



KIIS Merida, Mexico Program, Summer 2024

SPAN 370: Spanish Conversation

Instructor: Prof. Itzá Zavala-Garrett

Email: i.zavala-ga@moreheadstate.edu

Instructor's office hours: After class and by appointment

Syllabus subject to change

1. Course Description: This class, for students with at least 2 years of college-level Spanish (or equivalent), is designed to expand students' vocabulary, enhance fluency, and refine grammatical breadth and accuracy. The goal is for students to improve in complex communication skills (including narrating and describing in the past, present, and future; providing detailed explanations; and stating and supporting opinions concretely). Students will also increase their awareness about cultural characteristics of Mexico through engagement with locals and sharing written/oral reports of these experiences in class.

2. Overall KIIS Program Student Learning Outcomes:

KIIS Study Abroad Mission Statement:

KIIS provides high-quality education abroad programs for students from all diverse backgrounds that promote deep international learning, are integrated into the curriculum, and encourage critical and creative thinking. Our goal is to help students understand the wider world and develop personal and professional skills for lifelong enrichment. We strive to go beyond generalizations and cultural stereotypes to help foster a nuanced appreciation of the world in which we live.

Students participating on KIIS study abroad programs aim to:

- 1) Understand contemporary issues of their host country/countries (i.e. KIIS program location).
- 2) Develop skills to interact comfortably in a global setting.
- 3) Understand other cultures.

Prior to your KIIS study abroad program, and again at the conclusion of your program, KIIS will ask each student to a) answer a few multiple-choice questions, and b) write a short reflective essay (two paragraphs in length) related to the elements detailed above. There is no right or wrong answer, and your responses will not affect your grade in any way. The purpose of the exercise is to help KIIS measure the effectiveness of its study abroad programs.

3. Course Objectives and Specific Learning Outcomes. After completing this course, students should be able to:

- Communicate more appropriately in Spanish in diverse social contexts.
- Engage in conversations and generate writings that provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange and support opinions.
- Understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

- Be able to produce speech that is more target-like in pronunciation and more grammatically sophisticated (e.g., use of subjunctive) and accurate.
- Display expanded vocabulary base and more appropriate use of idiomatic expressions.
- Present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience.
- Demonstrate an increased understanding of the culture of Mexico.

The class is intimately linked to living abroad, and students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the abundant opportunities for conversation. Students who make a sustained effort to use only Spanish outside of class throughout the program do well in class, without exception. ABOVE ALL, DO NOT SEQUESTER YOURSELF FROM YOUR HOST FAMILY. YOU SHOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO CREATE SOCIAL EXCHANGE. Reciprocate the hospitality extended to you by making the home stay experience pleasant and interesting for your host family. They and the relationships you form with other locals are what will stay with you long after the program is over. Resolve to benefit from as much social interaction as possible. Make a self-pledge to speak only Spanish and make the same pact with your roommate. Your ability to succeed is integrally linked to what you do outside class, and we expect that all students will use Spanish with host families, other locals, and KIIIS students and faculty. In class you will be expected to work collaboratively as well as independently to generate knowledge and hone your language skills, to prepare assignments for every class that often require social interaction with locals and venturing out into the city to explore historical and cultural landmarks, to complete all assigned exercises outside of class on time, and to participate fully, productively, enthusiastically, and respectfully in class and on all excursions (which count as class hours).

4. Major Topics covered in the Course:

General Goal Activities

To develop your skills in oral expression; build your vocabulary; and expand your understanding of Spanish culture.

Activities

You should expect a task-based assignment, a reading assignment and class conversation for each class period. We will take full advantage of the program site by participating in the local daily life (such as a shopping adventure in the open market in the Plaza Mayor) as well as the local cultural life (such as student-led tours of local landmarks). All work for the class will be done in Spanish.

Additional resources

Our discussions will be done not only in the classroom but also in local venues. Since you will certainly have rich experiences and remember them vividly, you will write a Spanish diary during your stay in Mexico. In addition, you will be actively developing your conversation skills and learning new words by writing new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions in a notebook.

❖ Temas para conversar e investigar

España, Estados Unidos y Latinoamérica:

1. la historia (eventos, lugares, personajes históricos y culturales);
2. la política y los medios de comunicación;
3. las costumbres y celebraciones;
4. la familia y las relaciones humanas (formas de interacción);
5. el transporte y los viajes (vacaciones);
6. la comida y los restaurantes y;
7. los servicios y lugares públicos (hospitales, correos, farmacias, tiendas, iglesias, plazas, mercados, parques, cines, escuelas públicas y privadas...)

5. Required Readings and Materials:

Conversaciones creadoras | 4th Edition

Joan L. Brown/Carmen Martín Gaité

<https://www.cengage.com/c/conversaciones-creadoras-4e-/9781285837420PF/>

- spiral (or other bound) notebook for taking class notes and writing assignments
- small (pocket) notepad for jotting down linguistic or cultural observations while out of class
- Wordreference app installed on smartphone (or small Spanish/English print dictionary)
- Online Spanish/English dictionary such as: <https://www.spanishdict.com/translation>, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/translator...>
- Voice recording app on smartphone (for certain assignments)
- Purchase of local and national newspapers and other print media (for certain assignments)

6. Graded Assignments:

Dialogues: (20%) Students will be expected to present impromptu dialogues (conversations) based on a provided description of a situation. The situation will correspond to assignments (vocabulary and structure) provided by the professor and test the student's ability to put the vocabulary and structures to work in a real-life situation.

Tour guide/Reports: (25%) Students will develop an appreciation of the Spanish language, culture, history and landmarks. At the same time, they will develop their academic register focusing on conversation skills that are intellectually disciplined. Students will regularly participate in discussions and presentations focused on academic discussions. These discussions will occur in the classroom as well as outside of the classroom, culminating in student-led tours of Segovia. That's right! You will be a tour guide! (Professor Zavala-Garrett will provide more information about it).

Spanish Diary/Notebook: (25%) There will be regular revisions on vocabulary, grammar structures and listening comprehension (short conversations with the professor) about the Spanish diary and the vocabulary notebook.

Active Participation/Tertulias: (30%) A **tertulia** is a social gathering with literary or artistic overtones. The word is originally Spanish. It is similar to a salon. During **tertulias**, we will share creative works and reflections on our common experience in Segovia, Spain. Our **tertulias** will focus on that which we share, an awesome study-abroad opportunity/developing experience in Segovia, Spain.

Grading Scale: A = 93-100 B= 82-92 C= 81- 70 D= 69-60 F(E)= 0-59

❖ Evaluación de la **participación diaria** del/la estudiante:

- A Participación activa. Inicia, dirige conversaciones con otros. Usa solo español en clase.
- B Participación activa. Conversa con otros. Usa inglés en caso de emergencia.
- C Participación necesaria. Responde a los otros. Usa inglés varias veces.
- D Participación forzada. Respuestas mínimas. Usa mucho inglés.
- F(E) Silencio y pausas largas. Falta de preparación, uso del español y comprensión.

7. Attendance Policy: KIIS program participants are expected to be punctual to and in attendance at all classes, presentations, meetings and required excursions, and to remain with the program for the full academic period. Unexcused absences from classes and/or mandatory

meetings will result in a lowering of the student's final grade, as will excessive tardiness. Multiple unexcused absences could result in expulsion from the program. Any absence from an academic class session must be excused for medical reasons.

8. Disability Accommodation: KIIS will make every reasonable effort to provide accommodations for program participants with special needs or disabilities, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Be aware that many foreign countries do not have comprehensive legislation comparable to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a result, businesses and other establishments operating in foreign countries may not be able to provide accommodations.

If you have a disability accommodation need, we recommend you contact your KIIS Campus Representative, <https://www.kiis.org/about-kiis/contact-us/campus-representatives/> early in your program selection process so that s/he has time to discuss any specific needs, including which KIIS programs may be best suited. You also are welcome to contact KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, maria.canning@wku.edu, to discuss your disability accommodation needs (e.g. housing, transportation, excursions, class schedule, etc.).

Immediately after acceptance, notify KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, haley.mctaggart@wku.edu, if you have a special need or disability that might require any form of accommodation abroad. Failure to notify KIIS may prevent you from participating on your KIIS program.

If you require any accommodations abroad, you must provide KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning, or KIIS Admissions and Enrollment Specialist, Haley McTaggart, an accommodation letter from your home campus' disability accommodation office that lists the accommodations you are eligible to receive. Please do not request accommodations directly from your KIIS Program Director or other KIIS Faculty; the KIIS Office will notify your KIIS Program Director and/or Faculty after we have received your above accommodation letter.

In some cases, you may need to make arrangements for a caregiver to join you on your KIIS program, should your physician, campus disability accommodation office, or KIIS make such a recommendation or require it.

9. Title IX / Discrimination & Harassment: Recent attention to gender discrimination and sexual harassment at colleges and universities reminds us of the importance of adhering to standards of ethical and professional behavior. KIIS Study Abroad is committed to supporting and encouraging safe and equitable educational environments for our students, faculty, and program directors. Students, faculty, and program directors are required to be civil and treat each other with dignity and respect. As such, harassment and/or discrimination of any kind will not be permitted or tolerated.

Sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual/dating/domestic violence) and sex discrimination are violations of KIIS policies. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to a) KIIS Assistant Director, Maria Canning (+1-859-200-1000) or KIIS Executive Director, John Dizgun (+1-270-227-2288), b) WKU's Title IX Coordinator, Ena Demir (270-745-6867 / ena.demir@wku.edu) or WKU's Title IX Investigator, Michael Crowe (270-745-5429 / michael.crowe@wku.edu). Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a KIIS program director and/or faculty member, KIIS program directors and faculty are considered "Responsible Employees" of Western Kentucky University and MUST report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator.

If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center, <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/> at 270-745-3159.

For more information on KIIS Title IX, see <https://www.kiis.org/students/health-safety/title-ix-clery/>; additional Title IX resources can be found here <https://www.wku.edu/eeo/titleixbrochure2020.pdf>.

Everyone should be able to participate on a KIIS program, attend a KIIS event, or work in a KIIS environment (e.g. KIIS office) without fear of sexual harassment or discrimination of any kind. Be respectful of each other.