



## COURSE SYLLABUS

### ADVANCED SPANISH AND ARGENTINE CULTURE Argentine Universities Program

**Suggested US semester credit hours:** 3

**IFSA course code:** SP401-01

**Contact hours:** 45

**Delivery method:** Face to Face

**Language of semester:** Spanish

**Course length:** Semester

**Host institution affiliation:** Universidad de Buenos Aires

#### **Course Description**

The IFSA-Butler Advanced Spanish and Argentine Culture class is a mandatory course designed specifically for the students of the Program. The course comprises three stages.

It consists of meetings during the program orientation, an intensive grammar workshop in weeks 3 and 4 of the program, and weekly three-hour meetings during the remainder of the semester.

This course is required for all program participants, and is worth 3 U.S. semester credit hours.

The course begins with an evaluation to determine the student's linguistic competence that aims at assessing the student's oral expression and comprehension, as well as their written expression and reading comprehension.

The course is offered in 10 to 12 different sections, each focusing on a different aspect of Argentine culture. At the beginning of the semester, students select a section of the Advanced Spanish course according to their interest and needs. Possible thematic sections are: Identity of the Argentinians, Argentine Cinema, Argentine Theater, Argentine Popular Music, Argentine Women, Reading of newspapers, Academic Writing, Argentina through Media. The specific syllabus for each section is available in Spanish upon request.

The course aims to make the most of the surrounding Spanish-speaking environment by encouraging students to interact with native speakers and offering insight into different aspects of the Argentine cultural, social and political reality.

Students will be encouraged to put into practice the four macro skills of language, namely: speaking, listening, writing and reading.

**Activities:** Reading and discussion of literary texts, writing of assignments, study of grammar points, reading and discussion of materials related to the specific cultural topic of the class.

### **Requirements and course assessment**

The final course grade will be determined by the Laboratorio de Idiomas de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, University of Buenos Aires.

#### **30% of the final grade will be comprised of:**

- a) Compliance with and presentation of reports and mini reports throughout the duration of the course.
- b) Participation in class.
- c) Progress achieved in oral comprehension and expression.
- d) Fulfillment of instructions and assignments: activities, outings, mini presentations, reading of texts, etc.
- e) Attendance and punctuality: Students are allowed a maximum of two non-consecutive absences. Late arrivals count as  $\frac{1}{2}$  an absence.

#### **30% of the final grade will be comprised of:**

- f) Final 4-page long paper per student printed single sided with a  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  line spacing, font size 12.

#### **40% of the final grade will be comprised of:**

- g) An oral presentation on the final paper and a 15-minute long interview per student with IFSA professors and professors from the UBA Filosofía y Letras team.

### **Orientation**

### **Stage:**

The Orientation Stage is intensive and students participate in 10 class hours over a period of 5 days.

**Objectives:** The objective of this stage is to afford students their first contact with the Spanish language and with the local sociocultural habits and customs through the practice of the language. Students are encouraged to become acquainted with the linguistic features of the River Plate Spanish and are introduced to some of the sociocultural aspects of the environment in which they are going to spend their semester. By addressing topics that are unique to Buenos Aires and its people, this stage of the course is aimed at laying the foundations and providing the tools that will enable the student to achieve a degree of immersion in the new environment. Students are also encouraged to interact with native speakers and other fellow students.

### **Grammar Workshop:**

The grammar workshop comprises six meetings lasting 2 hours each. The workshop is intensive and is designed as a leveling up stage.

**Objectives:** The workshop is aimed at revising and adjusting the structures learnt by the student before attending this course and is designed as a preparation for the Maintenance Stage.

### **Maintenance Stage:**

This stage takes place over the course of 15 weeks, with weekly meetings that last 3 hours each.

It involves the presentation, learning and practice of more complex discursive structures and strategies of the Spanish language by a closer look into cultural topics.

Students are encouraged to read, write and discuss on different aspects of Argentine culture.

**General Objectives:** This segment of the course is aimed at providing students with the tools required to improve their Spanish through a varied approach and by taking into account areas of interest put forward by the students.

The workshop focuses on uniformity of register, both formal and informal, and, particularly, on the introduction to and deeper analysis and production of oral and written academic texts.

- **Specific objectives of the maintenance course:**

The maintenance course involves three main components:

- 1) Discussion and practice of grammar topics;
- 2) Reading, discussion and writing based on literary texts, and
- 3) Study and discussion of aspects that are unique to Argentine culture and identity.

These three objectives are designed to enable students to:

- Explore different strategies for the comprehension and analysis of complex texts and genres of discourse pertaining to the academic field.
- Exercise critical reflection on oral and written communication processes through literary works, essays, newspaper articles and auditory material designed to bring them into contact with the local cultural production.
- Achieve tools that can be applied to their specific fields of interest for the appropriate and effective production of expositive and argumentative texts in Spanish.
- Develop the skills required to search for, define and process documentary and bibliographic information with a view to producing autonomous and grounded points of view and achieving an effective presentation of the results.
- Optimize their processes of textual production, reading comprehension and oral communication in Spanish through the development of metacognitive strategies, i.e. strategies that enable the student to observe his/her own learning process of Spanish as a foreign language – e.g. Identifying the objective and aim of an exercise or assignment in order to determine whether it is designed to broaden vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, etc.; self-evaluating a completed assignment; seeking for opportunities to practice and strengthen newly acquired knowledge – and metadiscourse strategies that comprise both aspects involved in the production and organization of the text and aspects that enable the writer to talk about his/her work or build a relationship with the reader.

- **Structure of each class:**

Each class lasts 3 clock hours and is divided into three blocks: a first block lasting 55 minutes, a 10-minute long pause, a second class block lasting 55 minutes, a new 10-minute long pause and a third and last class block lasting 50 minutes.

First block:

1. Grammar topics
2. Corrected reports are returned. A discussion ensues regarding the corrections to the reports.

Second block:

1. Discussion of the chapters read by students from *Blanco nocturno*, *La ciudad vista* or *La persistencia* or of a specific course topic, as applicable, or

Third block:

2. Discussion of a topic relating to Argentine culture.

Students are expected to read an average of 20 pages per class.

- **Course contents per block:**

**Grammar block contents:**

| <b>GRAMMAR SYLLABUS<br/>SPANISH MAINTENANCE</b>                             |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>TOPICS</b>   | <b>OBJECTIVES:</b>  | <b>EXAMPLES</b>   |
| <b>Past Tense of the Indicative Mode</b>                                    | Revision of Past Tense. To express contrasting forms of past tense                                | <i>Ella fue de vacaciones a Mar del Plata.</i><br><i>Ella iba de vacaciones a Mar del Plata</i><br><i>Ella había ido de vacaciones a Mar del Plata.</i> |
| <b>The subjunctive, mandatory uses</b>                                      | To express possibility, doubt, desire   | <i>Es posible que vaya.</i><br><i>Dudo de que vaya.</i><br><i>Quiero que él venga.</i>  |
| <b>Concessive propositions: value of the subjunctive and the indicative</b> | To express concession with a different degree of knowledge and appreciation of the circumstances. | <i>Aunque hace frío, voy a salir a pasear.</i><br><i>Voy a salir a pasear, aunque haga frío.</i>  |
| <b>Prepositions:</b><br>Prepositional system                                | Correct use of prepositional phrases.   | <i>Para/ Por</i><br><i>Soñar con, pensar en, dudar de, etc.</i>   |

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| <b>Relative propositions:</b><br>connectors, combination with articles and prepositions. Indicative / subjunctive alternation.        | To describe real vs. imaginary persons or objects or persons or objects outside the field of experience.  | <i>Es una mujer en la que no se puede confiar.</i><br><i>Busco a alguien que sabe./ Busco a alguien que sepa.</i>  |
| <b>Imperfect Subjunctive:</b><br>Use with "as if".  | To describe using imaginary comparisons.  | <i>Camina como si fuera un robot.</i>  |
| <b>Subjunctive</b><br><b>Past Perfect</b><br><b>Correlation in the past tense.</b>  | To express desires, doubts, etc. referred to the past.  | <i>Queríamos que ella tuviera una fiesta sorpresa.</i><br><i>Ojalá hubiera tenido una linda fiesta.</i>  |
| <b>Conditionals:</b> Revision of Type I.<br>Type II and III.<br><br><b>Other conditional connectors.</b>                              | To express conditions in real, probable or impossible situations relating to the present or the past and with a different value: give excuses, complain, desire, regret something, etc. | <i>Si tengo tiempo, voy/ voy a ir al cine.</i><br><i>Si tuviera tiempo, iría al cine.</i><br><i>Si hubiera tenido tiempo, habría ido al cine.</i><br><i>Estará contenta siempre y cuando tenga trabajo.</i><br><i>No trabajaría de noche, a menos que me pagaran muy bien.</i> |
| <b>Supposition future</b><br>Future Simple and Future Perfect   | To make assumptions, suppositions or personal conjectures in relation to present or past events.  | <i>Juan no vino, ¿estará enfermo o se le habrá hecho tarde?</i>  |
| <b>Modal verbs:</b> must, should, can   | To express probability or obligation in relation to past or present events  | <i>Ese auto es viejo, puede tener problemas.</i><br><i>Debería llevar el auto al taller.</i><br><i>Nunca llegó a la fiesta, puede haber tenido problemas con el auto.</i><br><i>Debería haber llevado el auto al taller.</i>   |
| <b>Reported Speech:</b><br>correlation with the introductory verb in the present and in the past tense.<br><br>Different introductory | To incorporate another speaker's discourse into one's own discourse.<br>To provide information about what people say or think.  | <i>Era tu mamá, dice que no te olvides de pagar el gas.</i><br><br><i>Anoche llamó tu mamá, dijo que no te olvidaras de pagar la boleta.</i>   |

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| verbs.  |  |  |
| <b>Verb To Be. Different verbs to express "To Be" in Spanish, according to the context ("ser" vs. "estar"). Changes of meaning when used with adjectives.</b> | To identify and express slight differences in meaning according to whether "ser" or "estar" is used. | <i>Es/está triste.<br/>Es/está verde.</i>  |
| <b>Change of state verbs (to become):</b><br>"Volverse", "hacerse", "quedarse", "ponerse", "convertirse" and "llegar a ser".                                  | To express changes with slight differences of meaning.   | <i>Gracias a esa idea, se hizo rico.<br/>El pan se puso rancio.<br/>Se quedó mudo con la noticia.</i>                    |
| <b>Passive Voice:</b> with the verb "to be" ("ser" / "estar").<br>Passive Voice in the present tense vs. passive "se".  | To express processes and results by means of the PV.   | <i>El libro fue escrito por Borges/está escrito en español.<br/>Actualmente, se escriben muchos libros de autoayuda.</i> |
| <b>Passive "se" vs. impersonal "se".</b>  | To express degrees of impersonality.   | <i>Se dice que ese fenómeno es una moda.<br/>Aquí se vive muy bien.</i>  |
| <b>Other uses of "se"</b><br><b>(optional, emphatic)</b>  |  | <i>Se comió toda la torta/todo.</i>  |
| <b>Dative of interest or ethical dative</b>   |  | <i>Te me vas de acá.<br/>El nene no me come.</i>   |

#### Literature block contents:

The literary material chosen for reading and discussion throughout the course includes the following works by Argentine writers: the novel *Blanco nocturno*, by Ricardo Piglia; *La ciudad vista*, a compilation of essays by Beatriz Sarlo; *Operación Masacre*, nonfiction by Rodolfo Walsh and *La Persistencia*, a play by Griselda Gambaro.

Students are expected to read the texts throughout the duration of the course in keeping with the schedule to be provided by the professor. A segment of each class will be allocated to the discussion and clarification of the texts. Furthermore, students will be required to hand in written assignments on a regular basis that will be graded and returned for corrections.

Class discussion will focus on the importance of each writer and his/her work within the context of Argentine and Latin American literature. Each of the selected works will be subject to a group reconstruction of the story, an analysis of the structure of the work and its core themes and historical and cultural background material will be provided to cast light on these themes.

More specifically:

***Blanco nocturno:***

- The writer and his work: bio-bibliographical outline. Placing the author and his work in the context of Argentine literature. Importance of the author's work. Introductory remarks on this novel.
- Introductory discussion and guidelines for the reading of *Blanco nocturno*.
- General characteristics of the police genre.
- Discussion on the development of the crime story throughout the novel.
- Group reconstruction of the story and characterization of the main characters (their motivations, interests, desires, etc.). The family history of the different characters.
- Discussion of the references to Argentine political and economic history included in the novel.

***La ciudad vista:***

- The writer and her work: bio-bibliographical outline. Placing the author and her work in the context of Argentine literature and academic life. Importance of the author's work. Remarks in relation to the magazine *Punto de vista* that Beatriz Sarlo founded and directed over a period of thirty years. Introductory remarks on the novel *La ciudad vista*.
- The city and its new forms.
- Cultural identities.
- The City of Buenos Aires: major social and cultural issues, cultural changes and their effects on the life of the Argentine people.

***Operación Masacre:***

- The writer and his work: bio-bibliographical outline. Placing the author and his work in the context of Argentine literature. Importance of the author's work. Introductory remarks on this novel.
- Introductory discussion and guidelines for the reading of *Operación Masacre*.
- General characteristics of the nonfiction.
- Group reconstruction of the story and characterization of the main characters (their motivations, interests, desires, etc.).
- Discussion of the references to Argentine political and economic history included in the novel.

***La Persistencia:***

- The writer and her work: bio-bibliographical outline. Placing the author and her work in the context of Argentine literature and, particularly, in the field of playwriting. Importance of the author's work. Introductory remarks on *La persistencia*.
- Local point of view of a conflict of atemporal order through an historical event and a specific political conflict.
- *La persistencia* as a contemporary tragedy in its core themes and theatrical treatment.
- Women, hatred, revenge, justice.
- Terrorism

**Theme block contents**

Available in Spanish upon request

**Timely Submissions**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the course instructor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

**Academic Integrity**

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student's original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA-Butler takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA-Butler resident director as well as your home institution.