



Sul Ross State University
Course Syllabus
Spanish I- SPAN 1411
Hybrid Course
Fall 2025

Course Number: SPAN 1411

Class: Face-to-face: T/TH 9:30am-10:45 MAB101

Course Title: Spanish I

M/W on-line via **VHL**¹

Type: Hybrid

Credit Hours: 4

Course Instructor: Rachel Sangster Garza

Instructional Plan

- This course will be taught synchronously on Tuesdays and Thursdays and online asynchronous via the mandatory book website: VHL on Mondays and Wednesdays
- Students enrolled from Sul Ross – Alpine will come in-person. Students at other campuses will attend synchronously online T/TH from 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM and asynchronously M/W via VHL online.

Virtual students instructions:

On Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30AM central time you will logon to Blackboard and enter class via the tab that says “Join Session” under “Class Collaborate” on the home page. Be sure to logon and familiarize yourself with Blackboard before our first session. Also, ensure that your camera and audio are working! You will be participating by talking with me and other students through Blackboard.

Instructor Contact Information

I am available via Blackboard message or email at ras25or@sulross.edu. I typically respond within 24 hours during the week.

Office Hours:

- MAB 112C – Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays from 11am-1pm
- By appointment in-person (MAB 112C)
- By appointment on [Microsoft Teams](#)

Course Description

Spanish 1411 is the first course of a four-semester sequence which implements a proficiency-oriented approach. Proficiency is defined as the ability to understand and convey information and/or feelings in a particular situation for a particular purpose. This approach

¹ Vistas Higher Learning (the mandatory book we need for the class). You can find it and purchase it at: <https://vistahigherlearning.com/store/school/sulrossu>

focuses on the rapid development of listening and reading comprehension skills through constant exposure to high-frequency language in the form of spoken conversation and printed texts.

The material covered by this course is designed to introduce students to the basic elements of the language, and to provide practice in applying it to everyday situations and needs. Emphasis will be placed on learning useful communicative skills, grounded in grammatical knowledge and a wide variety of vocabulary. All four modes of communication – listening, speaking, reading and writing – will be practiced. In addition, readings, music, film/video and online resources will be used to help develop a greater understanding of the many Spanish-speaking cultures. Prerequisite: None.

Instructional Materials

Vistas: Introducción a la lengua española. Blanco, Donley. Sixth edition. Vista Higher Learning, 2020. Our course package includes: the text (only chapters 1-5 of full book); vText; softbound Student Activities Manual (workbook, audio and video sections); and WebSAM (online, gradable version of the Student Activities Manual).

THIS BOOK IS CUSTUM MADE FOR SUL ROSS. It comes with a 5 months access code that includes: the online book (eBook) version and the exercises and assessments online. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO BUY A USED BOOK ONLINE, IT WILL NOT INCLUDE THE NECESSARY ONLINE CODE.

You can choose to buy the online version (it comes with an eBook) or the combination of the eBook and the paper book.

Textbook website: <https://vistahigherlearning.com/store/school/sulrossu>

1. Access to the Internet is required. Please make sure you have access for all assignments; Internet or computer failure that may occur will not be taken into consideration for this course.
2. OPTIONAL: A good Spanish-English dictionary, such as Oxford, Harps or Vox, for use in class. For out-of-class, online work the following, excellent dictionary site is recommended: <http://www.wordreference.com>.

The textbook package should be bought immediately. Lateness penalties for online activities will be applied starting **Wednesday, Sept. 3rd**. The online access code is required to complete these activities. Please make sure you check your email and/or blackboard often, as this will be my primary means of communicating with the class.

Student Objectives/Competencies

Students who complete this course will be able to do the following:

1. Demonstrate basic oral proficiency in Spanish
2. Demonstrate basic listening proficiency in Spanish
3. Demonstrate basic reading proficiency in Spanish
4. Demonstrate basic writing proficiency in Spanish
5. Communicate effectively via spoken and written Spanish in real-world contexts.
6. Identify and describe cultural Spanish cultural properties and traditions.
7. Identify and apply communication strategies when using Spanish, including cognates, clues from context, circumlocution, etc.

These learning objectives are based on the national standards document (2006) of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (<http://www.actfl.org>), which is the professional association for K-16 language educators. In addition, the objectives support the revised NCATE/ACTFL teacher education standards, 2012:
<https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/guidelines/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012.pdf>

Course and Learning Activities

1. Attendance (10 %) and Participation (10%) = 20% of your grade is showing up and being prepared to speak in the target language of Spanish.

Failure to attend class is always a missed opportunity to hear and speak Spanish. During the semester, you are allowed **a maximum of three unexcused absences**. *Excused* absences are **written excuses** signed and dated by an athletic coach or a professor, a medical doctor or a counselor.

*A crucial component of your daily participation points is your planning to come to class ready to speak for the **daily conversation check**, which will always comprise the first 5 - 10 minutes of class. The list of questions for the daily conversation check can be found on the content tab on blackboard for each new chapter of Vistas and will be updated with each new chapter. For the first two weeks of the course, the questions will be based on the review of Spanish 1. Names will be called at random. You must be prepared with a full, complete sentence as an answer. Even if the information doesn't pertain to you (I.e. "Do you like watching sports? How did you celebrate your last birthday?" or you don't know the actual answer "How old is _____ (Lady Gaga/Queen Elizabeth of England/Kevin Hart/Marc Anthony)?"... make something up! The point of the daily conversation check is to use grammar and vocabulary in a meaningful way and to practice our spoken communication skills as much as possible. I will not be checking if your answer is "true" or really reflects what you think.*

2. Compositions (10%): there will be two (2) composition assignments **in class**. The compositions have to be **in Spanish**. Use the grammar structure and vocabulary from the lessons we have covered up to the deadline of the submission. I will NOT accept any composition that is translated from English. This assignment is meant for you to apply the concepts, grammar, and vocabulary learned in the chapters we have covered. Use simple sentences in the verb tenses that you have already studied. If you are absent the day of the composition, you will need to make an appointment to complete the assignment at a later date. All students will have 50 minutes to complete the Composition. After you get feedback and an initial grade, you may choose to rewrite the composition to receive back any credit you may miss. The topics of the compositions are:

a. **First composition:** This composition is divided in two parts:

1) Students will create an extended family tree with the vocabulary of family relations in Spanish (e.g., grandfather, cousin, mother, brother in law, etc.) **You can either write about your own family, or a famous family whose tree can be found online (e.g., the Kardashians, the Jonas Brothers, royal families, influencers, etc.)**

2) Students will write a paragraph (minimum of 5 sentences, about 100-150 words) about their family (e.g., where are they from, what do they like to do, what is your relationship with one or more members of your family, how are they physically, and/or what is their personality like, etc.) You need to use verbs ending -AR, -ER, -IR and the vocabulary of lesson 1, 2, and 3.

- **The composition will be done IN CLASS on Thursday, October 16th**

b. **Second composition:** This composition will be about the *Día de los muertos* en México. You will watch a video and view a PowerPoint presentation in Spanish and you will write two paragraphs. One paragraph summarizing the Day of the Dead in Mexico according to the video. You will also write a paragraph describing and analyzing the similarities and differences with the USA Halloween. Finally, you'll explain which festivity you prefer and why. (Total composition should be about 150 words).

- **This composition will be completed IN CLASS on Thursday, Nov. 13th**

3. **Homework (25%):** Homework will be assigned from two kinds of online activities, called 'Practice' and 'WebSAM' (Student Activities Manual) on VHL.com. Homework assignments will be due on a weekly basis, usually on Monday evenings. Any homework turned in late will be penalized by 10% of the score per day. Please plan accordingly to accommodate work and family obligations. If you experience technical difficulties while in the Supersite you will need to contact [tech support](#) at 1 (800) 248-2813.

If you are unable to purchase the book immediately, you must create an account on *Vistas* using the **Grace Period** access.

4. **Chapter Tests (25%):** Students will have a chapter test per lesson. Each chapter test will be about every three weeks. The online test will have ONLY 1 attempt and 75 minutes to complete. Each will be open for several days.
5. **Graded Oral Activities: Prueba Oral** (*Vistas Supersite* Oral quiz). We will have an oral quiz called "*Prueba Oral*" every chapter through the *Vistas Supersite*. These *Pruebas Orales* will consist of recording your responses to the questions asked in each chapter. The responses **MUST** be in Spanish using the grammar and vocabulary component of the chapter. The responses will be graded according to the use of the grammar and vocabulary and the proper pronunciation of the words/sentences recorded.

Useful information

- If you have any special needs related to a disability that may affect your performance in this course, please speak to the instructor privately during the first week of classes.
- Students distracted by technology during class may be counted as absent; your participation grade will reflect this.

- Come to all classes and participate! Your presence is essential to learning Spanish and to receiving a good grade.
- Familiarize yourself with all of the online tools of the *Vistas* website; use all of the resources available to you.
- Visit me during my office hours for comments or questions –I’m here to help you succeed!

Assessments

A) Attendance	10%
B) Participation	10%
C) Oral quizzes (VHL).....	20%
D) Homework (VHL)	25%
E) Chapter Test (1 per lesson: Total 5; VHL)	25%
F) Compositions (In-person)	10%

Grading System

90 - 100: A
 80 - 89: B
 70 - 79: C
 60 - 69: D
 0 - 59: F

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one’s own work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures that grades are earned honestly and gives added value to the entire educational process. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. Any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, copying from the Internet and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act is ground for failure in this course and for further academic discipline. By enrolling in this course, you acknowledge having been given an electronic copy of the syllabus and therefore you are responsible for its contents.

Note about AI: Excessive use of AI – in other words, any use of AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Translate, Microsoft, and more) to write responses on your behalf, to write in Spanish for you, to translate Spanish passages or sentences from exams or other assignments, etc. are considered plagiarism as you are not doing your own work. While AI can be useful to help you understand individual vocabulary terms or phrasing, you should never use AI to complete your assignments for you. When this is done, you are no longer learning. You may use these engines to search a single vocabulary word or phrase when you are unsure of it’s meaning, or unsure how to say a specific word in Spanish. However, if it appears that you are using an AI service for responses, the instructor will investigate and may set up a meeting with you.

SulRoss demands **academic integrity** from its students. Any form of academic dishonesty, including (but not limited to) plagiarism or cheating is ground for failure in this course and for further academic discipline. Each student must agree, in writing, to uphold this policy.

ADA Statement

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartz@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Student Responsibilities

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize him/herself with the requirements of such laws.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](#). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Classroom Climate of Respect

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Supportive Statement

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Tutoring Center

[The Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

Important Information:

- **Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments:** Flexible options to fit your needs.
- **Hours of Operation:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **Workshops:** Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- **Location:** BWML Room 128.
- **Contact Us:** For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?

- Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

Class Schedule*

*Note: This schedule is subject to change in order to fulfill the needs of the course and its students.

CHAPTER & COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES		TOPICS (VOCABULARY, GRAMMAR, CULTURE)
CHAPTER 1	<p>Weeks 1-3 August 25th – Sept. 12th</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greet people 2. Say hello and goodbye 3. Identify yourself and others 4. Talk about your classes and school life 5. Express time of day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course • Getting to know each other • The plaza principal • Spanish alphabet • Cognates • Expressions of courtesy & respect • Nouns and articles • Numbers 0-30 • Present tense of ser • Telling time • Plaza de Mayo (Buenos Aires, Arg.) <p>Assignments due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 1 HW due in VHL on Sept. 2nd • Week 2 HW due in VHL on Sept. 8th • Sept. 11th to the 15th ONLINE: Chapter test 1 • Pruebas Oral via VHL: due Sept. 15th
CHAPTER 2	<p>Weeks 4-6 Sept. 15th – Oct. 3rd</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss everyday activities 2. Ask questions in Spanish 3. Describe the location of people and things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom & academic life vocabulary • Days of the week; months • Fields of study • Class schedules Universities and majors in the Spanish-speaking world • Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México • Present tense of -ar verbs • Forming questions in Spanish • Present tense of estar • Numbers 31 and higher <p>Assignments due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 4 HW due in VHL on Sept. 22nd • Week 5 HW due in VHL on Sept. 29th • October 2nd to the 6th ONLINE: Chapter test 2 • Pruebas Oral via VHL: due Sept. 6th

CHAPTER 3	<p>Weeks 7-9 October 6th – October 24th</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk about your family and friend 2. Describe people and things 3. Express possession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family • Identifying people • Professions and occupations • Surnames and families in the Spanish-speaking world • Royal Families in the Spanish-speaking world • Descriptive adjectives • Possessive adjectives • Present tense of -er & -ir verbs • Present tense of tener and venir <p>Assignments due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7 HW due in VHL on Oct. 13th • Thursday, October 16th: Composición 1 IN CLASS • Week 8 HW due in VHL on Oct. 20th • Oct. 23rd to 27th ONLINE: Chapter test 3 • Pruebas Oral via VHL: due Oct. 27th
CHAPTER 4	<p>Weeks 10-12 Oct. 27th – Nov. 14th</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk about pastimes, weekend activities, sport 2. Make plans and invitations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastimes and sports vocab • Places in the city • Soccer rivalries in the Spanish-speaking world • Present tense of ir • Stem-changing verbs: e→ie, o→ue, e→i • Verbs with irregular yo forms <p>Assignments due: 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 10 HW due in VHL on Nov. 3rd • Week 11 HW due in VHL on Nov. 10th • Thursday, Nov. 13th : Composición 2 IN CLASS • Nov. 13th to Nov. 17th ONLINE: Chapter test 4 • Prueba Oral via VHL: Due Nov. 17th
<p style="text-align: center;">Holiday break – November 26–28, Wednesday – Friday</p>		
CHAPTER 5	<p>Weeks 13-Finals Nov. 17th – Dec. 10th</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk about travel and vacation 2. Month and seasons and weather 3. Ordinal numbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estar with conditions and emotions • Ser y estar • Present Progressive • Puerto Rico • Repaso <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 13 HW due in VHL on Nov. 24th • Week 14 HW due in VHL on Dec. 1st • Prueba Oral via VHL: Due Dec. 1st • Friday, Dec. 5th to Wednesday, Dec. 10th ONLINE: Chapter test 5