

SPAN 1391 Spanish for Legal Assistants
Fall 2012
Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

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Office: 432-335-6547
Office Hours: To be announced
Class Meets:
Time:
Days:
Course Dates: Please consult the online OC calendar each semester at:
<http://www.odessa.edu/calendar/>

Welcome!

Hello class, my name is Juan Soto, and I will be your instructor for the next 15/16 weeks. I am looking forward to a fun and interactive 15/16 weeks of Spanish for Legal Assistants..!

I. Required Texts:

1. *Spanish for Attorneys and Paralegals* with Audio CDs (Book and Audio CD) (Paperback), by William C. Harvey, M.S. Barron's.
2. *McGraw- Hill's Spanish and English Legal Dictionary: Diccionario Jurídico Inglés-Español*, by Henry Saint Dahl. McGraw Hill.

II. Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the Spanish language and Spanish Legal Terminology for Legal Assistants. Emphasizes on teaching practical Spanish and focuses on **conversation**: pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. Presents basic grammar and composition. The course will include the necessary oral practice of dialogues reflecting the most common legal situations to communicate in Spanish with Spanish - speaking clients. Concentrates on words and phrases likely to be used in law offices, courtrooms and similar settings, and which pertain to contracts, wills, real estate transactions, law suits, legal right issues, misdemeanors and felonies.

III. Course Credits: 3 lecture hours.

IV. Prerequisite(s): Basic knowledge of the Spanish language in the following areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

V. Instructional Methods

Even though the instructor will be using English at some times, the instructor will be using more Spanish as the semester progresses in order to provide the students the opportunity to listen to and practice Spanish. English will be used by the Instructor only to clarify and explain difficult words or concepts. The student shall strive to use Spanish in class as much as possible. For the success of the learning of the language, students are also expected to use their Spanish in daily life. IF YOU DON'T HEAR AND SPEAK SPANISH, YOU WILL NOT LEARN IT.

VI. Student Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives:

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. Comprehend words, phrases and sentences in standard written and spoken Spanish.
Speak using words, phrases and sentences to ask/give information in Spanish. Write short simple sentences and paragraphs using learned vocabulary and grammatical structures to express feelings and ideas.
2. Understand colloquial spoken Spanish.
3. Communicate with their Spanish -speaking clients using basic vocabulary and phrases most used in law offices, courtrooms, and similar settings.

VII. Classroom Policies

1. Attendance

Attendance is required for success in this course. To help you succeed, you are required to attend at least eighty percent of class meetings, which means you may miss a total of 6 classes during the semester; but your instructor will lower your grade in the course as per the following absence-based table:

1 absence	3.57 points
2 absences	7.14 points (3.57 points per absence X 2 absences)
And so on...	

Please note that this may affect your financial aid and athletic eligibility. Also note that two tardies equal one absence. If you miss an important in-class assignment or do not turn in an assignment due to an absence (except for medical emergencies, jury duty, official OC business or athletics), you will get a maximum of 50% credit. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what was assigned and to have those assignments ready at the next class meeting. Since two tardies will be considered equivalent to an absence, please note that being routinely

late to class will also affect your grade in this course. Please note, also, that if you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be considered absent for that day.

2. Late work

I may accept late assignments based on the exceptions mentioned above, but you will receive partial credit (maximum of a 50%). Remember, to be successful in this course, all work should be submitted in a timely manner.

3. Classroom Behavior

I expect you to be respectful towards other students and myself during class and in any online interactions such as discussion forums or on e-mail. When a person, whether it is me or another student, is speaking, please do not interrupt or hold conversations about topics that are not relevant to this class. I do encourage you to make comments, to ask questions, and to raise class concerns. You will be given the opportunity to do so. Also, if I have given you an individual or group assignment in class, I expect you to work on it for the allotted time. We will have periodic group and class discussions, and I ask that you be respectful to your classmates at all times.

If behavior occurs that violates this policy, I will ask the student(s) to correct the behavior. If I have to do this more than a couple of times during the semester, or if the student refuses to correct the behavior at the time I ask, I will give the student an official warning, ask him/her to leave the class, and he/she will be counted absent and receive a zero for any activities done that day, even if those activities have already been concluded. This warning will be made in class and a copy will be sent to the student and to the appropriate administrators:

- If a student interrupts me or another student who is contributing to class discussion.
- If students are holding conversations about material that is not relevant to class.
- If a student is rude, belligerent, or otherwise disruptive.
- If a student has non-course materials out after I have announced the beginning of class.
- If a student submits any disruptive, inappropriate, or offensive posts on the online class forums.

If you violate any aspect of the classroom behavior policy again after the warning, or if there is any case of very disruptive or disrespectful behavior, the same penalties will be given (counted absent, grades for the day forfeited), and I will consult the Dean of Arts and Science about further disciplinary action.

If you have questions or concerns regarding an issue that pertains to the whole class, such as a question about assignment instruction, please ask. If you have questions or concerns regarding an issue that pertains only to you, such as a question about a grade on one of your papers, please discuss that with me during office hours or some other arranged time.

4. Phone use

I do not permit mobile phone use in my classroom. Please keep your phone turned off unless you are expecting an emergency call. If you are expecting an emergency call, please inform me at the beginning of class to get my permission to keep your phone turned on. Your phone should remain out of sight at all times. If you make a phone call, answer a phone call, send or read a text a message during class, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent for the day. All assignments turned in on that day will be returned to you and counted late.

VIII. Grading:**a) Grading Scale:**

90.0-100 = A 80.0 - 89.9 = B 70.0 -79.9 = C 60.0 – 69.9 = D 0 – 59.9 = F

b) Student Evaluation:

Please note that all students are expected to complete all assignments and tests. If you are unable to come in for an exam on time due to an illness or family emergency, please contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements.

Students will be evaluated as follows:

Oral class preparation and participation	50 (1 session=up to 3.57 points/100)
Homework	40 (7.14 points per assignment/100)
Final	10
Total.....	100

Extra Credit:

1)Spanish Tutoring at the SSC: 15 points toward your final grade (up to 3 points for every hour session with the Spanish tutor and up to 15 points for a total of 5 meetings with the tutor. The tutor's name is Brenda Muñiz and you may contact the SSC center for her work schedule.

2) 14-15 hand-outs: 15 points toward your final grade.

3) Perfect Attendance: 10 points toward your final grade.

The instructor is not responsible for dropping or withdrawing students from the course. It is student's responsibility to drop/withdraw the course with the Registrar's.

Student Success Coaches

The Odessa College Student Success Coaches will help you stay focused and on track to complete your educational goals. If an instructor sees that you might need additional help or success coaching, he or she may submit a Retention Alert or a Starfish Alert. A Student Success Coach will contact you to work toward a solution.

IX. Course Schedule:

Week	Readings and Exercises
1	Chapter 1: Intro to Spanish -The Spanish alphabet and pronunciation, common expressions, numbers, vocabulary, basic grammar, colors. -Spanish Conversation activities: "Para Comunicarnos mejor (Episodios 1)"
	- The verbs "to be" and "to have"; most common infinitive verbs, basic verb tenses.

2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spanish-English Cognates (Legal terminology). - Spanish Conversation activities: “Para Comunicarnos mejor (Episodio 2).”
3	Chapter 2: The Law Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Common Spanish words, sentences and phrases used by Attorneys and Paralegals. -Spanish Conversation activities: Actividades Comunicativas: “Los habitantes en Latinoamérica”(Episodio 3)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parts of the office, instructions, and scheduling. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Números telefónicos (Episodio 4).”
5	Handling of telephone conversations at the office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spanish-English Cognates. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Las actividades de Sofía los fines de semana, en la escuela...” (Episodio 5)
6	Chapter 3: The Courthouse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General overview of the local, state, and federal departments within a courthouse facility. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Actividades en comun con la familia, amigos”; (Episodio 6)” “Crucigrama” (Episodio 6)
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description of the courtroom itself. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Los planes para el fin de semana” (Episodio 7)
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-trial conversations and instructions related to standard courtroom behavior, court procedures, and case specific requirements. - Spanish Conversation activities “Actividades, obligaciones, deseos y planes semanales” (Episodio 8) <p style="text-align: center;">*Mid-term Exam*</p>
9	Chapter 4: Immigration, Personal Injury, and Family Law. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -General terminology, expressions, questions, and statements in Spanish related to cases involving immigration, personal injury, and family law. -Spanish Conversation activities: “¿Cuánto ejercicio deseo hacer/ejercicio y dieta” (Episodio 9)
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spanish-English Cognates (Legal terminology and vocabulary) - Spanish Conversation activities:”La historia va así..” -Orden Cronológico- (Episodio 10)
	Chapter 5: Business, finances, and Real Estate law

11	-Bankruptcy, tax, and real estate law vocabulary. - Spanish Conversation activities: “¿Qué hace Manolo los sábados? –Orden Cronológico- (Episodio 10)
12	- Words and phrases related to business, collections and probate law. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Actividades comunicativas (Episodios 1)”
13	-Vocabulary required guiding clients through a variety of standard banking activities. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Actividades comunicativas (Episodios 4)”
14	- Warrant issue, arrest, investigation, preliminary hearings, trial procedures, and sentencing. - Spanish Conversation activities: “Actividades comunicativas (Episodios 8)”
15/16	- Building a case for and against the defendant. - Spanish-English Cognates. Spanish Conversation activities: Actividades comunicativas: “Presentacin Oral” (Episodio 6)” Final Exam

X. Scholastic Dishonesty:

The integrity of the Odessa College degree depends on the integrity of the work done for that degree by each student. Odessa College expects a student to maintain a high standard of individual honor in all scholastic work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but it is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student, or the attempt to commit such acts. In cases of such dishonesty, you may either fail an individual paper or other assignment, or you may be subject to a course grade of an “F” as well as to possible action by the dean of the department.

Consequences:

1. First offense. The student will receive a “0” (zero) on the assignment or test.
2. Second offense. The student will receive an “F” for the course.

XI. ‘Incomplete’ Policy

An ‘Incomplete’ grade may be given only if:

1. The student has passed all completed work
2. If he/she has completed a minimum of 75% of the required coursework. A grade of an “I” will only be assigned when the conditions for completions have been discussed and agreed upon by the instructor and the student.

XII. Statement of Special Accommodations (Special Needs)

Odessa College complies with Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have any special needs or issues pertaining to your access to and participation in this or any other class at Odessa College, please feel free to contact me to discuss your concerns. You may, also, call the Office of Disability Services at 335-6861 to request assistance and accommodations.