

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 student's competency in Spanish and readiness to continue on with more advanced studies in Spanish. As a student's course of study within the Spanish major continues, he or she engages more specific on focused areas of study in Spanish conversation and composition, and in courses that deal with the culture, art, business, literature, film, theatre and linguistics of the Spanish-speaking world.

Part of the Modern Languages Department's ongoing revitalization is an establishment of thorough and ongoing assessment at the course and program level. It is hoped and anticipated that the listing of artifacts and rubrics here provided will be helpful in continuing to make assessment more systematic throughout the Spanish major and the Modern Languages area.

## 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.

These Modern Languages Department goals match well with Millikin's University-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.

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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.

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Related Millikin University Goals
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## Spanish Major Curriculum Map

Courses	Goal #1: Students will demonstrate proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish.	Goal #2: Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.	Goal #3: Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and conduct research on works of literature from the Spanish-speaking world.	Goal #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.
SP 103 – Beginning	X			
SP 114 – Continuing	X			
SP 223 – Intermediate	X			X
SP 301 – Spanish Conversation and Composition I	X			X
SP 302 – Spanish Conversation and Composition II	X			X
SP 303 – Culture of the Spanish-Speaking World				X
SP 304 – Culture of Latin America				X
SP 320 – Art, Literature, and Film of U.S. Latinos				X
SP 321 – Survey of Spanish Literature			X	
SP 323 – Survey of Latin American Literature I			X	

## Assessment Methods

For the assessment of the four learning goals the following courses will be used:

Learning Goals	Courses
1	SP 302 Spanish Composition
2	SP 350 Study Abroad in Spanish
3	SP 360 Central American Literature
4	SP 303 Culture of Spain

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.

The students should be ranked “adequate,” with a minimum of 13 points, if the learning goals are being achieved.

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

“Green light” (an acceptable level or clearly heading in the right direction and not requiring any immediate change in the course of action).

“Yellow light” (not an acceptable level; 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).

“Red light” (current status or direction of 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	60
Adequate	40
Nominal	0
Number of students evaluated	12

Total of *Excellent* and *Adequate* combined: 100%.  
 Rating for goal 1: “Green light.”

**Learning Goal 2:** Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from other countries.

Table 2: SP 350 Study Abroad in Spanish (Argentina)

Rubric Category	Percentage of students in category
Excellent	80
Adequate	20
Nominal	0
Number of students evaluated	5

Total of *Excellent* and *Adequate* combined: 100%  
 Rating for goal 2: “Green light.”

**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 360 Central American Literature

Rubric Category	Percentage of Students in category
Excellent	29

**Learning Goal 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.

Table 4: SP 303 Culture of Spain

Rubric Category	Percentage of students in category
Excellent	18.75
Adequate	81.25
Nominal	0
Number of students evaluated	16

### Learning Goal 2:

Since the year 2004 the Department of Modern Languages has been promoting different Study Abroad programs: in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Spain and Argentina.

The program in Chile started in January 2005, and has been very successful in terms of recruiting a good number of students and in achieving the corresponding learning goal.

The newest program is the one in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which started in May 2006.

In all the countries mentioned above Millikin' students have had plenty of opportunities to engage in meaningful interactions in Spanish with people from different social status.

From the academic refined language to the street language, the students demonstrated their communications skills by interacting with professors, waiters, bus drivers, etc.

It is also evident the confidence the students get by being able to communicate with native speakers in another country.

### Assessment of the Study Abroad in Argentina:

Five students participated in the Study Abroad in Argentina. The whole period of time was spent in Buenos Aires, where students participated in a number of cultural activities.

They were able to immerse themselves in the culture by communicating with native speakers on a permanent basis. Students watch and analyze a play, visited museums and wrote analytical reports on work of art, studied the life of the *gauchos*, learned to dance tango, etc.

For assessing Learning Goal 2, a final report has been used as artifact.

From the 5 students who wrote the final report, 4 fall within the category "excellent" (80%), and 1 within the category "adequate" (20%).

### Learning Goal 3:

The Assessment for SP 360-01 Central American Literature shows that students at this level have the ability to analyze the intellectual, cultural and historical development of Literature. During the discussions students debated about important historical moments and how Literature portrays and reflects such social changes created under specific historical circumstances. The course brought the opportunity to explore literature as a cultural artifact to understand the Central American society of the last decades of the Twentieth Century on the dawn of a new Century.

The assessment shows that at the end of the semester students could identify Central American Literature and culture among Latin American literatures in the contemporary world. They identified political, cultural and historical perspectives portray in literary representations. Students had the opportunity to improve their four skills of the language, as they read short story, plays and poetry, and presented their view points about cultural expressions portrayed in literature. Their oral skills were noticeable improved by the preparation of the two oral presentations during the semester. Also their writing skills were important in the process of writing their final paper. Through this writing exercise students demonstrated their ability to research different topics and analyze the strategies through which writers presented their work.

### Learning Goal 4:

The Assessment for SP 303 Culture of Spain shows that students at this level of Spanish are able to understand and analyze the culture of Spain in relation to the foundations of the society through modern Spain. Students took advantage of the opportunity to read,

discuss and analyze about the main historical times from Ancient Civilizations, to the Franco's Regime, to Democracy in the Modern Society, and the respectively artistically expressions and representations (Literature, Paintings, and other cultural artifacts) giving quality input to the class. As the students wrote essays in a variety of topics in historical, social, political, and cultural contexts of the Spanish speaking nation demonstrate their ability to process information in a research essay. SP 303 Culture of Spain is one of the most important surveys that introduce students to the bases of the culture not only of the Modern Spain but also understand the influence of Spain in Latin American Culture. The assessment shows that students reinforced their skills as they developed research skills such as apply concepts of Literature to analyzed the culture of Spain. Also their oral skills were reinforced through the preparation and performing of oral presentations.

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

The Spanish major will be strengthened with the addition of the new course SP 360 Spanish for Radio Production. This course allows students to have a very positive experience by putting in practice their communicative skills.

The Department of Modern Languages will continue to implement a communicative approach to teaching, as well as continue monitoring the needs of the students who major in Spanish. In Spring 2011 the capstone course SP480: Spanish Advanced Conversation and Composition was added.

## Appendix 1: Rubrics

### Compositions

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## 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] Student's defense of 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.
Mechanics	[5 points] Student's writing is very strong and clear, free of errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics.	[3 points] Student's writing is reasonably clear; errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics exist, but do not interfere seriously with understandability.	[1 point] Student's writing is unclear. Errors in spelling, grammar, and mechanics seriously impair readability.

Excellent: 19-20

Adequate: 13-18

Nominal: less than 13.