

## 2014-15 Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture

Erin Melo

[emelo@wcpss.net](mailto:emelo@wcpss.net)

**Course Overview** - The three modes of communication (Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational) defined in the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century are foundational to the AP Spanish Language and Culture course. The AP course provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency in each of the three modes in the Intermediate to Pre-Advanced range as described in the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners. As such, the AP Spanish Language and Culture course has been designed to provide advanced high school students with a rich and rigorous opportunity to study the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking world that is approximately equivalent to an upper-intermediate college or university Spanish course. It is expected that this course will be offered as the first step in the study of college-level Spanish after approximately three to five years of language study for classroom learners. For native and heritage speakers, there may be a different course of study that leads to the AP Spanish Language and Culture course. Students who are successful in this course and exam may continue their study of college-level Spanish by taking the AP Spanish Literature and Culture course and exam, as well. The AP Spanish Language and Culture course takes a holistic approach to language proficiency and recognizes the complex interrelatedness of comprehension and comprehensibility, vocabulary usage, language control, communication strategies, and cultural awareness. Students should learn language structures in context and use them to convey meaning. In standards-based world language classrooms, the instructional focus is on function and not the examination of irregularity and complex grammatical paradigms about the target language. Language structures should be addressed inasmuch as they serve the communicative task and not as an end goal unto themselves. The AP Spanish Language and Culture course strives to promote both fluency and accuracy in language use and not to overemphasize grammatical accuracy at the expense of communication. In order to best facilitate the study of language and culture, the course is taught in the target language. The AP Spanish Language and Culture course engages students in an exploration of culture in both contemporary and historical contexts. The course develops students' awareness and appreciation of products, both tangible (e.g., tools, books) and intangible (e.g., laws, conventions, institutions); practices (patterns of social interactions within a culture); and perspectives (values, attitudes, and assumptions that underlie both practices and products).

**Academic Expectations** - The curriculum for AP Spanish Language is in-depth and analytical. Because this is an AP level course, students are expected to work diligently, incorporating the language in all areas of the class. This course differs from other Spanish courses: the goal is not mere memorization, vocabulary recognition, etc. Students should strive to understand and synthesize classroom material. This will require higher-order thinking skills as student express opinions, defend their thoughts, compare and contrast, evaluate, and analyze.

Due to the rigor associated with this level of a course, students can expect to have several hours of homework and studying each week. Thorough nightly preparation is crucial for being able to participate in the classroom. Students must accept responsibility for their learning.

This course will be taught and conducted exclusively in Spanish. It is expected that all students perform in the target language during class time, both with the instructor and their peers. Students and parents will be expected to read, sign, and abide by the *Palabra de Honor* document at all times. It is the expectation that all students enrolled in this course take the AP exam.

### **Themes and Sub-Themes for Class:**

#### **Theme: Global Challenges / Los desafíos mundiales**

##### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Economic Issues / Los temas económicos
- Environmental Issues / Los temas del medio ambiente
- Philosophical Thought and Religion / El pensamiento filosófico y la religión
- Population and Demographics / La población y la demografía
- Social Welfare / El bienestar social
- Social Conscience / La conciencia social

#### **Theme: Science and Technology / La ciencia y la tecnología**

##### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Access to Technology / El acceso a la tecnología
- Effects of Technology on Self and Society / Los efectos de la tecnología en el individuo y en la sociedad
- Health Care and Medicine / El cuidado de la salud y la medicina
- Innovations / Las innovaciones tecnológicas
- Natural Phenomena / Los fenómenos naturales
- Science and Ethics / La ciencia y la ética

#### **Theme: Contemporary Life / La vida contemporánea**

##### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Education and Careers / La educación y las carreras profesionales
- Entertainment / El entretenimiento y la diversión
- Travel and Leisure / Los viajes y el ocio
- Lifestyles / Los estilos de vida
- Relationships / Las relaciones personales
- Social Customs and Values / Las tradiciones y los valores sociales
- Volunteerism / El trabajo voluntario

#### **Theme: Personal and Public Identities / Las identidades personales y públicas**

##### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Alienation and Assimilation / La enajenación y la asimilación
- Heroes and Historical Figures / Los héroes y los personajes históricos
- National and Ethnic Identities / La identidad nacional y la identidad étnica
- Personal Beliefs / Las creencias personales
- Personal Interests / Los intereses personales
- Self-Image / La autoestima

## **Theme: Families and Communities / Las familias y las comunidades**

### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Customs and Values / Las tradiciones y los valores
- Education Communities / Las comunidades educativas
- Family Structure / La estructura de la familia
- Global Citizenship / La ciudadanía global
- Human Geography / La geografía humana
- Social Networking / Las redes sociales

## **Theme: Beauty and Aesthetics / La belleza y la estética**

### **Recommended Contexts:**

- Architecture / La arquitectura
- Defining Beauty / Definiciones de la belleza
- Defining Creativity / Definiciones de la creatividad
- Fashion and Design / La moda y el diseño
- Visual & Dramatic Arts / Las artes Visuales y Escénicas
- Language & Literature / El Lenguaje y La Literatura

### **Grading Policies -**

Tests: 40%

Quizzes: 25% (This includes both vocabulary and grammar quizzes)

Classwork: 25% (This includes AP test practice items such as print texts, print/audio, email replies, telephone conversations, persuasive essays, and cultural comparisons)

Homework: 10%