

T 4:00-6:50pm

256 The Woodlands Center

**Course Description:** Spanish conversation helps you develop and integrate your language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural knowledge). By the end of the course, you should be able to discuss a variety of subjects in Spanish, be more aware of cross-cultural communication differences (between Spanish and English), and manage your interactions in a variety of communicative settings. You can also expect to expand your vocabulary and be more precise in your use of grammatical structures.

**Style:** This course meets once a week (Tuesday from 4-6:50) for an in-class discussion. Materials for class discussion are available on Blackboard. This course will be conducted exclusively in Spanish.

## Dr. Maria Barker

ABIV 323

936.294.4584

[mhb015@shsu.edu](mailto:mhb015@shsu.edu)

Skype: mlhasler

Office hours: MWF 8:30am-9:30 am (ABIV 323)  
T 2:30-3:45 (TWC 310)  
W 4:30-5:45 (TWC 310)

By appointment (in person, by phone, via Skype)

University policies are found at <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

**A note on attendance and participation:** This is a conversation class. Attendance and participation are essential and, therefore mandatory. I do not expect perfect speaking, just prepared participation. Participation includes reading assigned materials thoroughly and preparing written assignments. No late work is accepted. You may miss one class without penalty. Each subsequent absence will result in a 3-point penalty on your FINAL grade.

## IDEA Essential Course Objectives

Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing (in Spanish)

Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity

## Course Outcomes



I can use communication strategies to participate in and maintain conversations on a variety of simple and complex topics. I can discuss and respond to reading assignments effectively.



I can free write on a topic in class. I can synthesize reading assignments to demonstrate my understanding of a topic.



I can understand and respond to a wide variety of topics, ranging from simple, familiar discussions to complex, new ideas.



I can understand the majority of what I read, usually without resorting to a dictionary or a translator.



I can appreciate Spanish-speaking cultures and make connections and comparisons to my own culture.

<b>EVALUATION/GRADES: A (100-90), B (89-80), C (79-70), D (69-60), F (59-0)</b>	
Preparation and participation	40%
Homework	30%
Media consumption log	15%
Presentation	15%

**Attendance (3% off of FINAL GRADE for each absence):** Simply put, you MUST attend class each week to do well in this course. You may miss ONE (1) class without penalty. Each subsequent absence will result in a 3% penalty on your overall course grade.

**Preparation and participation (40%):** Before each conversation session, you should complete any assigned homework. On days when freewriting is planned in class, you should do your readings ahead of time to prepare you. You should actively participate (based on the rubric we design) in each class. Your instructor will evaluate your participation and preparation in each class session. You will also complete periodic evaluations of your own preparation and participation.

**Homework (30%):** Homework will consist of readings, followed by microthemes (never more than 250 words), worksheets, and other activities related to course content. All readings will be made available on Blackboard, as will homework assignments. Homework is due by **11:59AM** the morning of class so your instructor can evaluate it and incorporate it into class discussion.

**Media consumption log (15%):** One of the best ways to improve your listening and reading skills is to regularly consume a variety of media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, podcasts, blogs, etc...). You should spend a minimum of two ADDITIONAL hours a week consuming Spanish language media. You will log these hours and share them with the instructor at regular intervals.

**Presentation (15%):** In lieu of a final exam, you will prepare a presentation to be given during the last week of class. The topic will be of your choosing. Further information will be given to you at a later date.

**Make-up and extra credit opportunities:** You can make up ONE (1) missed class by participating in three hours of Spanish language event(s). See the instructor for further information. Late homework may be accepted at the instructor's discretion. **While there are limited extra credit opportunities (e.g., completing the course evaluation), they are not sufficient to rescue a failing grade.** Keep up with the course work to get the best grade possible.

#### **LANGUAGE LEARNING SUCCESS TIPS: INCORPORATE SPANISH INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**

## The Perfect Language Learner

Every language student wants to know the secret of making the most progress in the shortest time.

What does the perfect learner do to excel in acquiring a foreign language?

**SGI** ST GEORGE INTERNATIONAL  
THE LANGUAGE SPECIALISTS  
[www.stgeorges.co.uk](http://www.stgeorges.co.uk)  
English School in Central London



### 1: Learn every day

Even when you are really tired, do some learning, even if it's only 5-10 mins. Never miss a chance to increase your knowledge. Use it, or lose it! Practice makes perfect.



### 2: Be motivated

What is your goal? Always think about your objective. You are learning because you want to achieve something. When you get there your life will be better. Always remember that, even when it's tough.

Success in remembering new vocabulary

Vocabulary book	86%
Mobile phone	74%
Flashcards	67%
No written record	21%



### 3: Record new vocabulary

To really learn a new word, you have to remind yourself of it 6 times over hours, days and weeks. Write down all your new vocab in a little book that you can always carry around with you. Or keep a record in your mobile - you always have it with you, don't you?



### 4: Read, read & read!

Read (in the foreign language) things that you like, not boring stuff. Notice new grammar patterns and important vocabulary. The more you read, the quicker you progress - it's as simple as that.



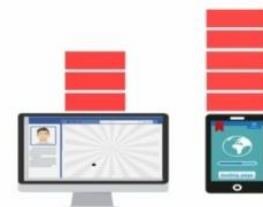
### 5: Be brave

Don't worry about small mistakes! No-one minds! When you learn new vocab or grammar, use it as soon as possible. If you are not 100% accurate, someone will correct you. Challenge yourself! Go for it!



### 6: Use technology

Listen to podcasts of native speakers  
Do online tests checking your level & knowledge  
Read the news in your target language  
Watch videos in the target language  
Comment on articles & interact with blog authors  
Record yourself speaking with free audio software  
Make your own flashcards with online flashcard generators  
Play games in the target language  
Keep a permanent record of your new vocab in GoogleDrive



**Course Calendar Schedule:** Subject to adaptation for instructional purposes

All At-home Assignments are accessed through Blackboard; Most assignments include reading and writing activities

**\*Assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date indicated**

Class Date	Topic; In-Class Activities	Readings; At-Home Assignments	*Due Date
Sep 5	Course introduction Develop participation rubric	Microtheme assignment (reading and writing) Set up media consumption log (see Blackboard for model)	9/12 9/12
Sep 12	Small talk vs. conversation	Worksheet (read and answer questions)	9/19
Sep 19	Cross-cultural conversation differences Solidarity vs. independence Power, social distance, and imposition Tú and usted	Reading (free write in class)	9/26
Sep 26	Body language Touch (handshakes, kissing, etc.) Gesture	Reading (free write in class) Media log – 1 <sup>st</sup> check	10/3
Oct 3	Interpersonal relationships Friendship Courtship	Reading (free write in class)	10/10
Oct 10	Notions of home Family structure Status of children	Microtheme assignment (reading and writing)	10/17
Oct 17	Healthcare Western medicine Holistic medicine Traditional medicine	Microtheme assignment (reading and writing)	10/24
Oct 24	Mental health and (in)sanity Access to mental healthcare Depictions of mental illness	Reading (free write in class) Media log – 2 <sup>nd</sup> check	10/31
Oct 31	Death and memory El día de los muertos	Microtheme assignment (reading and writing)	11/7
Nov 7	Workplace concerns Hierarchy Work ethic and tempo Leadership	Microtheme assignment (reading and writing)	11/14
Nov 14	Government Justice System Morality	Reading (free write in class)	11/21
Nov 21	Holiday traditions Religion and holidays	Reading (free write in class)	11/28
Nov 28	Conceptions of beauty, music, and art Colors and symbols	Media log – final check	12/5
Dec 5	Final presentation: Teach us to do something		