

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Division of Elementary, Literacy, Multicultural & Secondary Education**

EDUC 400: Spanish for Educators, Part 1  
Wednesdays, January 16<sup>th</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup> (excluding Spring Break)  
4:30-7:30 pm  
Saunders MS, Room D-11

**Instructor:** Ditzanoris Berrios  
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**Course Description:** This is the first of a series of four undergraduate courses created just for PWCS staff in order for them to learn basic Spanish skills in all the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and have a multi-cultural understanding of the cultures most represented by PWCS Latino students and families. Given our Spanish-speaking demographics and that 78% of all of our ELLs (English language learners) are Latinos, our PWCS staff will benefit from the study of Spanish in order to better understand and assist them in feeling welcomed in our schools and validated for the importance of their language and cultural heritage while learning and adapting to an American school setting.

**Purpose and Intended Audience/Participants:** Participants in this first level course should be at a novice level of Spanish. The course presumes participants have never studied Spanish as it begins with the very basics of the language such as the alphabet, sound system, and development of very basic interpersonal communication skills. Course participants should be staff members who have studied Spanish for less than two years in high school and/or those who have not studied beginning Spanish at the university level. This course is offered to all staff members of PWCS as a free professional development opportunity to improve their cultural competence, knowledge, and skills. This course can also satisfy earning 3 of the foreign language credits needed towards Virginia ESL State Certification if the sequel, Part 2, is also taken.

**Course Format:** The course format follows infusing all of the National Foreign Language Standards goals known as the 5 Cs: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities and the best practices of teaching a world language. All course content will actively engage students in applying the vocabulary and grammar to authentic interpersonal situations of daily life, primarily focusing on a PWC school setting. Through presentations by the instructor, students will learn the basics of the sound system and sentence structures needed for simple interpersonal-level functions like asking questions and providing answers. Through the viewing of videos and the completion of supplemental response sheets and class discussions, students will gain insight into the real lives of many Latino students and families of PWCS. Through group conversations, continual practice, and written and oral activities,

students will apply their knowledge of the Spanish language and Latin culture. Students will be assessed either orally or in writing during each class session.

**Student Outcomes:** The course supports the PWCS Professional Performance Standards especially Standard 1, Knowledge of Students. It also supports the following PWCS Strategic Plan Goals:

- Goal 1, Obj. 1.1: Increase the percent of students who meet or exceed achievement performance levels
  - 1.2: Provide equitable access for students to challenging opportunities that will prepare them for the future
- Goal 2, Obj. 2.1: Promote a climate that supports equity, diversity, and collaborative behaviors among students and stakeholders
- Goal 3, Obj. 3.1: Forge partnerships with families and the community to collaboratively promote student learning
- Goal 4, Obj. 4.2: Maintain high performing employees through an employee supervision and evaluation system that provided targeted and ongoing professional development support for employees

The course content is aligned with the National Foreign Language Standards goals and recognized most effective research-based best practices of the second language acquisition field.

**Required Materials:** Text: ¡Arriba! Comunicación y Cultura: 5th Edition (to be purchased by student)

Companion website: [http://wps.prenhall.com/ml\\_zayas\\_arriba\\_5/](http://wps.prenhall.com/ml_zayas_arriba_5/)  
(or just search: Arriba Companion website)

Supplemental materials (excluding textbook) will be provided by the instructor.  
Culture Grams of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico  
Authentic cultural DVDs include: Victor, El Norte, If the Mango Tree Could Speak  
ESOL Program Resources Sheets and ESL State Certification Requirement List  
National Foreign Language Standards & PPP Standards

**Course Requirements:** Regular attendance is both crucial and mandatory for any beginning skill-building type class like a beginning Spanish class. With the exception of true emergencies, absences/late arrivals/early departures that cumulatively exceed 10% of required class time (i.e. 4.5 hours) will lower the final grade by one letter. In addition, it is mandatory to bring all essential text materials to class each time as part of the class participation requirement

Preparation for each class is necessary. It is expected that the same number of hours be spent studying the Spanish language outside of the classroom by completing all written homework and memorizing, studying, and learning vocabulary and grammatical information as there are class hours (3 hours). Since the class meets only once weekly (not the best format for early language acquisition), it is highly recommended that participants do "homework" in increments spread over the week rather than in one sitting.

Written homework will be assigned and collected weekly. "Making up" a basic level foreign/world language class is very difficult. If absent the student should notify the instructor or another student to find out the missed work. If absent, the homework that is due should be handed in during that week or at the following class. There will be no make-up quizzes. The absent student will simply have one less quiz grade calculated at end of semester.

Class participation is essential in a beginning language class. Turn off all computers, cell phones, and electronic devices for your benefit and that of others.

**Evaluation:** Grades will be calculated according to the following categories and weighted as indicated:

Chapter tests:	25%
Quizzes (written and oral):	25%
Class Participation//Homework:	25%
Project (Cultural):	25%

The grading scale is as follows: 90-100 = A, 89-80 = B, 79-70 = C, 69-60=D, 59-0=F

**Statement of Expectations:** GMU and PWCS expect that all students exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. Students must abide by the GMU honor code and PWCS Code of Behavior. See [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC\\_H12](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12) for GMU's full honor code.

**Inclement Weather Policy:** We follow the Prince William County school closing decisions due to inclement weather, not GMU, since the course is in one of our schools. If PWC schools are closed or open that is what decides the class status not what is announced regarding GMU. We also follow the PWC calendar with regard to holidays or school closings.

**Course Withdrawal:** For PWCS purposes, PLEASE do not register on the On-Line Catalog unless you plan to be in the course. We follow the PWCS policy on consequences for being a "no show." However, in addition, after the first night of class, you will also be registered within the GMU system. To withdraw after the second class, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, you must notify the instructor and also follow GMU procedures to withdraw without academic penalty.

**Points:** PWCS professional staff receives one point for each hour of attendance or class time. This time will be entered into the On-line Professional Learning Catalog within two weeks of the end of the course. Participants will be notified via email when a course evaluation may be done and when the awarding of points may be viewed in the system. It is the responsibility of the student/participant to secure his/her own transcript from GMU.