

University of Washington: Spanish for Heritage Learners Higher Education Program

Background Information

Institution: University of Washington

College: College of Arts and Sciences

Department: Division of Spanish and Portuguese

Program address: Box 354360, Seattle, WA 98195

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Contact Person:

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Title: Senior Lecturer

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Type of institution: Research university

Languages/dialects taught: Spanish

Courses: three upper intermediate/advanced level courses

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: This program is designed to build upon the language base that students have acquired outside of the educational system so that

they may attain greater literacy and grammar and writing skills. Additionally, the program will create cultural awareness of the Hispanic World.

Type of program: Heritage language track in a foreign language program

Mission statement:

Program origin: The program was founded in Fall 2000 when Maria Gillman noticed an increase in the number of heritage Spanish speakers in the department. These students had various levels of expertise instructional needs that from the foreign language students. This program was one of the first heritage programs in the state of Washington.

Faculty's and administration's expectations for the program: Prior to the heritage program, many faculty members were frustrated with heritage students. They had high expectations because of the students' verbal skills, but were disappointed by the students' academic language use. There were complaints about student performance and a lack of tolerance for non-standard dialects. There was an overall lack of awareness of heritage learners' unique needs.

With the institution of the heritage track, the faculty and administration are now aware of the differences and expect students in the program to overcome these limitations with targeted instruction.

Students

Students:

Countries of origin: Argentina, Canary Islands, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Spain, United States, Venezuela

Total student enrollment: approximately 38 per year

Age of students: 19-22

How the program identifies heritage speakers: Department counselors speak to students about the heritage classes and refer them to the coordinator of the third year Spanish language program, Maria Gillman. She conducts an in-depth oral interview to determine if interested students qualify for heritage classes.

How the program determines the language background and language proficiency of students: Oral interview

Percentage of students who complete the program: 70%

Percentage of students who continue to study the heritage language after completing the program: Approximately 55% go on to major or minor in Spanish.

Possible reasons for student withdrawal: Some students just take the courses to fulfill the University's language requirement. When their requirement has been completed, they withdraw from language courses.

Students' attitudes toward the language varieties they speak: Some students feel that they don't speak "good Spanish" and are self-conscious speaking with relatives when they visit their home country. However, many students feel very lucky that they have maintained their Spanish in spite of the fact they never formally studied the language. They enjoy taking classes with other Spanish speakers and are fascinated by the many dialects and registers of the language. These classes lead to greater confidence and pride in their heritage and their language abilities

Faculty

Number of faculty in the program: 2

Languages in which faculty members are proficient: Spanish, English, French, Italian, German

Proficiency level: Native speakers of Spanish and German, Superior and Advanced levels in the other languages

Credentials: MA Latin American Studies, Sociology, Linguistics/PhD. Spanish literature

Professional development opportunities for faculty members: Conferences

Professional development opportunities faculty members need: Training in HL teaching methods and U.S. Spanish

Comments: One of the instructors is a heritage speaker of Spanish.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: 5

Times per week: 5

Student grouping: by level

Language skills

Skills developed by the program:

- Spelling

- Accentuation marks
- Reading
- Academic writing
- Creative writing
- Film analysis

Culture

Aspects of culture taught:

- Geography
- History
- Festivals
- Customs
- Traditions/beliefs
- Religion
- Folktales
- Arts and crafts
- Songs
- Rhymes
- Social and cultural norms
- Cultural appropriateness
- Literature

Kind of student identity fostered by program: The program fosters positive identity by increasing students' cultural awareness to be better communicators. They also learn to see issues from different perspectives and to become better citizens of the world. For those who want to become language majors, it helps them succeed in the academic world.

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: The program promotes communication, literacy and focuses on grammatical structure and accuracy, so that students can continue and succeed in the Spanish program curriculum.

Materials

Textbooks:

Span 314

Roca, Ana. *Nuevos mundos: Lectura Cultura, Comunicación*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2005.

Marqués, Sara. *La lengua que heredamos: Curso de español para bilingües*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2005

Jiménez, Francisco. *Cajas de carton*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company., 2000

Cantú, Norma Elia. *Canícula*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company., 2000

Jiménez, Francisco. *Senderos Fronterizos*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company., 2002

Span 315

Roca Ana. *Nuevos mundos: Lectura Cultura, Comunicación*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2005.

Marqués Sara. *La lengua que heredamos: Curso de español para bilingües*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2005

Cisneros Sandra. *La Casa en Mango Street*. Translated by Elena Poniatowska. New York: Vintage Books, 1994

Fernández Roberto G. *En la Ocho y la Doce*. New York, Houghton Mifflin Company., 2001

Span 316

Colombi Cecilia, Pellettieri Hill L, Rodríguez Maria Isabel.. *Palabra Abierta*.

Other materials used for instruction: Packets of authentic materials (articles from newspapers and periodicals, etc).

Technology used for instruction:

- A Web site for practicing accentuation marks.
(<http://courses.washington.edu/legado/intro.htm>)
- Email
- Compact Discs
- Television and film

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress:

- Chapter tests
- Mid-term tests
- Final exams
- Performance-based tasks
- Portfolios
- Dialogue journals

In winter, students in Span 315 participate in World Language Day, a day when High Schools throughout the State of Washington visit the language programs offered at the UW, by performing a play. A bilingual story: *El Viz mexicano y el Border Patrol* de Asunción Espinoza or *Los tres cuervos* de Francisco Campos.

In Spring 04, Span 316 students participated in a project where they interviewed and gathered stories of women inmates from the Federal Detention Center in Sea-Tac. These women were learning how to read and write, and get their elementary or middle School education in Spanish, through the Mexican Institute for Adult Education (Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos –INEA) while in prison. In this way when they are deported they had at least got their basic education in Spanish. Students presented and read their *Historias de vidas* in a special event, sponsored by the UW and the Division of Spanish and Portuguese.

The Span 316 students present a recital of their best work (shorts stories, poems and poems with music) and at the end of the quarter.

Connections: Program students tutor local high school students. Maria Gillman is working with high schools in Washington interested in creating a HG Program at the 100 level in order for Heritage Students to earn college credits.

Opportunities for using the heritage language and developing cultural knowledge outside the program: Students participate in service learning on a voluntary basis in outside organizations. Some of these organizations include:

- Casa Latina
- Centro de la Raza
- Mexican Consulate
- Radio Sol
- Red Cross
- Cascades's People
- Center for Spanish Studies
- K-12 public schools

What the program has in place:

Types of financial support the program receives:

- Institutional
- Local/state support

Desired assistance or collaboration for program from other entities: The program needs an operating budget that will provide Heritage courses at the 200 and 100 level.

Special challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: Sometimes there are not enough instructors interested in undertaking the some of the classes, not for lack of interest but because of lack of training and not knowing how to approach this specific group. Faculty would like to attend more lectures, courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences on methodology, socio, and psycholinguistics in this subject.