

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

Spanish Language and Culture for Beginners I

LANG1330

No. of Credits: 3

Pre-/co-requisites: Nil

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Office Hours of Course Leader: Available by appointment only.

Course Description

LANG 1330 is a three-credit, elective course offered to UG students with no prior knowledge of Spanish. Students with a higher level of Spanish proficiency are not eligible for the course. The course covers all language skills—listening, reading, speaking, and writing—with a primary focus on interaction. Students actively participate in practice lessons, complete online homework assignments, and engage in class discussions. By the end of the course, students achieve an A1.1 level proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). They can introduce themselves, ask and answer basic questions, and interact in everyday situations. Small-group classes ensure meaningful interaction between students and instructors.

Devices such as laptops and smart books are required in class exclusively for instructional purposes to complete the assigned activities. Cultural topics are also discussed during the lessons.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. gain an introductory insight into Spanish and the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world;
2. develop a sense of confidence when dealing with Spanish-speaking people and Spanish-language materials in their daily lives; and, more specifically;
3. understand conversational enquiries and simple instructions, notices, and information that they might encounter on a visit to a Spanish-speaking country or when encountering Spanish speakers;
4. make and respond appropriately to everyday conversational enquiries that they might encounter, and give straightforward opinions;
5. acquire a sufficiently accurate pronunciation and intonation of Spanish to be understood by native speakers of the language;
6. understand simple messages relating to people's lives and interests;
7. produce simple messages relating to people's lives and interests;
8. develop basic intuitions about Spanish vocabulary and learn the fundamental principles of Spanish grammar; and
9. understand and appreciate the aspects of the cultures of Spain and Latin America.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided on Canvas, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

Assessments:

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
Pop-Quizzes (in-class)	10%	To be conducted unannounced throughout the course to encourage consistent engagement with the material.
Learning Tasks (out-of-class)	10%	To be completed online after each lesson.
Cultural Discussions (out-of-class)	10%	Weeks 8 and 13*
Oral Assessment (in-class)	30%	Week 13*
Review Quiz (in-class)	40%	Week 13*

*Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within ten working days of the due date.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
<p>Pop Quizzes (in-class)</p> <p>4 pop-quizzes administered at the instructor's discretion during class sessions</p>	ILO1, ILO2, ILO3, ILO8	This task evaluates students' ability to engage actively with the material by applying their understanding of conversational structures (ILO 3) and fundamental grammatical principles (ILO 8). It also fosters confidence (ILO 2) and enhances cultural insight (ILO 1).
<p>Learning Tasks (out-of-class)</p> <p>Interactive practice on Canvas where students can practice and review the content for each lesson.</p>	ILO2, ILO3, ILO8	This task evaluates students' understanding of conversational structures (ILO 3), vocabulary and fundamental grammatical principles (ILO 8). It also fosters confidence (ILO 2) by receiving immediate feedback.
<p>Cultural Discussions (out-of-class)</p> <p>Online discussions on Canvas where students can engage in conversations about various aspects of Spanish culture, such as food, art, music, customs, holidays, and more, and make comparisons with their own culture.</p>	ILO1, ILO6, ILO7, ILO9	The discussions encourage students to articulate culturally relevant while reflecting on cultural differences and similarities (ILO 9). By producing written messages on various cultural topics, students demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively (ILO 7) and develop intercultural competence (ILO 1 and 2).

<p>Oral Assessment (in-class)</p> <p>Students complete a five-minute dialogue with the instructor in pairs.</p>	<p>ILO4, ILO5</p>	<p>This task evaluates students' ability to participate in structured conversations (ILO 4) while demonstrating clear and accurate pronunciation (ILO 5). It emphasizes effective interpersonal communication and the ability to respond in authentic daily conversational scenarios.</p>
<p>Review Quiz (in-class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Comprehension • Vocabulary & Grammar Assessment • Listening Task • Writing Task 	<p>ILO1, ILO3, ILO6, ILO7, ILO8, ILO9</p>	<p>Reading Comprehension: This component develops students' ability to analyse written texts and extract relevant meaning (ILO 3), fostering interpretive skills necessary for understanding information in real-life contexts.</p> <p>Vocabulary & Grammar: This task assesses students' linguistic precision and adaptability through mastery of grammatical structures and vocabulary, ensuring their ability to construct accurate communication (ILO 8).</p> <p>Listening Task: Students' auditory processing skills are evaluated, focusing on their ability to comprehend spoken Spanish in real-life scenarios and respond appropriately, further enhancing their linguistic understanding (ILO 3).</p> <p>Writing Task: This component measures students' ability to produce coherent written messages that reflect cultural awareness and linguistic accuracy, demonstrating their ability to communicate ideas effectively in written form (ILO 7).</p>

Grading Rubrics

Detailed rubrics for each assignment will be provided on Canvas. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Final Grade Descriptors:

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent	Demonstrates excellent achievement across all learning outcomes, and fulfils all assessment criteria. Shows an effective use of familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases. Confidently asks and answers questions about personal details and interacts competently in areas covered.
B	Good	Demonstrates a good achievement in all learning outcomes. Understands and generally uses familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases appropriately. Can ask and answer questions about personal details effectively and interacts suitably in areas covered.
C	Satisfactory	Achieves satisfactory performance in most learning outcomes. Can partially understand and use familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases. Shows basic ability to ask and answer questions about personal details and interacts with limited appropriateness in areas covered.
D	Marginal Pass	Meets minimal standards in a limited number of learning outcomes. Demonstrates difficulty in understanding and using familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases. Has limited ability to ask and answer questions about personal details and interacts poorly in areas covered.
F	Fail	Fails to meet the required standards for a number of learning outcomes and/or does not satisfy the assessment criteria. Unable to understand or use familiar everyday expressions and basic phrases. Cannot effectively ask or answer questions about personal details and is unable to interact appropriately in covered.

Course AI Policy

We encourage students to use all the tools available to support their learning and enhance their ability to communicate effectively in Spanish. We also expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. While there is no penalty for using or not using GenAI, these tools must not be used as a substitute for a student's independent work. The use of GenAI or other tools should be limited to supplementary assistance, such as exploring vocabulary, grammar rules, or cultural insights, and not as a means of generating responses or completing tasks on behalf of the student.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within ten working days of submission. Feedback on assignments will include strengths and areas for improvement where relevant. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Resubmission Policy

Resubmissions are not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Required Texts and Materials

- Eva María Lloret I, Ribas, Rosa et al (2021). ¡Nos Vemos Hoy 1!: Libro del alumno /Cuaderno de ejercicios. Barcelona: Difusión. (ONLINE VERSION)
- Handouts and PowerPoints are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.