

Beginning Spanish I

SPAN-1003 (3 credits)

Chile: Public Health, Traditional Medicine, and Community Empowerment

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This Spanish course aims to facilitate students' integration into the host culture and their participation in everyday social life. Through the introduction of basic grammatical principles, the course develops essential communicative skills that enable students to function in predictable social situations and engage in simple conversations. Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation are taught in an integrated manner alongside the development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, using authentic materials and practical activities tailored to students' needs. Learning is further reinforced through the homestay experience, which promotes cultural immersion and the use of Spanish in real-life contexts. In a complementary way, the course is connected to other components of the academic program and offers linguistic support that contributes to students' overall progress during their study abroad experience.

Learning Outcomes

The course comprises 45 hours of instruction and field visits. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Communicate in basic conversations to give and receive basic information, greet and introduce themselves;
- Ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics;
- Understand the main ideas of clearly written texts in standard language;
- Write short notes and messages such as postcards and emails;
- Orally describe people, places, things, experiences and wishes;
- Relate efficiently in simple situations where the interlocutor speaks clearly and slowly.

How Objectives Will Be Met

Classes and field-based language activities are taught by experienced instructors who are native Spanish speakers and who apply communicative methodologies and oral proficiency-based approaches. Students are placed into the appropriate language course through an oral

proficiency interview and a written assessment conducted in the host country at the beginning of the program. Because SIT courses prioritize communicative competence and functional language use, the assigned levels may not correspond directly to the course levels at students' home institutions.

Each level of the Spanish course has a specific workbook that is used systematically in every class alongside the Spanish instructor. This workbook includes study content and practical activities developed session by session and is designed using an experiential and communicative learning approach aimed at the integrated development of the four language skills: reading comprehension, speaking, writing, and listening comprehension.

In addition, oral proficiency interviews are conducted at the end of the semester to assess students' overall communicative development and linguistic progress. Final grades for assessed activities reflect the fulfillment of the course's academic requirements, while the estimated language levels indicate the degree of Spanish language proficiency attained.

Language of Instruction

This course is conducted mainly in Spanish.

Language Levels and Placement

During the first week of the program, students complete an oral proficiency interview and a written assessment to determine the most appropriate course level. The oral interview lasts approximately 20 to 30 minutes, while the written assessment consists of authentic written production tasks lasting approximately 60 minutes. Together, these components allow for a comprehensive and contextualized evaluation of language proficiency within the program.

Instructional Methods

The methodology of this course is based on experiential learning and aims to develop basic communicative skills in Spanish within the cultural context of Chile. Instruction is organized around the following components:

- Interaction with Spanish speakers in everyday situations and during field-based activities.
- Active participation in the classroom through individual and group presentations, discussion panels, simulations, and role-playing activities.
- Systematic use of the course workbook, which promotes balanced development of the four language skills—reading, speaking, writing, and listening—during each class.

These strategies encourage meaningful language use and strengthen students' confidence in real communicative contexts, both academic and community-based.

Course Requirements and Texts

Students are responsible for completing all required readings and arriving to class prepared to discuss them. The readings contribute to linguistic development by fostering critical participation, enriching class discussions, and helping to contextualize daily experiences outside the classroom, particularly those related to the SIT Chile program focus.

Required Readings:

SIT Spanish textbook. Arica-Chile (2026) [Prepared for the course].

MarcoELE (2019). papELEs. *Gramática del Español como Lengua Extranjera*, Nivel A. En línea: <https://marcoele.com/gramatica-a/>

Real Academia Española (2010). *Nueva Gramática de la Lengua Española - Manual*. En línea: https://www.academia.edu/29461718/RAE_Manual_de_la_Nueva_Gram%C3%A1tica_de_la_Lengua_Espa%C3%B1ola/

Gramática Española Esquemas ESO (2011). *La gramática en mapas conceptuales*. Cuadernos Digitales. Aula 31. En línea: <https://ciervalengua.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/gramc3a1tica-en-esquemas-eso.pdf>

Real Academia Española (1999). *Ortografía de la Lengua Española*. En línea: <https://lya.fcienias.unam.mx/gfgf/ga20111/material/Ortografia.pdf>

Recommended Readings:

Arnal, C., and Ruiz de Garibay, A. (1996). *Escribe en Español*. SGEL: Madrid. En línea: <https://es.scribd.com/document/341190656/Carmen-Arnal-Escribe-en-Espanol-pdf>

Bosque, I. y Demonte, V. (1999). *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe. En línea: <https://www.espanolavanzado.com/recursos/2771-gramatica-descriptiva-de-la-lengua-espanola>

RAE. (2005). Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas. Espasa-Calpe, Madrid. En línea: <https://www.rae.es/dpd/>

RAE. (2005). Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas. *Modelos de conjugación verbal*. En línea: <https://www.rae.es/dpd/ayuda/modelos-de-conjugacion-verbal/>

Pinilla, R., & Muñoz, R. A. (2005). *¡Bien dicho!: ejercicios de expresión oral*. Sociedad general española de librería, Madrid.

Rodríguez Rodríguez, M. (2003). *Escucha y aprende: Ejercicios de comprensión auditiva*. SGEL; Madrid.

Online Resources:

Diccionario RAE: <https://dle.rae.es/>

World Reference: <http://www.wordreference.com/esen/>

Spanish Learning Made Easy <https://www.spanishdict.com/>

Marco ELE: <https://marcoele.com/>

Todo ELE: <https://www.todoele.net/explora/>

Fundación Español Urgente: <https://www.fundeu.es/>

Español al día: <https://www.rae.es/espanol-al-dia/>

Videoteca del curso:	https://goo.su/bb3x/
Portales Chilenos:	www.sitios.cl
Derechos Humanos:	https://www.minjusticia.gob.cl/ and https://www.indh.cl/
Pueblos Indígenas:	www.serindigena.cl
Canciones Hispanas:	www.atame.org
Diario La Estrella de Arica:	www.estrellaarica.cl
Diario El Morrocotudo:	https://www.elmorrocotudo.cl/
Agenda Cultural:	https://eligecultura.gob.cl/events/

Course Content

**Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.*

Communicative

Pragmatic

- Assertive speaking (affirm, announce, assent, etc.);
- Compromise speaking (express will, intention, etc.);
- Expressive speaking (express admiration, surprise, etc.);
- Fact speaking (greet and say goodbye, introduce someone, invite, etc.);
- Directive speaking (give and receive instructions, give and receive consent, etc.).

Grammatical

- Simple sentences
- Syntactic order;
- Interrogation in spanish (Interrogative pronouns)
- Gender, numbers, nouns, adjectives;
- Present and simple past tenses;
- Direct objective / indirect objective pronouns;
- Periphrastic future;
- Pronunciation;
- Comprehensive speaking in present, past and future;
- Use short paragraphs with medium fluidity;
- Simple narration and description.

Lexis - semantic

- Personal identification;
- Activities of daily living;
- Free time and leisure;
- Transportation;
- Social and human relations;
- Health;

- Education;
- Commercial activities;
- Food;
- Weather, etc.
- Different registers formal / informal.

Intercultural

- Behavioral and social interaction;
- Accepted behavior in social groups;
- Religious and moral beliefs;
- Behavioral conventions;
- Geography: meaningful geographical factors about the country;
- Socialization: socialization institutions such as family, work or school, social or religious ceremonies, etc.

Assessments and Evaluation Criteria

Assessment Framework

- Diagnostic Assessment: Includes oral and written components designed to evaluate students' language skills in both formal and informal contexts.
- Formative Assessment: Throughout the semester, students receive feedback, academic support, and opportunities for self-assessment that allow for continuous monitoring of progress in relation to course objectives.
- Summative Assessment: Course assessments are directly aligned with the established learning outcomes.

Assessment of Spanish language learning is not based solely on classroom performance or test results, but on the holistic development of the language as demonstrated in both formal and informal contexts, including Spanish use with host families, during field activities, and in interactions with the local community. Evaluation criteria include:

- a. Regular attendance, a positive attitude, and active participation in all language classes;
- b. Initiative in using Spanish consistently and in expanding vocabulary and fluency both inside and outside the classroom;
- c. Evaluation of progress and effort by Spanish instructors, based on oral and written assessments as well as ongoing observation;
- d. Evaluation of effort and progress by the academic director.

Assignments and Assessed Activities

Throughout the program, students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired through the following assessments, contextualized within the framework of the SIT Chile program: *Public Health, Traditional Medicine, and Community Empowerment*:

1. Written Forum on Canvas (20%)

A written assessment focused on grammar, reading comprehension, and written production. It includes short-answer questions (5–8 lines) and the use of basic vocabulary to describe and reflect on personal experiences related to culture, daily life, and academic and community activities carried out in Chile. This forum promotes collaborative reflection among program students.

2. Oral Presentation: Favorite Photos (30%)

An oral production assessment that considers appropriate use of vocabulary and grammar corresponding to the student's level, as well as the ability to speak fluently without reading notes. The presentation is brief (5–8 minutes) and is based on photographs and meaningful experiences from the academic program and field excursions.

3. Oral Presentation: Vocabulary Learning (30%)

An assessment of vocabulary acquired during a study visit or learning experience within the program. This is a brief and dynamic presentation in which students identify unfamiliar words encountered during a specific visit or experience, research and construct their meanings, and then present these words and their meanings to the rest of the class.

4. Participation in Classes and Field Activities (20%)

Includes active and responsible participation in classes, readings, discussions, and excursions. Evaluation criteria include:

- Attendance: punctuality and positive presence in the classroom.
- Active listening: attention during classes and field activities, asking relevant questions, taking notes, and demonstrating interest.
- Participation in discussions: meaningful contributions in both small and large groups, maintaining balanced participation.
- Group responsibility: collaborative and respectful participation in group activities and excursions.
- Respect: culturally appropriate interaction with host families, SIT program staff, instructors, and local communities.

Assessment Weighting

- Written Assessment: Canvas Forum – 20%
- Oral Presentation: Favorite Photos – 30%
- Oral Presentation: Vocabulary Learning – 30%
- Participation in Classes and Field Activities – 20%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+

84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Attendance and Participation

Due to the experiential nature of SIT Study Abroad programs, attendance at all classes and program excursions is mandatory. Students are expected to participate fully in all academic components and field activities, with no option to voluntarily opt out of required activities. Excused absences, such as those due to illness, must be reported and coordinated with the academic director or designated staff. Unexcused absences may negatively affect academic performance and final grades and, in severe cases, may result in dismissal from the program.

Late Assignments

SIT Study Abroad programs integrate classroom instruction with field-based experiences, site visits, and reflective activities. Because the curriculum is progressive and sequential, timely completion and submission of assignments are essential for students to fully benefit from the learning process. Students may request one justified extension for an assignment during the semester. Requests must be submitted in writing at least 12 hours prior to the established due date and time. If the request is approved, an extension of up to one week may be granted. No additional extensions will be allowed. Assignments not submitted within the approved extension period will receive a grade of "F."

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will

always be available despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.

- **Personal Technology Use:** cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than online classroom activities.
- **Course Communication:** Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Canvas. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting us know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.
- **Content Considerations:** Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, we will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with the Academic Director and/or seek help from counseling services.
- **Classroom recording policy:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Accessibility Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.