Spanish Intermediate B2

Instructor: David Perucha
Times: Tuesday 15:15 – 16:45
       Thursday 09:00 – 10:30
       Friday 10:45 – 12:15
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Location: P98A.U.05

Course Material
Course materials will be provided.

Course Description
The class work is based on a communicative teaching approach (what in technical terminology is called Task-based language learning) aimed at developing students' oral and writing skills through interaction and the introduction of authentic language in form of text, film or music. The goal of the course is consequently to make the student competent in Spanish in the B1 level. “Competence” implies that the acquisition of the language must show a high level of grammatical, lexical, and cultural accuracy. The students don’t learn simply a list of rules and words, but have to be able to communicate successfully in real situations. The writing assignments (which will be handed in as hardcopy and with enough margins on each side for comments and corrections) will be also a crucial aspect towards the integral learning of all four skills.

The learning goals of this intermediate’s class B2 are in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (abbreviated as CEFR). CEFR is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe. It describes what a learner is expected to be able to do in reading, listening, speaking and writing at each level. Our class fulfils the requirements of the “B2 Vantage or upper intermediate” level. What this means is that once you have completed the class successfully you are able to:

- understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.
- interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers without strain for either party.
- produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
The work-load to achieve the aimed level may vary from student to student, but all of them are required to hand in the writing assignment on time, to make all homework tasks and to be prepared for the class and for the tests. The amount of work is designed to meet the 8 credit point structure the course has.

Requirements

Attendance
Since interaction is critical for language learning, we take class attendance very seriously. You will be allowed no more than three unexcused absences during the semester. An absence counts as excused only if you can provide a doctor’s note or a note from the Dean of Bard College Berlin, Prof. Catherine Toal. Any additional unexcused absence will result in automatic failure of the course.

Learning and Testing
About every two weeks, the students will take a test based as well in task resolution exercises. The tests must be taken on the announced test days. The only acceptable means of rescheduling a test are: (a) prior arrangements with the teacher, or (b) written notification from a doctor or from the Dean of Bard College Berlin following the absence. (Tests that are missed and not excused under these terms will not be rescheduled, and will receive a score of “0%”.)

Recommended
It is extremely important to complete the class work and the tasks attached to it spending time in touch with the aim-language. For that, although it is not always easy during the semester, it would be extremely important to practice with native Spanish speakers regularly. Much easier, but also very effective, is to be in contact with the language through texts or any kind of oral expression (songs, films, news) that might be of interest for the student. The time dedicated to these activities will be significantly more effective if things the students read or listen to are related to their personal interests. To find the right materials you can ask me or take a look to the Bard Center for Foreign Languages and Culture (http://cflc.bard.edu/spanishlanguage/), or to web site of the Spanish Public TV and Radio Corporation (www.rtve.es), where you can find an interesting collection of audio and video materials related especially to culture and news.

Grade Breakdown
Your Grade will be based on class attendance, quality of participation, written homework assignments, a small presentation at the end of the course and tests:
Class Participation and Presentations 25%
Homework and Writing Assignments 25%
Tests 25%
Final Exam 25%

Syllabus: We won’t be using a course book, but a variety of materials (mostly extracted from real contexts and from different textbooks) which will be chosen according to the students’ interests and suggestions at the beginning of the semester.