

Southwest Missouri State University

Department of Foreign Languages

Course No. SN400

Title of Course: Special Topics: Spanish

Revised _____

New X

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

Designed to cover a variety of knowledge and skills, using a range of topics pertaining to the Spanish-speaking world. Taught in Spanish. May be repeated once for credit. 3 credit hours.

II. Prerequisites:

SN 220.

III. Course Objectives:

- A. To deepen student awareness of a particular aspect of Spanish-language civilizations, cultures, and literatures.
- B. To expand student skills in areas of the target language, including but not limited to: reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and literary criticism.
- C. To improve analytical skills and critical thinking.
- D. To broaden the practical foundation for further exploration in Spanish-language cultures.

IV. Expectations of Students:

- A. Students will attend all class sessions.
- B. Students will participate actively in class discussions related to course material.
- C. Students will complete all assigned work on time, including oral presentations, compositions, outside readings, and examinations.

V. Sample Syllabi:

A. Mexican Culture and International Business Communication

1. Description:

- a. Exploration of the LESCANT approach to international business communication as applied to the case of Mexico. LESCANT is an acronym for the seven work-related values that shift dramatically between the United States and other countries in a business setting: 1) language, 2) environment and technology, 3) social organization, 4) contexting, 5) authority conception, 6) nonverbal communication, and 7) temporal conception.

- b. Depending on availability, speakers will be invited to present their views of various facets of Mexican and/or business culture. These speakers will have direct experience in the area which they present. Speakers may be drawn from international students on campus, professors from Southeast, business people from the Cape Girardeau area, representatives of relief services, etc.
 - c. Apart from lectures, speakers, and readings, films and TV programs will be shown and discussed.
 - d. The course is reading and speaking intensive.
 - e. This topic will satisfy one of the following components of the major program: Skill Courses, Culture, or Electives.
- 2. Objective:** The course will provide a systematic approach to helping US students become aware of the major cross-cultural differences faced in doing business in Mexico. Such cultural awareness will also prove useful to students who are not primarily business-oriented.
- 3. Program:** The course will meet either twice a week for seventy-five minute sessions or once a week for two and a half hours. Material will be divided as follows:
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| Week 1: Introduction to the course. The physical geography of Mexico. The human geography of Mexico. The cultural history of Mexico. | (3 hours) |
| Week 2: Mexican and US relations since the 1920s. Trade relations in the 1980s and 1990s. NAFTA. | (3 hours) |
| Week 3: Environmental and labor problems associated with international business in Mexico: The maquiladoras. Business in the Mexican press. Speaker 1. | (3 hours) |
| Week 4: Unit Exam 1. The LESCANT model: Language. | (3 hours) |
| Week 5: Commercial language in cultural context: Business correspondence. Advertisements. | (3 hours) |
| Week 6: Composition 1: A business letter to be sent to a Mexican company or agency. The LESCANT model: Environment and technology. Specialized vocabulary. | (3 hours) |
| Week 7: The LESCANT model: Social organization. Speaker 2. | (3 hours) |
| Week 8: Unit Exam 2. The LESCANT model: The cultural context. | (3 hours) |
| Week 9: The LESCANT model: Authority conception. Corporate organization. Employee rights. Unions. | (3 hours) |

Week 10: Composition 2: Mexican commercials. The LESCANT model Nonverbal communication.	(3 hours)
Week 11: The LESCANT model: Temporal conception. Speaker 3.	(3 hours)
Week 12: Unit Exam 3. The workplace in Mexico and in the US.	(3 hours)
Week 13: Student presentations and discussions.	(3 hours)
Week 14: Student presentations and discussions.	(3 hours)
Week 15: Composition 3: Advertisements and business coverage in the Mexican press. Student debate: The LESCANT model.	(3 hours)
Week 16: Discussion of course material. Course evaluation. Review for the final exam.	(3 hours)

4. Text books Required:

- a. Fryer, Tissera, *Éxito comercial* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1997). 2nd edition.
- b. Victor, David A. *International Business Communication* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).
- c. Various supplementary materials selected by the professor.

5. Basis for Student Evaluation:

a. Participation/Preparation	15%
b. Three Compositions	15%
c. In-Class Presentation	20%
d. Three Unit Exams	30%
e. Final Exam	20%
f. Three Unit Exams	30%

B. Life and Literature in Franco Spain

1. Description:

- a. A view of post-Civil War Spain during the Franco dictatorship (1939—1975), one of the most important periods for Spanish letters, with special emphasis on the literature and its relationship to life under Franco.
- b. The course is reading and speaking intensive.
- c. In consultation with the instructor, students will specialize in a writer of the period, read works and critical articles obtained through ILL, do an oral presentation of 15—20 minutes, and write a research paper.

- d. Apart from lectures and readings, films and slides will be shown and discussed.
- e. This topic will satisfy one of the following components of the major program: Culture, Literature, or Electives.
2. **Objective:** The course will place literary expression in a specific cultural context that deepens student awareness and understanding of each. Students will also gain an appreciation for the complexities of Spanish history and civilization as both anthropological and literary aspects of the period are explored in depth. Students will also gain experience in obtaining and evaluating critical essays on literary works.
3. **Program:** The course will meet either three times a week for 50-minute sessions or twice a week for seventy-five minute sessions. Material will be divided as follows:
- Week 1: Introduction to the course. Geography and history of Spain to 1936. Spanish literature of the early 20th century. (3 hours)
- Week 2: The Civil War. Francisco Franco. Results of the war: The economy. Dictatorship and censorship. Literature. (3 hours)
- Week 3: Unit Exam 1. The Generation of 1936: Fascism. Luis Rosales. José María Pemán. (3 hours)
- Week 4: The Generation of 1936: Antifascism. Miguel Hernández. Writers in exile: José Ortega y Gasset. Juan Ramón Jiménez. The Franco state. (3 hours)
- Week 5: The ideology of hispanidad: Manuel García Morente. Garcilasismo and autarquía. (3 hours)
- Week 6: Unit exam 2. Franco, Hitler, and World War 2. National Catholicism. Camilo José Cela and tremendismo. (3 hours)
- Week 7: Tremendismo and social consciousness. Carmen Laforet. Ana María Matute. Ignacio Aldecoa. (3 hours)
- Week 8: Camilo José Cela and unanismo. Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio. Carmen Martín Gaité. Luis Martín-Santos. (3 hours)
- Week 9: Unit exam 3. Existential and agonistic poetry. Dámaso Alonso and Hijos de la ira. (3 hours)
- Week 10: The first postwar generation (I): Vicente Gaos. José Luis Hidalgo. Carlos Bousoño. (3 hours)
- Week 11: The first postwar generation (II): Blas de Otero. José Hierro. Rafael Morales. (3 hours)

Week 12: The second generation: Ángela Figuera. Gloria Fuertes. Carlos Sahagún. Jaime Gil de Biedma. Manuel Mantero. Julia Uceda. Mariano Roldán.	(3 hours)
Week 13: Unit exam 4. The theater of Alejandro Casona. Student presentations.	(3 hours)
Week 14: The social theater of Antonio Buero Vallejo. Student presentations.	(3 hours)
Week 15: Student presentations.	(3 hours)
Week 16: Review for the final exam.	(3 hours)

4. Text books Required:

- a. Required: Abellá, Rafael, *La vida cotidiana en España bajo el régimen de Franco* (Barcelona: Argos Vergara, 1985).
- b. Various supplementary materials selected by the instructor.

5. Basis for Student Evaluation:

a. Participation/Preparation	10%
b. In-Class Presentation	15%
c. Four Unit Exams	40%
d. Final Paper	15%
e. Final Exam	20%

VI. Rationale for SN 400:

- A. A number of courses listed in the catalog—SN 410 (Golden Age Novel), SN 415 (Golden Age Drama), SN 420 (19th Spanish Literature)—are, in effect, no longer offered by this department. Rather, these are courses developed for the interests and talents of faculty who are no longer teaching. Other courses—SN 320 (Latin American Short Story), SN 440 (Latin American Novel), SN 425 (Contemporary Spanish Literature)—are offered infrequently if at all, even though the current faculty are specialists in these areas. A flexible course like the proposed topics course can be tailored to focus on any of the material in the courses listed above, which can then be deactivated from the catalog.
- B. At the same time, SN 400 can easily be developed into non-literary topics as the need arises.
- C. A flexible course would not be tied to the strengths of the current faculty, but would lend itself to any future changes in the department.
- D. In addition, the book-rental policy does not apply to such courses, thus facilitating the rotation which our students need to graduate.

- E. As part of our ongoing efforts to improve our major program, SN 400 will play a vital role: it will be offered every spring semester. Depending on the particular topic, SN 400 may be used to fulfill requirements in one of several areas: Skill Courses, Culture, Literature, or Electives. Each syllabus will clearly state the program component which the particular topic will satisfy. Students often find themselves in the crunch between the courses required to graduate and those we can offer on any practicable rotation. With no topic repeating in a given two-year period, the vast majority of majors could enroll in this course every spring semester, which is where the course would fit in the planned rotation.
- F. A special topics course already exists in German and for much the same reasons. Furthermore, Spanish programs in other universities now offer special topics courses both to attract majors and to prepare them better for careers and/or graduate school.
- G. Special Topics is the most efficient way to give course credit for coursework done as part of approved exchange programs in Spain and Mexico in the case of subject material not covered by SN courses in the catalog.