

Millikin University  
Student Learning in the Spanish Major  
By  
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**Executive Summary**

The Modern Languages Department supports the mission of Millikin University in preparing students for professional success, democratic citizenship in a diverse global community, and a personal life of meaning and value. In the context of the Spanish major, the mission of the Department is to produce graduates who achieve the following four learning outcome goals:

- (1) Students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish.
- (2) Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.
- (3) Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and conduct research on works of literature from the Spanish-speaking world.
- (4) Students will demonstrate their comprehension and appreciation of the diversity of the Hispanic culture and their understanding of the social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of the Spanish-speaking nations of the world.

The core curriculum begins with freshman-level courses in Beginning Spanish and Continuing Spanish, as well as a sophomore-level course in Intermediate Spanish, all of which establish a s

## Goals

The purpose of the Spanish major is stated in four Modern Languages Department goals:

- (1) Students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish.
- (2) Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.
- (3) Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and conduct research on works of literature from the Spanish-speaking world.
- (4) Students will demonstrate their comprehension and appreciation of the diversity of the Hispanic culture and their understanding of the social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of the Spanish-speaking nations of the world.

-wide

learning goals:

- (1) Millikin students will prepare for professional success.
- (2) Millikin students will actively engage in the responsibilities of citizenship in their communities.
- (3) Millikin students will discover and develop a personal life of meaning and value.

The table on the following page shows how Modern Languages Department goals for the Spanish major relate to University-wide goals:

Learning Goal	Corresponding MU Learning Goal Number(s)
Students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish.	1
Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.	1, 2
Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze, and conduct research on works of literature from the Spanish-speaking world.	1
Students will demonstrate their comprehension and appreciation of the diversity of Hispanic culture, and their understanding of the social, historical, political, and cultural contexts of the Spanish-speaking nations of the world.	1, 2, 3

Students majoring in Spanish are required to take 21 credit hours of Spanish at the 300 level or above, including the capstone course SP480: Spanish Advanced Conversation and Composition. The prerequisite for taking a 300-level course is three semesters of Spanish-language courses.

The mission of the Spanish major is to prepare students for a career in teaching, for graduate studies in literature, or to provide the necessary Spanish-

The Department continues using a *communicative language lab* for students who are taking Spanish 103 and also for students taking Spanish 114, which consists of group work with the coordination of a *facilitator*. Its main goal is that the students can achieve an advanced level of oral proficiency. Students spend an hour per week in the lab talking about the topics that are being studied in the language classes.

The Chair of the Department (Dr. Eduardo Cabrera) has been in charge of interviewing and hiring the tutors and facilitators for the lab. He has been also responsible of monitoring the functioning of the lab: the work of tutors and facilitators as well as the feedback from students attending the lab sessions.

The curriculum for the Spanish major consists of traditional courses in language, literature and culture, as well as practical courses like SP 330 (Spanish for Business), SP 340 (Theatre Performance in Spanish), and SP 350 (Study Abroad in Spanish) and SP 310 (Spanish for Health Professions). Those last four courses have been added to reflect 1) the tendency among Spanish programs across the country toward the inclusion of

### **Learning Story**

The first-spoken and written Spanish, through Spanish 103 (Beginning Spanish) and Spanish 114 (Continuing Spanish). The second-year curriculum, with Spanish 223 (Intermediate - and senior-level courses that engage Spanish conversation and composition; culture, art, business, literature, film and theatre of the Spanish-speaking world, including Latin America, Spain, and U.S. Latino/Latina culture; and Spanish linguistics.

To complete the Spanish major, a student must take a minimum of 21 credits above Spanish 223, including the capstone SP 480: Spanish Advanced Conversation and Composition, from the following courses:

- Spanish 301, Spanish Conversation and Composition I;
- Spanish 302, Spanish Conversation and Composition II;
- Spanish 303, Culture of Spain;
- Spanish 304, Culture of Latin America;
- Spanish 310, Spanish for Health Professions;
- Spanish 320 (Art, Literature, and Film of U.S. Latinos);
- Spanish 321 (Survey of Spanish Literature);
- Spanish 323 (Survey of Latin American Literature I);
- Spanish 324 (Survey of Latin American Literature II);
- Spanish 330, Spanish for Business;
- Spanish 340, Theatre Performance in Spanish;
- Spanish 350, Study Abroad in Spanish;
- Spanish 402, Linguistics.
- Spanish 480: Spanish Advanced Conversation and Composition.

A Spanish Major Curriculum Map is offered as an appendix to this document.

A chapter of the national Spanish Honor Society *Sigma Delta Pi* was created, which makes possible for the Spanish major students to participate in cultural activities as well as in round tables to practice their oral communicative skills.

A radio show in Spanish *Español en Acción* was created, making possible for the students to participate as guests. Students may improve their listening and oral skills as well as their knowledge of the cultures of the Spanish speaking world.

The creation of the language communicative lab allows the students with a Spanish major to work as special tutors.

**Double majors and the *preparation for professional success*:**

One of the characteristics of the major in Spanish is that it supports students in their other





## Assessment Methods

For the assessment of the learning goals for the Spanish major the following courses will be used:

Learning Goals	Courses
1	SP 302 Spanish Composition
3	SP 481 Topics in Hispanic Literature
4	SP 301 Spanish Conversation

The rubrics for those courses have been created (attached).

## Assessment Data

The grading rubrics used to assess each learning goal have a maximum of 20 possible points. Those points have been divided for reporting purposes in the following way: Excellent: 19-20; Adequate: 13-18; Nominal: less than 13.

goals are being achieved.

The following assessment criteria will be used to evaluate student progress in achieving the learning goals:

requiring any immediate change in the course of action).

either improving, but not as quickly as desired or declining slightly. Strategies and approaches should be reviewed and appropriate adjustments taken to reach an acceptable level or desire rate of improvement).

change is unacceptable. Immediate, high priority actions should be taken to address this area).



**Learning Goal 1:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing in Spanish.

Table 1: SP 302 Spanish Conversation and Composition II

Rubric Category	Percentage of students in category
Excellent	25
Adequate	75
Nominal	0
Number of students evaluated	12

Total of *Excellent* and *Adequate* combined: 100%.

**Learning Goal 3.** Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and conduct research on works of literature from the Spanish-speaking world.

**Table 3:** SP 481 Topics in Hispanic Literature: Latin American TheatrJETBT/F6 1TJ3(he)(a)4(n The)3JE9

## **Analysis of Assessment Results**

The analysis of the data shows that the Spanish major is in the right direction.

### **Learning Goal 1:**

#### **Assessment for SP302: Spanish Composition**

The assessment of the learning goal for the *written component* of the Spanish Composition course shows that the Department continues doing a very good job during the first semesters of the Spanish language courses, building a strong foundation for the upper division courses. The Spanish Conversation and Composition II course (together with the Spanish Conversation and Composition I course) is one of the courses recommended to be taken at the beginning of the major. Most of the students take that course right or soon after they take SP 223: Intermediate Spanish.

This is a very important result: **100% of the students at the excellent or adequate level.** With the strong formation in writing in the composition course, students are able to succeed in the other upper division courses. They will be able to write good essays in the literature classes, etc.

For assessing Learning Goal 1, essays have been

be taken at the beginning of the major. Most of the students take that course right or soon after they take SP 223: Intermediate Spanish.

This is a very important result: **100% of the students at the excellent or adequate level.**

With the strong formation in oral expression in the Spanish conversation course, students are able to succeed in the other upper division courses. They will be able to communicate effectively in class, to participate in discussions, and contribute with their insights.

The oral component of the course has also benefited from a stronger foundation in the first semesters of Spanish language courses. On the year 2005 the Department created a *Communicative Lab*, in which students taking the first two semesters of Spanish can practice the target language with the assistance of a *facilitator* (an advanced Spanish major student).

In this class students watched short films from the Hispanic world (Latin America and Spain), learned about those cultures and, at the same time, practiced their listening comprehension skills. Students also read different kind of readings (essays, short stories, dramas), discussed about them in an organized way, improving their communication skills.

For assessing Learning Goal 1, dialogues have been used as artifacts. From the 16 students, 8 (57%) got a grade that falls (43%)

### **Follow up and Improvement Plans**

The Spanish major has been strengthened with the regular offering of practical, cultural and literature courses. The practical courses *SP310 Spanish for Health Professions* and *SP312 Spanish for Radio Production* are offered frequently, satisfying the needs of students. These courses allow students to have a very positive experience by putting in practice their communicative skills. The cultural (Spain and Latin America) courses and the literature courses (both peninsular and Latin American), as well as the more basic, Spanish conversation and composition, are offered every year.

The capstone course (required to all Spanish majors), *SP480 Spanish Advanced Conversation and Composition*, is being offered every Spring semester. All students who take this course make a research presentation at the *Celebration of Scholarship* event.

but also to show prospective Spanish major students what will be expected from them. That course allows for more integration of theory and practice, since students work on a special project relevant to their major. Those students who are double major will continue to be able to work in a project that put together the acquired knowledge in both fields. An important component of the Spanish major is its course SP350: Study Abroad in Spanish. It complies with Goal #2: *Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.* During the academic year 2014-2015 no student was able to participate in a study abroad program. In lieu of it students had many opportunities to engage in interactions in Spanish with people from other countries through the cultural activities organized by the ML Department and the student organization Sigma Delta Pi. The Department plans to offer, in the near future, Study Abroad programs in Spain, Argentina and Chile

Faculty teaching courses within the Spanish major will continue to meet to discuss assessment of the learning goals for that academic program.

Students who are majoring in Spanish will continue to have the opportunity to work as tutors and facilitators, developing their skills in those areas. This is an important experience especially for those students who are thinking to pursue a teaching career. It is equally important for the development of leadership skills.

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## Appendix 1: Rubrics

### Compositions

Categoría	4	3	2	1
Oraciones y Párrafos	Oraciones y párrafos están completos, bien-construidos y con estructura variada	Todas las oraciones están completas y bien construidas (no hay fragmentos o escrito a prisa)	La mayoría de las oraciones están completas y bien construidas. Los párrafos necesitan algo de trabajo	Muchos fragmentos de oraciones u oraciones hechas a prisa o los párrafos necesitan mucho trabajo.
Gramática y Ortografía	No comete errores de gramática u ortografía	El escritor comete 1-2 errores de gramática u ortografía.	El escritor	

## Appendix 2: Rubrics

### Literature Essays

	Excellent	Adequate	Nominal
Concepts and Thesis	[5 points] Student shows a strong knowledge of literature concepts, and essay has a clear thesis.	[3 points] Student shows a reasonable but less than complete knowledge of literature concepts, and essay has a thesis.	[1 point] Student shows a marginal awareness of literature concepts, and thesis is not clear.
Organization of Ideas	[5 points] Student defends his or her main idea very clearly, with strong organizational links between and among his or her ideas.	[3 points] Student defends his or her main idea somewhat clearly, with reasonably effective organizational links between and among his or her ideas.	[1 point] his or her main idea is unclear; organizational links between and among his or her ideas are weak or nonexistent.
Text Analysis	[5 points] Clear and accurate analysis of the literature work. May show insight or originality.	[3 points] Competent explanation of the text. Some ambiguity or incompleteness may be present.	[1 point] Paraphrasing or plot summary outweigh commentary.