



SPA 1311 – (9BE)
ELEMENTARY SPANISH I
COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Arturo Castillo

Office Hours: 10:32-11:22 AM

University Email Address: Arturo.Castillo@etamu.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

- Brown, E., Escudero, A., Montoya, M. & Small, E. (2021). [Chévere – Spanish I](#). [CC BY]. Lumen Waymaker.
- Hernández, P. (2020). [Pluma: historias en español. Vol. 1](#). [CC BY NC SA]
- A good Spanish-English bilingual dictionary (for instance: *Harper Collins' Spanish Concise Dictionary*. New York: Harper Collins; *Diccionario Español-Inglés Cumbre*. Madrid: Everest.

Other required materials: Access to a computer with good audio and video interface; also recommended a good headset to complete speaking and listening activities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Beginning Spanish I (SPA 1311) is the first course in the four-course sequence of the Spanish Language Program at ETAMU. The course has been designed for second-language learners (this is, students whose first language is not Spanish). The Spanish Program has adapted the performance standards based on the ACTFL framework; considering these standards, students will continue developing competence in the three communicative modes, and they are expected to reach the **Novice-Mid level** by the end of the course (ACTFL 2026). In addition, students will also advance their intercultural competence by exploring cultural products, practices and perspectives from Hispanic communities in the US and around the world. Students will make comparisons across languages and cultures and will recognize the ways in which Spanish extends beyond the classroom into the global community.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, students who have successfully completed all activities and requirements will be able to perform the following tasks in Spanish:

1. Identify some cultural products and practices from a variety of Hispanic cultures; identify and use cultural appropriated rehearsed behaviors in everyday situations.
2. Request and provide information on very familiar topics, describe people, objects and places, and share personal perspectives using practiced phrases and simple sentences in Spanish.
3. Understand the main idea and some isolated facts on informational, descriptive and instructional Spanish texts dealing with very familiar topics.

4. Provide basic information and express personal perspectives about very familiar topics, using practiced phrases and simple sentences in Spanish.

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, <http://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

Student Responsibilities

Students' participation is essential and required to succeed in this course. Students are expected to: 1) actively engage in all classroom activities, including the in-person class meetings, 2) read and prepare assigned materials by the due dates, 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.
- *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 TAMUC Library resources for academic research. See the *Resources* folder for details;
- c. Competently use MSFT Office tools (Word, Excel, PPoint).

- d. **Important note: I will not accept links to documents so be ready to convert and revise your work in MSFT Word or Adobe PDF formats.**

GRADING

Method of Evaluation

Chapter Exams (4x8%)	32%
Homework	28%
Communication Tasks (5 x 2%)	10%
Participation: (15 weeks x 1%)	15%
Final Exam: Integrative Performance Assessment (3 parts)	15%
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

Activities & assessments

Chapter exams (32% final grade):

There will be four exams based on units' contents, focusing on vocabulary, language structures, language strategies and cultural content. Each test represents 8% of the final grade. For relevant dates please see "Tentative Course Schedule".

Weekly homework (28% final grade):

Students will complete diverse exercises every week based on the content unit. Some of the activities will be audio recordings and videos, so please make sure you have access to a computer with good video and sound capabilities. The activities are expected to be completed by the due date and they will be evaluated by level of completion and accuracy. Weekly activities represent 28% of the final grade.

Communication tasks (10% of final grade):

There will be 5 communication tasks. These will mimic the three linguistic tasks evaluated in the Final IPA: Presentational (Individual speaking or writing), Interpersonal (in a group or with a partner) and Interpretive (Reading or Listening.) The activities are expected to be completed by the due date and they will be evaluated by level of completion and accuracy. Communication Tasks represent 10% of the final grade.

Participation (15% of final grade):

For each class meeting, students will engage in a number of communication tasks. Attendance and full participation in class is required for full credit. Participation represents 15% of the final grade.

Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) (15% of final grade):

This Spanish course has incorporated the Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) framework as primary model for assessing students' progress. An Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) will be given at the end of the semester in order to assess learner fluency. It will consist of two parts: Interpretive and Presentational. Following the CARLA (2019) description, IPA is "a set of interrelated linguistic tasks which allows students to demonstrate their Spanish competence on the three modes of communication: *Interpretive* (reading/listening and completing a comprehension activity); *Interpersonal* (interacting with another student or the instructor); and *Presentational* (writing or orally presenting information to an audience). The three tasks are aligned within a single theme, reflecting the manner in which learners will naturally use the language in the real world beyond the classroom.

NOTE: Students are required to complete each full IPA cycle (all portions) in order to be assessed; incomplete cycles cannot be evaluated, therefore if the student misses any of the tasks, the resulting grade will be 0 (zero).

Each IPA cycle will be evaluated with scoring rubrics that rate performance in terms of whether the task meets expectations, exceeds expectations, or does not meet expectations. More information will be presented later in the semester as well as on the “IPA” module on the course page.

Extra-credit

The Spanish Program at East Texas A&M presents a variety of events each semester and invites you to actively participate. 3 extra-points will be granted after attending the event/s and completing the assigned activities.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

1. Participation

Participation and attendance are fundamental to succeeding in this course. Attendance to the weekly meetings is mandatory. Absences due to unexpected situations count as absences. The only justified absences are those resulting from mandatory participation in university events, hospitalization, or family emergencies of which the instructor has been notified.

- **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 me immediately.
- 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 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 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@tamuc.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 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 we, 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 activity 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, in the classroom and in online environments, as described in the Code of Student Conduct. For more information, please see [Student Guidebook](#). In addition, students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with peers, instructors and/or administrators in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

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

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 TAMUC Academic Honesty Policy. Likewise, the use of electronic media or algorithmically (AI) plagiarized work used to 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.

- Students who commit academic dishonesty will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment in the course and be issued a Written Warning that is reported to the CID Assistant Dean’s office and listed in a database.
- If the student does NOT have a previous Written Warning for academic dishonesty reported in CID courses and has additional attempts available for the assignment, the student may resubmit the assignment (this applies to CBE courses only).
- If the student has a Written Warning of academic dishonesty reported in CID courses, the student may NOT resubmit the assignment, and the instructor will follow the procedure detailed in Policy 13.99.99.R0.03 for Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty and report the incident to the Provost Office.

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 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: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.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 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.

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

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

Date	Activities	Readings & Assignments
SEMANA 1		
8/20-8/23	Introducción al curso, estrategias lingüísticas y OER Capítulo 1: ¡Hola! ¿Cómo te llamas?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 2		
8/24-8/30	Capítulo 1: ¡Hola! ¿Cómo te llamas? Communication Task #1	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 3		
8/31-9/6	Capítulo 1: ¡Hola! ¿Cómo te llamas? Capítulo 2: ¿Eres estudiante?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 4		
9/7	LABOR DAY-No hay clase	
9/7-9/13	Capítulo 2: ¿Eres estudiante?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 5		
9/14-9/20 9/16	Capítulo 2: ¿Eres estudiante? Examen #1: Capítulos 1-2 Capítulo 3: ¿Qué clases tomas?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 6		
9/21-9/27	Capítulo 3: ¿Qué clases tomas? Communication Task #2	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 7		
9/28-10/4	Capítulo 4: ¿Tienes prisa?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 8		
10/5-10/11 10/7	Capítulo 4: ¿Tienes prisa? Examen #2: Capítulos 3- 4 Communication Task #3	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 9		
10/12-10/18	Capítulo 5: ¿Quiénes son los miembros de una familia?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 10		
10/19-10/25	Capítulo 5: ¿Quiénes son los miembros de una familia? Capítulo 6: ¿Necesito un suéter?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 11		
10/26-11/1 10/28	Capítulo 6: ¿Necesito un suéter? Examen #3: Capítulos 5- 6 Communication Task #4	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 12		
11/2-11/8	Capítulo 7: ¿Dónde están mis llaves?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 13		
11/9-11/15	Capítulo 7: ¿Dónde están mis llaves? Capítulo 8: ¿Cómo pasas tu tiempo libre?	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 14		
11/16-11/22 11/28	Capítulo 8: ¿Cómo pasas tu tiempo libre? Examen #4: Capítulos 7-8 Communication Task #5	Tarea Semanal
SEMANA 15		
11/23-11/29	THANKSGIVING BREAK	

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

SEMANA 16		
12/2	Integrative Performance Assessment- Interpretive Task	
12/4	Integrative Performance Assessment- Interpersonal Task	
SEMANA 17		
12/8	Integrative Performance Assessment – Presentational Task	

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>

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.

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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

You must have a:

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

Speakers or headphones.

***For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.**

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 web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp](http://www.java.com/en/download/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.

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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](https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/) (version 17 or later) <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/>

At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.