



SPA 513 – 83410 (01W)

Teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Flavia Belpoliti, PhD

Office hours: Wednesdays, 5:00 pm-6:30pm. MyLeoOnline (Zoom), or by appointment

Office phone: 903 886-5271

Email: flavia.belpoliti@etamu.edu (Important note: I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the work week and by the next business day on weekends and holidays.)

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

- Pascual y Cabo, D. & Torres, J. (2021). *Aproximaciones al estudio del español como lengua de herencia*. Milton: Taylor & Francis Group. (Available online at the Waters Library: [ProQuest Central - Aproximaciones \(etamu.edu\)](#))
- Selected articles, book chapters, and videos (see the 'Recursos' folder in D2L-MyLeo)

Other required materials

- Access to a computer with good video interface and a good headset to complete speaking and listening activities. See the *Technology Requirements* section for more details.
- Access to Microsoft Office 365. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. To create a free student account to access MSFT 365, [follow these instructions](#).

Course Description

This graduate course presents a broad introduction to the field of heritage language education, with an emphasis on the teaching of Spanish to US bilingual learners of Hispanic background. Diverse aspects of heritage language acquisition, development and maintenance will be explored, including topics related to US demographics, Hispanic communities, the US Spanish varieties, and the sociopolitical issues of teaching Spanish to Latinx learners. The course will also focus on relevant pedagogical issues and current approaches for curriculum implementations to serve diverse Spanish-speaking populations. The course will be conducted in Spanish; readings will be in Spanish and English.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

- a. Explain and correlate key concepts in the field of Heritage Language Research and Pedagogy.
- b. Describe and critically analyze social, cultural, and pedagogical issues affecting the teaching of Spanish as a minority language in the US.
- c. Revise and compare different instructional approaches to teach Spanish to students of Hispanic heritage in the US.
- d. Advance critical and analytical skills by creating a professional portfolio focused on Spanish as a Heritage Language.

These learning outcomes will be measured through individual and group activities, short presentations, open discussions, and a professional teaching portfolio.

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

In order to measure the level of compliance with the university's Institutional Effectiveness guidelines, I will collect some of the ungraded materials you will produce for the class. These materials will be part of a portfolio created on your behalf and will be measured to ensure that our program "promotes practices that result in higher student academic achievement; an enhanced student experience; aligned and transparent decisions; and readily available information for improvement, accountability, and accreditation" (Institutional Effectiveness, www.ETAMU.edu/aboutus/institutionalEffectiveness.aspx). This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students' grades or GPAs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Presentation

This online course will be delivered through ETAMU's MyLeoOnline (MSL) platform. You will use your ETAMU MyLeo account to access the platform and use the course content, which includes short video presentations, readings, discussion threads, and chat/email communication.

The syllabus & schedule are subject to change.

Student Responsibilities

Students' participation is essential and required to succeed in this course. Students are expected to: 1) actively engage in all classroom activities, accessing the course at least twice a week, 2) revise materials by the assigned dates, 3) complete and submit the assignments by the due date, and 4) interact with each other and the instructor on a regular basis.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

a. Course communication. Good communication in an online setting is a fundamental component of success. Please consider the different types of media available for communication with your instructor and classmates, in individual and group formats. Please follow [Netiquette rules](#) to keep our conversation professional, engaging, and polite.

During the semester, we will use three main means of communication:

- *Announcements:* General tool for course communication; I will post short messages or reminders related to due dates or changes in the assignments.
- *Email:* Please only use the official ETAMU Leo Email to communicate with me and your classmates. I will send general emails with information related to the course, date changes, assignments modifications, etc. or with information that relate to our content. I will send individual emails as needed. I will respond to emails in 24 hs. during the work week and by the next business day on weekends and holidays.

To setup the ETAMU email contact **HelpDesk** helpdesk@ETAMU.edu or call 903-468-6000; you may also access information at <https://leo.ETAMU.edu>.

- *General Discussion Board:* Located in the "General Resources" folder, this board is open to all participants; anyone can post a comment, question or suggestion related or unrelated to the course. All students are encouraged to participate and post responses; I will visit this board regularly.

b. Feedback and assessment: You will receive detailed feedback on HW, discussion posts and other tasks 72 hours after the activity is due (see the 'Tentative Course Schedule' for details). Participation in the discussion boards will be assessed through a comprehensive rubric (see the "Course Resources" folder for details).

Minimal Technical Skills

Students in this course are expected to:

- a. access, navigate and use the diverse tools included in the course shell (MyLeoOnline - D2L). This includes how to turn-in assignments, how to upload video and audio recordings, how to participate and respond in the discussion boards, and how to access and use the quiz tool. See the *Introduction* folder for more details.
- b. manage ETAMU Library resources for academic research. See the *Resources* folder for details;

- c. competent management of MSFT Office tools (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.). To create a free student account to access Office 365, [follow these instructions](#). **Important note:** I will not accept assignments through Google Docs links or similar.

Course Content

This graduate course follows a critical approach to Heritage Spanish language pedagogy, which requires in-depth analysis and constant reflection from students. Main activities include guided readings; online discussion; data analysis (both quantitative and qualitative), and design and evaluation of activities for teaching Spanish as a heritage language. The course is divided into five units (about three weeks each). In addition to these topics, other related themes may be included as the course progresses, based on students' goals and interests:

- *Unit I: Key concepts in Heritage Language Education.* General introduction to the field of Heritage Languages Education and its relevance in multicultural communities; main concepts and approaches.
- *Unit II: Spanish Heritage Language Learners.* Introduction to the demography of Spanish Heritage Learners; analysis of linguistic, sociocultural and socioaffective features.
- *Unit III: Language ideologies and the teaching of Spanish(es) in the US.* Main issues on perception, attitudes and ideologies in the SHL classrooms. Spanish dialects, norms and prestige; translanguaging and SHL speakers.
- *Unit IV: Current approaches to teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language:* Main trends in Heritage Language Pedagogy curriculum design, including critical language awareness, sociolinguistics, multiliteracies, and macro-approaches.
- *Unit V: Effective strategies and practices for teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language.* Analysis of Spanish as a Heritage Language programs; principles on SHL course design; implementations to teach vocabulary, grammar, culture, reading and writing.

GRADING

Activities & assessments

1. **Unit HW (30% of the final grade).** You will complete five analytical activities related to each unit topic. These activities include data analysis, assessment of resources, and teaching material design; please note that some of these activities will be completed in small groups. Please see the Schedule for relevant dates.
2. **Online forum / Conversaciones (20% of the final grade).** Interaction and discussion of topics will be conducted by participating in [bi-weekly discussion forums](#). The forums will include short analytical activities, complementary examples or cases, or sets of questions related to the readings and complementary materials. Students will participate by posting

their answers to these activities/ questions, and offering their critical interpretations, counterexamples or discussion of particular cases. Students are expected to complete a minimum of 3 postings per forum (initial response + interaction with classmates; about 300-350 words each, in academic Spanish). Postings will be evaluated for content understanding, reasoning, interaction with peers, and language conventions usage. Please see Online Discussion Rubric in the 'Recursos' folder for details.

3. Teaching Portfolio (50% of the final grade). An important outcome of this course is the development and organization of an online teaching portfolio that will continue to grow as you gain experience and advance in the Heritage Spanish field. The portfolio compiles different documents that showcase critical understanding of key issues in the field, analytical and communicative skills, and advanced abilities to locate, evaluate and adapt relevant resources for teaching Heritage Spanish in the US. The final portfolio will consist of five main components: (1) Teaching philosophy statement; (2) Needs-analysis instrument; (3) Content unit on a relevant HS topic; (4) textbook evaluation report; (5) Compilation and review of digital resources (websites, companion digital materials, apps, video series, etc.) to support teaching and learning Spanish in the U.S. Please see the folder "Portfolio" for details.

Grade distribution

Units HW:	30% (6 x 5%)
Online discussions:	20%
Teaching Portfolio:	50% (philosophy statement; need analysis; lesson unit; textbook/resource review; digital resources compilation)
Total:	100%

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 100%-90% B = 89%-80% C = 79%-70% D = 69%-60% F = 59% or Below

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

1. Participation

- Participation and interaction are fundamental to succeeding in this course. You are expected to actively engage with the instructor, your classmates and the course content while completing the different activities in order to achieve the learning outcomes of this course. For more information, please see "University Procedures Policies" in the next section of the syllabus.

- Students who require special accommodation for religious holidays should make arrangements with their instructor during the first week of class.

2. Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

3. Withdraws & Incomplete grade.

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLeo account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled “Drop a class” from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the web page.

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Incomplete grades (a grade of “X”) are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances which are fully documented; students requesting an incomplete grade should contact the instructor as soon as possible, provide all pertinent documentation, and sign the ‘X’ grade contract which details the coursework they need to complete to pass the class.

4. Grievance procedures.

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Director of the Spanish Program, Dr. Flavia Belpoliti (flavia.belpoliti@etamu.edu). If there are still unresolved issues, students need to schedule an appointment with the Department Head, Dr. Hunter Hayes, by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the Main Office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities, Dr. Joseph Romero, after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05 (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

5. Statement on the use of AI

At East Texas A&M University we recognize that there are potentially legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Co-Pilot, etc.), or other software that can generate human-like discourse. AI is a powerful tool for searching and consolidating information; as with any other tool, it requires that faculty and students carefully evaluate *when* and *how* its ethical use supports our teaching and learning goals.

For achieving the core goals of our course —developing critical understanding of all issues that surrounds the teaching of a minority language in the US, and designing, producing, and evaluating effective resources to teach Heritage Spanish—, using AI offers little or no help. Therefore, the use of AI to respond to the weekly prompts or complete any graded assignment is not allowed; undisclosed use of AI constitutes a case of Academic Dishonesty.

NOTE: Please consult with your instructor before using AI for idea generation, revising and editing own writing, and/or completing translation tasks. See more details in the “Recursos” folder.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](#)

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.ETAMU.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is borrowing the work of others and not giving credit where credit is due. It is unethical and reflects very poorly on a person’s character. Copying someone else's work or asking a friend or tutor to write your work constitutes a violation of the ETAMU Academic Honesty Policy. Likewise, the use of Artificial Intelligence engines to complete or translate your work to Spanish is also unacceptable. Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work.

Students with Disabilities - ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that

provides reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services

East Texas A&M University

Waters Library - Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@ETAMU.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.ETAMU.edu/counsel

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

This course schedule is subject to revisions and changes as the instructor deems necessary. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced on the course website in advance.

Dates	Content & Activities	Readings & Assignments
Week 1 8/25-8/31	Course presentation <i>Key concepts in Heritage Language Education.</i> General introduction to the field of Heritage Languages Education.	Print and read syllabus Complete Student Survey Participate in Conversación 'Bienvenida' Revise assigned sources
9/1	<i>Labor Day Holiday – Campus closed</i>	
Week 2 9/1-9/7	<i>Key concepts in Heritage Language Education.</i> Definitions and debates on heritage languages.	Revise assigned sources. Prepare and turn in HW I (Due date Sunday 9/7)
Week 3 9/8-9/14	<i>Spanish Heritage Language Learners.</i> Introduction to the demography of Spanish Heritage Learners; analysis of sociolinguistic, cultural and socioaffective features.	Revise assigned sources Participate in Conversación 1 (online forum) <i>September 10th. Fall Census Day</i>
Week 4 9/15-9/21	<i>Spanish Heritage Language Learners.</i> Introduction to the demography of Spanish Heritage Learners; analysis of sociolinguistic, cultural and socioaffective features.	Revise assigned sources Prepare and turn in HW II (Due date Sunday 7/21) Prepare needs-analysis instrument
Week 5 9/22-9/28	<i>Language ideologies and the teaching of Spanish(es) in the US.</i> US Spanish dialects, norms and prestige. Translanguaging.	Revise assigned sources Participate in Conversación 2 (online forum)
Week 6 9/29-10/4	<i>Language ideologies and the teaching of Spanish(es) in the US.</i> Main issues on perception, attitudes and ideologies in the SHL classrooms.	Revise assigned sources Prepare and turn in HW III (Due date Sunday 10/4)
Week 7 10/6-10/12	<i>Current approaches to teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language:</i> critical language awareness, multiliteracies, sociolinguistics, and macro-approaches.	Revise assigned sources Participate in Conversación 3 (online forum)
Week 8 10/13-10/19	<i>Current approaches to teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language:</i> critical language awareness, multiliteracies, sociolinguistics, and macro-approaches.	Revise assigned sources Prepare content unit for portfolio Prepare and turn in HW IV (Due date Sunday 10/13)
Week 9 10/19-10/26	<i>Current approaches to teaching Spanish as a Heritage Language:</i> critical language awareness, multiliteracies, sociolinguistics, and macro-approaches.	Revise assigned sources Participate in Conversación 4 (online forum) Prepare content unit for portfolio

The syllabus & schedule are subject to change.

Week 10 10/27-11/3	<i>Spanish as a Heritage Language: classroom practices.</i> Analysis of SHL programs; implementations to teach grammar, culture, reading and writing; principles for SHL syllabus design.	Revise assigned sources Prepare and turn in HW V (Due date Sunday 11/3) <i>October 30th. Last day to drop (no refund)</i>
Week 11 11/4-11/9	<i>Spanish as a Heritage Language: classroom practices.</i> Analysis of SHL programs; implementations to teach grammar, culture, reading and writing; principles for SHL syllabus design.	Revise assigned sources Participate in Conversación 5 (online forum) Prepare textbook report for portfolio
Week 12 11/17-11/24	<i>Spanish as a Heritage Language: classroom practices.</i> Analysis of SHL programs; implementations to teach grammar, culture, reading and writing; principles for SHL syllabus design.	Revise assigned sources Prepare and turn in HW VI (Due date Sunday 11/24) Prepare digital resource compilation and review for portfolio <i>November 21st. Last day to withdraw (no refund)</i>
11/26-11/30	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – Campus closed</i>	
Week 13 12/1-12/7	<i>Spanish as a Heritage Language: classroom practices.</i> Analysis of SHL programs; implementations to teach grammar, culture, reading and writing; principles for SHL syllabus design.	Prepare philosophy statement for portfolio Participate in Conversación 6 (online forum) <i>Last day of classes: 12/5.</i>
Week 14 (Finals week) 12/8-12/12	Turn-in the professional portfolio. Due date: Tuesday, December 9th, 11:59pm.	

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the MyLeoOnline Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

The syllabus & schedule are subject to change.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@ETAMU.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, an ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.

- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or point release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2L supports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:

512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred

Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive

Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

To participate in this course, **you must have:**

- Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer

The syllabus & schedule are subject to change.

- Speakers or headphones.
- Webcam and microphone

Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: [JAVA www.java.com/en/manual.jsp](http://www.java.com/en/manual.jsp)
Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

Pop-ups are allowed.

JavaScript is enabled.

Cookies are enabled.

You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:

[Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)

[Adobe Flash Player \(version 17 or later\) https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/)

[Adobe Shockwave Player https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/](https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/)

[Apple Quick Time http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)