es) if you are unable to do so. It is your responsibility to arrange for coverage in such cases. If you are sick for one day and find a substitute, there is no need to inform the departmental office or the 200-level director. However, if a substitute will cover more than one of your classes, you should inform the office and the course director.

## First-day Handout and Questionnaire

Ohio University requires each instructor to provide certain information to students in writing. In addition, students need other information not included on the website. On the first day of classes, you should distribute a handout with the following (see “Lesson Plan Suggestions” on Website for a sample):

- URL for course homepage and for student WileyPLUS registration,
- your name and email,
- my title, name, and email (Director of Second-year Spanish: Professor Mary Jane Kelley, kelley@ohio.edu)
- your office number and phone,
- departmental office phone (593-2765)
- your office hours,
- call # of course,
- any changes from policies on syllabus or homework,
- late work policy,

Be sure you have students fill out a short questionnaire to determine accurate placement (see “Lesson Plan Suggestions” on Website for a sample):

1. name
2. yr. at OU
3. # of yrs of HS Spanish
4. previous Span classes at OU
5. If you took the precollege Spanish placement exam, into what class did it place you?
6. (other information you may want from your students)

## Placement/Pink slips

If a student is unsure about placement in your 200-level class, please advise him or her based on your experience and observations of the individual’s ability. Any student wishing to drop back to 199 will need a pink slip and should speak to the instructor of the section he or she wishes to add. In addition, you can recommend one of the following options:

- take the PLACE computerized placement exam in Gordy 015 and follow its recommendation regarding placement, or
- talk to Mary Jane Kelley in Gordy 129.

If a student wants to enroll in your section, an opening will most probably appear soon. There should be no need for pink slips during the first two weeks of classes for adding 211/213; there is always a lot of movement in and out of 200-level classes. Use your good judgment when it comes to allowing students who are not enrolled to sit in during the first week - you may not allow more than 25 students to enroll in your section.

## Who our Students are

Between 30 and 40% of students entering Spanish 211 come from 113. Approximately 70% come from elsewhere.

30% of students entering Spanish 211 took 2 or 3 yrs of Spanish in high school, 2 or 3 years ago. Another 30% took 4 or 5 years of HS Spanish, up until last year.

Often, students wait 1 year between 113 and 211 (64 had done so FQ 04).

20% of students completing Spanish 213 go on to Spanish 341. 80% stop there.

Most first-year students who take the placement exam follow the exam’s advice for placement.

## Instructors' Resources

In addition to the many activities in the textbook, ideas for activities are available on the WileyPLUS website (panoramas culturales, autopruebas, etc.), from the Lesson Plan Suggestions link on the course homepage, and in the files on the counter across from the mailboxes in the departmental mailroom. Please contribute activities to these files, and send me electronic versions for posting on the course website.

## Procedures for Administration of Written Exams (listening and writing)

**Writing:** Spread desks out as much as possible so students are not clumped together in groups. Turn the semicircle into rows, if appropriate. This will discourage copying. If your classroom accommodates every-other-row seating, move the desks accordingly. Do not translate unknown vocabulary when students ask during the exam. Part of what we're testing is reading comprehension; students should be able to complete the exam on their own. Most vocabulary comes from the book, some words are cognates, and the meaning of others can be determined from context. Instructions are similar to instructions in the activities manual. When students ask, encourage them to do their best in spite of not knowing specific vocabulary.

**Listening** ("A escuchar"), usually section I worth 12-14%: Give students time to read the exercise to get an idea of the theme, play the CD once, allow students time to complete the activity, play the CD a second time, after which students complete the activity. Do not stop the CD in the middle of the selection and do not play the CD more than twice.

## Procedures for Miniconferencias, Oral exams, Video Activities

Be sure to familiarize yourself with instructions for these assignments in the student links on the course homepage. In addition, you should consider the following:

**Miniconferencias:** In class, in preparation for listening, have students complete pre-listening activities from the textbook and/or manual after which you should either deliver the miniconferencia "live," play the CD from the textbook, or access the mpeg file from WileyPLUS. Students should have a task to complete while listening (i.e., fill in a chart or outline), examples of which are available on WileyPLUS, on the course website or in the files in the mailroom. For homework, students re-listen to the talk on WileyPLUS, and we should each plan some kind of follow-up activity for the next day. Do not hand out the *miniconferencia* for students to read. For our purposes, the *miniconferencias* are listening comprehension exercises, not reading activities.

**Oral exams:** In order to avoid student complaints of unfairness, it is important that students not know who their partner will be in advance. Pre-assigned partners eliminate the minimal spontaneity we have built into these exams. You may wish to bring a timer to the orals and limit the time each pair can spend talking.

**Video activity sheets:** There is no suggested grading rubric for the video assignments. However, criteria to take into account in grading include: accurate completion of activity, accurate language use (grammar and vocab), vocabulary exercises completed with reference to the video and not the dictionary, thoughtful answers to individualized, personal questions regarding the cultural content of the clips.

## **Vosotros Policy**

Students are responsible for learning the vosotros forms of all verb tenses. We will incorporate vosotros forms into written exams whenever possible. You should include vosotros forms on verb quizzes. No instructor is required to use vosotros forms in class; however, each instructor must support the program by holding students responsible for these forms.

## **Goals for Student Achievement in 200-level Courses**

### **SPEAKING**

- Further develop ability to communicate and negotiate meaning with other students and with instructor in a variety of specific contexts
- Further develop ability to provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions in a variety of specific contexts
- Further develop ability to keep a conversation going and help others interact
- Further develop ability to present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners on a variety of topics

### **LISTENING**

- Comprehend student-oriented native speech on topics studied – listen for main idea and specific details
- Understand native speech in the context of advertisements, announcements, directions, and informational passages such as short lectures
- Develop listening strategies (i.e., picking out familiar words and phrases from extended speech in order to understand main idea)

### **WRITING**

- Write thoughtful, well organized, well edited, formal compositions of one page on topics studied.
- Write formal compositions with no errors in grammar forms studied in current chapter
- Write formal compositions with few errors in agreement (verbs, adjs.)
- Write spontaneously in class focusing on both the message and form
- Develop practice of writing as process and avoid relying on outside help in editing

### **READING**

- Thoroughly comprehend all instructions in books and manuals
- Read journalistic and literary passages for content with instructional support (i.e., pre-reading, post-reading activities and comprehension checks).
- Begin to appreciate and understand literature as art of language
- Develop reading strategies (i.e., identify meaning of words from context, skim for main idea, scan for specific details).

### **GRAMMAR**

- Develop insight into the nature of language and understanding of the concept of language
- Acquire better command of Spanish grammar studied in previous classes in order to apply with increased precision in writing and speaking
- Acquire the ability to approach grammar from a more analytic point of view than in first year (i.e., compare and contrast ser/estar and other concepts that do not exist in English)

### **CULTURE**

- Gain further knowledge of Hispanic cultures
- Deepen understanding of relationship between practices/products/perspectives of Hispanic cultures

- Develop insight into the nature of culture and an understanding of the concept of culture
- Develop insight into student's own culture(s) through comparison with knowledge gained regarding Hispanic cultures

## **Best Classroom Practices** (Based on discussions of textbook selection committee '03-'04)

### READING

Reading is taught as process. Students complete pre-reading activities that prepare them for the selection's theme as well as for important vocabulary and structures in the selection. They learn skimming and scanning techniques and acquire the ability to determine a word's meaning from its context. Students learn that repeated readings of any given text are essential for global comprehension. Exams assess students' ability to skim, scan, and determine meaning. Instructors remind students often that reading does not involve word-for-word translation.

### SPEAKING

The classroom setting provides frequent opportunities for speaking. Unlike reading, listening, and writing, students possess few opportunities for speaking outside of class. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that they speak often during each class session, to each other and to the instructor. Speaking activities force students to create meaning with the language. This goal is achieved when students need to acquire information from each other. This information cannot be obvious nor should the textbook provide it. In general, speaking activities lead students to accomplish a specific task. Speaking is assessed periodically through the quarter by means of oral exams in which students must create and negotiate meaning.

### LISTENING

The *Más allá* program provides students rich listening input via the CDs that accompany the text and the WileyPLUS activities that correspond to the Activities Manual. The teacher always supplements by speaking Spanish exclusively in class. Video clips in class add another source for listening practice. Students learn to listen for the gist, pick out targeted details, and, upon repeated listening, acquire global meaning. Listening is assessed on each written exam: students listen to a passage and complete exercises that target skills practiced at home and in class.

### WRITING

Students write in two contexts: in class and at home.

In class, a writing activity may constitute one step in a task or a portion of an exam. In this context, specific structures or vocabulary are targeted and students improve their proficiency in a limited number of targeted areas (vocabulary related to a certain theme, one grammatical concept such as preterit vs. imperfect, etc.).

At home, students prepare one formal writing assignment per unit ("composition") in which the instructor expects a high degree of global accuracy. In formal writing assignments, students practice writing as process and pass through a series of steps intended to lead them to a meaningful product: brainstorming, outlining, drafting, editing/polishing. Students learn to use word processing programs to create Spanish diacritics.

Instructors remind students often that writing does not involve word-for-word translation.

### GRAMMAR

The basics of grammar instruction come from chapters in the textbook with minimal time spent by the teacher explaining grammar in class. After a brief in-class introduction and minimal practice, students study grammar at home and come to class prepared to engage in activities that

reinforce and solidify comprehension of grammar rules. When a short grammar review or explanation precedes an activity, the teacher presents the material succinctly and in Spanish using cognates and diagrams on the board or overhead.

## CULTURE

The culture material comes from readings and “miniconferencias” in the textbook, the audio material from the Activities Manual, and the video clips. *Más allá* includes popular culture, fine arts, and literature, and asks students to compare the target culture with their own. In class, students will share conclusions they reached at home regarding certain cultural readings, and listen to one “miniconferencia” per unit.

## Observation Policy

Observation of classes in second-year Spanish contributes to the insurance of consistency across sections. The process of observation also helps less experienced instructors fine-tune their classroom technique. In addition, even the most experienced instructors get new ideas from observing others. Finally, observation of classes promotes dialogue among colleagues regarding program goals and methods for achieving those goals.

In October, the director of second-year Spanish or another experienced instructor will observe all TAs teaching in the second-year program. During the course of the year, the director will observe any new visiting or part-time faculty.

The observer will schedule all observations in consultation with the faculty and TAs to be observed. Shortly before the observation date, observer and instructor should meet to review “Best classroom practices” as well as the observation checklist from this manual. They should discuss what constitutes successful instruction at the 200 level and identify any areas the instructor would like the observer to target during the visit. Shortly after the observation, the observer should meet with the instructor to share impressions of the class. Feedback from the observer should be accurate, honest, focused, concrete, positively phrased, and action-oriented. After this meeting, the observer will prepare a written report, a copy of which goes to the department chair for placement in the instructor’s file. A second copy goes to the instructor.

I would like this process to remain as formative and collaborative as possible; the departmental Reappointment Committee conducts observations of part-time and visiting instructors with an evaluative focus. In second year, I am willing to work with any instructor open to suggestions for implementing the goals of the 200-level program by means of the “best practices.” If a written post-observation report contains areas of serious concern, I will meet with the instructor in question to offer suggestions for acquiring a better classroom technique. Usually I suggest sitting in on classes of more experienced instructors with a successful record in OU language classes. Afterwards, I will conduct a follow-up observation. Signs of improvement and a willingness to work towards achieving the goals of the program will alleviate concern.

However, this process cannot remain totally separate from the reappointment process. The Reappointment Committee will seek my input regarding renewal of part-time and visiting contracts, and the Spanish faculty will inquire about TA performance in the second-year program. I will work hard with each of you to ensure that my input be positive.

After the end of each quarter, I will read through course evaluations from 200-level classes in order to ensure my awareness of patterns of criticism or of acclaim. My reading of evaluations will be primarily from a programmatic point of view (i.e., I will be looking for recurring student comments regarding policy, procedure, assessment, materials, etc.). I consider myself a fair,

experienced reader of course evaluations, having read many of my own and even more of other instructors' during my career. I know well the difference between a pattern of comments and idiosyncratic, random criticism. If I detect a pattern within an individual's evaluations that I consider cause for concern, I will discuss it with the instructor in question.

## **OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

(Suggested points for focus of an observation)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor well prepared, organized
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relaxed and friendly atmosphere in classroom
- \_\_\_\_\_ Explanations and instructions clear
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pace of class appropriate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Class under control
- \_\_\_\_\_ Course content (culture and vocab.) reinforced through activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grammar integrated with course content in activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discussion of grammar brief and in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ Activities use homework as springboard for meaningful interaction
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students held accountable for homework through class activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least one opportunity for communicative speaking practice per class
- \_\_\_\_\_ Speaking activities generate substantial output by means of a simple task
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students and instructor speak exclusively in Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least one activity recycles content or grammar from previous *tema*
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-reading activity when reading passage required for next class
- \_\_\_\_\_ Short grammar explanation when grammar required for next class
- \_\_\_\_\_ Class challenges students to work at second-year level
- \_\_\_\_\_ Effective activities for teaching culture (comparison to students' culture(s))
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students practice all or most of four skills
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriate error correction technique(s)