



SPA 597 – 30347 01W

Designing Language Teaching Materials

COURSE SYLLABUS: Mini-May 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Flavia Belpoliti, PhD

Office Location: David Talbot Hall (DTH) 318

Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:00pm-6:30 (online), or by appointment

University Email Address: flavia.belpoliti@etamu.edu

Communication Response Time: I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the work week and by the next business day on weekends and holidays.

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

1. ACTFL *Guiding Principles for Language Learning* [available online: [ACTFL Principles](#)]
2. Compilation of articles and resources, available in *MyLeoOnline*
3. Access to H5P [free for activity design: [H5P – Create and Share Rich HTML5 Content](#)]
4. To fully participate in the online meetings, a good headset with microphone and computer camera are required.

Course Description

Grounded in materials development theory and research (Tomlinson 2013, Green 2023, Grewal et al., 2024), this intensive course engages participants in analyzing diverse teaching materials for language development, exploring differentiation strategies and examining skill integration approaches. Drawing upon prior knowledge of second- and heritage language learning theories, pedagogical approaches, and affective learner characteristics, participants

will design age- and proficiency-appropriate materials that promote meaningful engagement and effective learning in their teaching contexts.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Articulate a principled theoretical framework for language learning and teaching to inform materials development and implementation.
2. Evaluate and analyze language teaching materials using research-based criteria related to language acquisition, communicative competence development, and pedagogical effectiveness.
3. Design and create age- and proficiency-appropriate materials that integrate language skills and promote meaningful engagement with authentic language.
4. Apply differentiation strategies to create materials that address the diverse needs, wants, and socioaffective characteristics of language learners.

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" (see "Department of Institutional Effectiveness," www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/institutionaleffectiveness/default.aspx). This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students' course grades or GPAs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Presentation

This intensive online course will be delivered through TAMUC's MyLeoOnline (D2L) platform. You will use your TAMUC MyLeo account to access the platform and navigate the course content, which includes short video presentations, readings, multimedia materials, discussion threads, and video conferencing tools.

The course is organized around four learning units which focus on relevant aspects of developing and accessing pedagogical materials for teaching Spanish as second- and/or heritage language.

Unit 1: Core principles in language teaching and learning. Principles in pedagogical materials design for language learning.

Unit 2: Pedagogical materials for language development.

Unit 3: Pedagogical materials for communicative and intercultural competence development.

Unit 4: Digital technologies and digital resources in language education; language teacher's digital competence. Assessing and adapting language teaching resources.

Minimal Technical Skills

Students in this course are expected to be able to:

- a. manage ETAMU Library resources for advanced academic research;
- b. competently use MSFT Office tools (Word, Excel, PPoint);
- c. access, navigate and use the diverse tools included in the course MyLeoOnline (D2L).

Student Responsibilities

Students' participation is essential and required to succeed in this course. Students are expected to: 1) read and prepare assigned materials by the due dates; 2) actively engage in class communication via forum discussions and virtual meetings; 3) complete and submit 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 TAMUC 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 TAMUC email contact **HelpDesk** helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call 903-468-6000; you may also access information at <https://leo.tamuc.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 be received detailed feedback on article presentations and participation 72 hours after the activity is completed (see the 'Tentative Course Schedule' for details). Participation in the online meetings and discussion boards will be assessed through a comprehensive rubric (see the "Recursos" folder for details).

GRADING

Activities & assessments

- *Participation* (15% of final grade). Participation in this course will be completed by engaging in weekly forums and revising and commenting on the videorecorded meetings.
- *Weekly HW* (45% of final grade): Participants will complete diverse activities and short projects related to pedagogical materials design and evaluation; the activities will include a reflective section in which participants will demonstrate their understanding of theoretical frameworks and concepts. Each activity will include descriptive and critical analysis, assessment from a principled perspective on language teaching and learning, and adaptations for diverse educational contexts. See details in the 'Recursos' folder.
- *Bibliography research paper* (40% of final grade). Students will prepare a *critical bibliographic essay* (12-15 pages + references) on one topic of interest regarding material design for teaching and learning Spanish. Possible topics include but are not limited to: effective activities for intercultural competence; effective activities for interactional communication; effective activities for language development; digital different speech acts; politeness and cultural understanding; inferential meaning and literature understanding and appreciation; irony and humor in Spanish, etc.). The essay will be based in a critical revision of a minimum of 12 academic sources, and it will include a personal reflection based on the readings. See details in the 'Recursos' folder.

Grade distribution

Participation	15% (online forums, 3 x 5%)
Weekly HW	45% (3 x 15%)
Bibliographic research paper	40%
Total	100%

Grading Scale: A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-60 F= 59>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

1. Coursework

No late work will be accepted in this course, without exceptions. Work should be submitted on the due date provided in the class schedule. Failure to submit an assignment on time will

result in a zero (F) grade. In the case of an emergency or other reasonable situation which may affect your submissions or participation in assessments (quizzes, presentations, interviews, etc.), please contact your instructor immediately.

Students who require special accommodation for religious holidays should make arrangements with the 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 Code of Student Conduct. Incomplete grades (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 their 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. Charles Woods, by completing a **Student Grievance Form** (available in the **Department 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 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 and, as with any other tool, it requires that faculty and students carefully evaluate *when* and *how* its ethical use supports our goals.

For achieving the core goals of our course, using AI offers little or no help. Therefore, **the use of “AI” to respond to the discussion prompts or complete any graded assignment is not allowed, unless directly indicated in the instructions.** 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.tamuc.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>

TAMUC Attendance

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

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

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement - Students with Disabilities

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

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

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

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

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 Texas A&M University-Commerce 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.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

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.

Important note: As this is a very intensive class, there is no extension on due dates.

Weeks	Topics	Readings & Activities
5/11- 5/17	Foundational concepts on language teaching. Language teacher as material designer. Principles in pedagogical materials design.	ACTFL Guiding Principles in Language Teaching Ezeiza Ramos 2009 Green, 2023 Spiro, 2022 Tomlison, 2013 Littlejohn 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Student survey • Complete week readings • Participate in forum I (due Thursday 5/14) • Complete HW I (due on Sunday 5/17)
5/18-5/24	Designing materials for language development. Designing materials for communicative skills. Designing cultural-responsive materials.	Grewal et al, 2024 Ur, 2022 Uchihara & Webb, 2022 Thornbury, 2022 Fenner & Newby 2000 Baquero Herrera et al. 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete week readings • Select topic for bibliographic essay; begin bibliographic research • Participate in forum II (due Thursday 5/21) • Complete HW II (due on Sunday 5/24)
5/25	Memorial Day	
5/25-5/28	Materials development and digital technologies. Evaluating and adapting materials.	Tomlinson, 2013 Littlejohn, 2011 Sedano Cuevas et al., 2023 (Caps. 4-5) Marco de Referencia de la Competencia Digital Docente , 2022 (Intro, área 1 y área 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete week readings • Participate in forum III (due Wednesday 5/27) • Complete HW III (due on Thursday 5/28) • Turn-in bibliographic essay (due on Thursday 5/28)

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online 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

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

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@tamuc.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, a TAMUC 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>