SP 326 SPANISH FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES
IES Abroad MADRID

DESCRIPTION:

This language course introduces students to key concepts and discussions surrounding contemporary social issues. Through discussions, textual analysis, and targeted vocabulary development, students will strengthen their Spanish language skills while exploring topics in Spain and beyond. Areas of study include health, mental well-being, and access to healthcare; gender roles and evolving perspectives on equality; discrimination and social inclusion; sustainability, climate change, and urban development; and peace, conflict, and human rights. Throughout the course, students will build the linguistic and cultural competence needed to analyze these issues, express informed opinions, and engage in meaningful discussions in Spanish.

The course also develops students' critical thinking skills by encouraging them to examine diverse perspectives on contemporary social issues and their historical, cultural, and political contexts. Overall, the course integrates language learning with the study of contemporary social issues, helping students develop greater cultural awareness and confidence in communicating about complex topics in Spanish.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: Spanish

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Raquel Anido | ranido@faculty.iesabroad.org

PREREQUISITES: Completion IES Abroad *SP303 Spanish Language in Context: Emerging Independent Abroad III* or equivalent, determined by placement test.

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

This student-centered course employs active learning strategies, including project-based learning, collaborative activities, and peer interaction.

The course is organized into thematic units that integrate functional language use with grammatical, lexical, and cultural objectives. Instruction emphasizes the development of both written and oral comprehension, while communicative activities foster students' speaking and writing skills. Individual, pair, and group work provide opportunities for discussion, critical analysis, and oral presentations based on intensive and extensive reading. Students engage with a variety of authentic materials—including newspaper articles, documentaries, films, poems, short stories, and online discussions, many drawn from contemporary Spain—to strengthen their language proficiency while deepening their understanding of Spanish society, culture, and contemporary social issues.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Active class participation: 10%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Research project: 30%
  - Written paper (15%)
  - Oral Presentation (15%)
- Oral presentations: 10%
- Problem Solving Case: 15%
- Learning journal: 15%
- Course-related Trips: 10%

KEY DATES

Research Project Outline: Monday, October 19, 4:10 pm
Research Project: Monday, December 14, 4:10 pm

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:

Course Participation
Students will work individually or in groups to systematize and practice orally all the grammatical concepts learned in class. They will be given ample opportunities during class sessions to seek clarification, promote interactive learning, and address any uncertainties they may have. Daily active participation and completing assignments at home are essential to ensure progress throughout the course. Students are expected to actively engage in class discussions, which offer them the opportunity to present their views and hear the perspectives of other students on selected topics. A rubric will be provided to reflect student's participation in this course.

Quizzes
Four quizzes, both oral and written, to help the student check the understanding of the material covered in class and their usage of new terminology and concepts.

Research Project:
Students will research one of the topics covered in the course, which will include data and findings from local organizations related to their topic. Afterward, they will write a 2500-word paper. Students will get feedback on their topics and progress from peers and/or the instructor throughout the course, as listed in the content section of this syllabus. The course instructor will contact partner organizations in advance to explain the objectives of the research. The course instructor will work with the partner organizations and students to decide who will attend the first meeting. Students will explain all the steps in the research process in the learning journals. The Research Project is intended to extensively reflect on an issue related to the course topics.

Oral Presentations:
Students will prepare and deliver oral presentations on topics covered in class; two individual (one of which related to the Research project) and one in groups. These presentations will provide an opportunity to develop effective public speaking and presentation skills while receiving constructive feedback from both their peers and the instructor.

Problem Solving Case:
Students will identify a real problem from their research project topic and give a real solution that local organizations can implement. The result will be presented as an informative brochure that will be delivered to these local organizations.

Learning Journal
Personal critical reflection on each student's learning process: learning goals, achievements, experiences, thoughts, feelings, problems, and possible solutions. One entry per session. Length will vary depending on the session.

Course-related Trips:
Like intercultural discoveries, faculty-led class excursions are an important part of the course. These activities give the students the opportunity to learn about and understand cultural differences and to connect aspects of Spanish culture. All of them are organized with pre- and post-activities that help students improve their language skills and promote interaction with Spanish people.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Students who are placed in this level should be capable of achieving the outcomes in the Independent Abroad level as defined by the IES Abroad MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication. By the end of the course, students will be able to achieve the outcomes for the Emerging Independent Abroad level as defined by the MAP for Language and Intercultural Communication. The key learning outcomes from the MAP are summarized below:

I. Intercultural Communication
A. Students will be able to describe and analyze key host cultures, subcultures, habits, norms, and behaviors in a variety of settings, and they will be aware of the risk that generalizations can lead to stereotypes.
B. Students will be able to analyze the validity of their own cultural beliefs, behaviors, and norms by contrasting and comparing them with the host culture.
C. Students will demonstrate openness and acceptance of different beliefs and styles even when they do not agree with them.
D. Students will assume responsibility for their own learning by defining their linguistic goals and demonstrating independence in their exploration of the culture.

II. Listening
A. Students will be able to identify a wide range of social and cultural dialects of the spoken language.
B. Students will be able to understand most native speakers and non-native experts and comprehend a wide array of moderately complex interactions.

III. Speaking
A. Students will be able to participate fully in most academic and social interactions using, when appropriate, complex language including slang, colloquial expressions, double meaning, and humor, with increasing confidence.
B. Students will be able to make arguments to support hypotheses and opinions on topics of their interest.
C. Students will talk about abstract topics, but only if they are topics previously studied or which they are personally familiar.
D. Students will be able to understand different levels of formality.

IV. Reading
A. Students will be able to read and understand textbooks and academic articles for classes taught in the host language as well as a wide range of popular texts for enjoyment.
B. Students will be able to read and understand authentic materials including newspapers, advertisements, brochures, instruction manuals etc. on abstract topics with limited assistance.
C. Students will take responsibility for the selection of their reading materials based on their own interests.

V. Writing
A. Students will be able to write for a wide range of native audiences and express themselves quite clearly and effectively.
B. Students will be able to write essays for classes incorporating aspects of appropriate academic style with limited assistance.
C. Students will be able to use a variety of formal written styles with accuracy.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

As a member of our class community, you are expected to be present and on time every day. Attending class has an impact on your learning and academic success. For this reason, attendance is mandatory for all IES Madrid classes, including course-related excursions. Attendance will be monitored by the Absence Committee, and the student is responsible for regularly checking their attendance record in Moodle throughout the semester.

You are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences for once-a-week courses and four unexcused absences for twice-a-week courses. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a deduction of 3 percentage points from your final grade and/or disciplinary action. Accumulating 8 or more unexcused absences in twice-a-week courses, or 4 or more in once-a-week courses, may result in a failing grade for the course.

Only when surpassing the allowed number of unexcused absences will you be able to excuse an absence. Absences should be reserved for documented medical or family emergencies only. Students should not, under any circumstances, plan their absences in advance for personal reasons other than those specified in the List of Authorized Absences.

Students are responsible for communicating with their instructor(s) regarding any missed graded in-class coursework or the in-class submission of a graded assignment resulting from an absence. Opportunities to make up missed graded in-class coursework or receive deadline extensions are granted at the instructor's discretion. Students must not be absent for exams except in cases of documented medical or family emergencies.

Punctuality is essential for the smooth functioning of academic activities. Arriving more than 10 minutes late will be recorded as a late. Accumulating three lates will be considered equivalent to one absence. Additionally, arriving more than 20 minutes late will automatically be considered an absence.

For more information, please refer to the full Attendance and Punctuality Policy document.

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	**Introduction** Syllabus, assignments, and content introduction. Spanish Language: Vocabulary pertinent to social issues: equity, social justice, legal Spanish.	Writing: • Social issues of personal concern Class discussion: • What does "social justice" mean?
Week 2	**Equality & Human Rights** Universal Declaration of Human Rights The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals The 2030 Agenda. Spanish Language: How to express opinion and critical thinking	Reading: • Universal Declaration of Human Rights • SDGs (History, Implementation, etc) Class discussion: • Major issues affecting Human Rights worldwide • What is the role and shortcomings of the UN?

Week 3	**Health Issues** Global challenges and perspectives on health. Spanish Language: Narrating time I. Verbal tenses to indicate past.	Reading: "¿Por qué el centro de salud de la esquina es vital para la salud de tu barrio?". *El País*. 2023. Class discussion: • Is Spanish universal health an exportable model? Quiz
Week 4	**Women Rights and Feminisms** History and Culture of Women Rights. Approaches to Feminisms Spanish Language: Inclusive language	Readings: • Parra, M.L., & Serafini, E.J. "'Bienvenidxs todes': el lenguaje inclusivo desde una perspectiva crítica para las clases de español". *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, 8 (2), 143-160 (17 pgs). https://doi.org/10.1080/23247797.2021.2012 739 • United Nations. (n.d.). "Orientaciones para el empleo de un lenguaje inclusivo en cuanto al género en español". https://www.un.org/es/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml • González, B. (2023, March 8). "¿Qué es el feminismo? Una guía completa para principiantes". *El Periódico*. https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20 230308/feminismo-que-es-guia-completa-7876808 Class discussion: • How do we reflect orally inclusive and non-inclusive language?

Week 5	**Colonialism *versus* Immigration** Review of Spanish regulations regarding immigration. Main issues related to Racism in Spain and the United States. Balseros *versus* cayucos and pateras. Spanish Language: Narrating time II. Past tenses (cont.)	Readings: • Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones. (n.d.). Migraciones. "Migraciones e Integración y vivir en España." • Excerpts from *Invisible Immigrants. Spaniards in the US (1868-1945)*. Luis Argeo and James D. Fernández. Films: • *También la Lluvia*. Icíar Bollaín. • *Flores de otro mundo*. Icíar Bollaín Songs: • "Papeles mojados". Chambao • "Contamíname". Pedro Guerra Class discussion: • Are all immigrants created equal?

Weeks 6 & 7	**LGTBIQ+** Gender, Sex and Identity. Sexual discrimination. Transgender Identity. Spanish Language: Narrating time III. Future and conditional tenses	Readings: • Gay Pride in Madrid (largest in Europe): https://www.esmadrid.com/agenda/fiestas-orgullo-lgtbiqa-madrid • López, N. (2021), August 29). "Querida adolescencia LGTBIQ+". *El País*. https://elpais.com/eps/2021-08-29/querida-adolescencia-lgtbiq.html?ssm=TW_CM Films: • *Carmen y Lola*. Arantxa Echevarría. • Agrado monologue from *All About My Mother*. Pedro Almodóvar. Class discussion: • Self-identity • What is being authentic? Quiz
Week 8	**Environmental Issues** Ecology and sustainability debates. Madrid as a case study. Spanish Language: Subjunctive I	Film: • *Alcarràs*. Carla Simón. Class discussion: • Is Madrid a sustainable city? **Research Project Outline**

Weeks 9 & 10	**Housing, Homelessness and Aporophobia** Debates on the Constitutional Right to Housing. Gentrification. Homelessness in Spain. Aporophobia	Readings: • Carrero, M. (2021, August 23). "La aporofobia, el delito de odio más desconocido en España: 'Mucha gente no sabe identificarlos con claridad". *20minutos*. https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/4789661/ 0/los-delitos-notificados-por-aporofobia-aumentaran-tras-estipularse-como-agravante-de-delitos-en-espana/ • García Pérez, Eva. "Gentrificación en Madrid: de la burbuja a la crisis". *Revista de Geografía Norte Grande*, 2014, n.º 58, pp. 71–91 Class discussion: • Private property and capitalist model *versus* housing rights Quiz

Weeks 11	**Education. Youth. Neurodiversity. Inclusion** Global challenges on education. Neurodiversity. Inclusion and bullying Spanish Language: Subjunctive III	Short Film: • Disney Latinoamérica (2018, November 30). *Ian*. [Video] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHma93 eZiBY Class discussion: • Top 5 issues facing youth today
Week 12	**Research Methodology** Problem solving Spanish Language: Connectors in academic writing	Readings: • Euroinnova Business School. (2021). *Qué es la metodología de solución de problemas*. • https://ccmit.mit.edu/problem-solving/ Quiz
Week 13	**Actionable Research** Spanish Language: Oral presentations	**Oral Presentations of Research** **Project**
Week 14	**Conclusions**	• Final remarks • Materials TBD **Research Project**

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All materials will be available on Moodle. The following list is not exhaustive; additional materials may be uploaded to Moodle in advance of when they are required.

- Carrero, M. "La aporofobia, el delito de odio más desconocido en España: 'Mucha gente no sabe identificarlos con claridad'." *20minutos*, 23 Aug. 2021, https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/4789661/0/los-delitos-notificados-por-aporofobia-aumentaran-tras-estipularse-como-agravante-de-delitos-en-espana/.
- CCMIT. *Introduction to Problem Solving Skills*. https://ccmit.mit.edu/problem-solving/.
- Euroinnova Business School. "Qué es la metodología de solución de problemas." 2021, https://www.euroinnova.edu.es/blog/que-es-la-metodologia-de-solucion-de-problemas.

- Fernández, James D., and Luis Argeo. *Invisible Immigrants: Spaniards in the US (1868–1945).* [Excerpts].
- Franco, Manuel. "¿Por qué el centro de salud de la esquina es vital para la salud de tu barrio?" *El País*, 14 Dec. 2023, https://elpais.com/salud-y-bienestar/la-salud-va-por-barrios/2023-12-14/por-que-el-centro-de-salud-de-la-esquina-es-vital-para-la-salud-de-tu-barrio.html.
- García Pérez, Eva. "Gentrificación en Madrid: de la burbuja a la crisis." *Revista de Geografía Norte Grande*, no. 58, 2014, pp. 71–91.
- González, B. "¿Qué es el feminismo? Una guía completa para principiantes." *El Periódico*, 8 Mar. 2023, https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20230308/feminismo-que-es-guia-completa-7876808.
- *La Vanguardia*. "Barcelona impulsa medidas contra la aporofobia." 19 Mar. 2018, https://www.lavanguardia.com/local/barcelona/20180319/441658194640/ayuntamiento-de-barcelona-aporofobia-agresiones-cajero-automatico-pobreza-sintecho.html.
- López, N. "Querida adolescencia LGTBIQ+." *El País*, 29 Aug. 2021, https://elpais.com/eps/2021-08-29/querida-adolescencia-lgtbiq.html.
- Ministerio de Inclusión, Seguridad Social y Migraciones. *Migraciones*. https://inclusion.seg-social.es/web/migraciones/home.
- Naciones Unidas. *Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos*. https://www.un.org/es/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.
- Naciones Unidas. *Orientaciones para el empleo de un lenguaje inclusivo en cuanto al género en español*. https://www.un.org/es/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml.
- Parra, M. L., and E. J. Serafini. "'Bienvenidxs todes': El lenguaje inclusivo desde una perspectiva crítica para las clases de español." *Journal of Spanish Language Teaching*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2021, pp. 143–60. https://doi.org/10.1080/23247797.2021.2012739.

FILMOGRAPHY

- Almodóvar, Pedro, director. *Todo sobre mi madre*. 1999. [Excerpt].
- Bollaín, Icíar, director. *Flores de otro mundo*. 1999.
- Bollaín, Icíar, director. *También la lluvia*. 2010.
- Chambao. "Papeles Mojados." [Music Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj8aNCtTHW4.
- Disney Latinoamérica. "Ian." [Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHma93eZiBY.
- Echevarría, Arantxa, director. *Carmen y Lola*. 2018.
- *esMadrid*. "Fiestas del Orgullo LGTBIQA+ de Madrid." [Video]. https://www.esmadrid.com/agenda/fiestas-orgullo-lgtbiqa-madrid.
- Guerra, Pedro. "Contamíname." [Music Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63xrbVSXbXA.
- Simón, Carla, director. *Alcarràs*. 2022.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE REFERENCE WORKS

- Cerrolaza, Óscar, and Estrella Sacristán. *Diccionario práctico de gramática: Uso correcto del español*. Edelsa, 2005.
- Corripio, Fernando. *Diccionario de sinónimos y antónimos de la lengua española*. Larousse, 2005.
- Duque, Eladio, et al. *Palabras claves para organizar textos en español: Recursos pragmáticos y discursivos*. Routledge, 2019.
- Espasa Calpe. *Diccionario de sinónimos y antónimos*. Espasa Calpe, 2005.
- Instituto Cervantes. *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes. Niveles de referencia para el español B2 y C1*. Edelsa, 2007.
- Lorenzo, Emilio. *Los anglicismos del español*. Gredos, 1996.
- Real Academia Española. *Diccionario de la lengua española*. Espasa. https://dle.rae.es/.
- Real Academia Española. *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas*. Espasa. https://www.rae.es/dpd/.
- Real Academia Española. *Ortografía de la lengua española*. Espasa, 2022.

- Romero Dueñas, Carmen, and Alfredo González Hermoso. *Gramática del español lengua extranjera: Normas y recursos para la comunicación*. Edelsa, 2011.
- Seco, Manuel. *Diccionario de dudas*. Espasa Calpe, 2010.
- *Diccionario de colocaciones del español (DiCE).* https://www.dicesp.com/.
- WordReference. *Diccionario de sinónimos*. https://www.wordreference.com/sinonimos/.

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:

Raquel Anido holds a Ph.D. in Spanish Studies from The Johns Hopkins University (2010) and a Law Degree (*Licenciatura*) from the Universitat de Barcelona (2004). Dr. Anido has been a fellow at Cornell University, Boston University, and the Università degli Studi di Catania. From 2010 to 2025, she was a Spanish professor at Clemson University, working first as Assistant Professor and later as tenured Associate Professor. She is now Emerita Associate Professor at Clemson.

At Clemson, Dr. Anido taught Spanish at all linguistic levels, as well as courses on the history and culture of Spain, with a particular focus on literature and film. She also founded and directed Clemson's only faculty-led semester program in Spain, in partnership with the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. She is multilingual, a published author, an enthusiast of the arts and culture, and is deeply committed to working with students. As a former study abroad student in Italy and the United States, and as the creator of a study abroad program in Spain, Dr. Anido is thrilled to work with IES students in Madrid.