

Spanish & Portuguese Graduate Course Descriptions

Fall 2026

SPANISH

Spanish 541:

Old Spanish

Prof. Fernando Tejedo

TR 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm

383 Van Hise

Spanish 541 examines the historical development of Spanish from Latin to Modern Spanish from the perspectives of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Throughout the course, students will gain a general understanding of the various processes and mechanisms of language change as they apply to the history of Spanish. Students will learn about regular sound changes; changes in the nominal system (e.g., the development of grammatical gender and forms of address such as vos, vosotros, usted); changes in the verbal system (e.g., the origins of the perfect tenses and the development of verb paradigms such as haya, vaya alongside haiga, vaiga, or the future and conditional forms saldré, saldría, querré, querría instead of saliré, saliría); and changes in clause structure (e.g., the origins of the “direct object marker”: quieres tu perro vs. quieres a tu perro). We will also explore some of the factors involved in semantic change (e.g., widening, narrowing of meaning, lexicalization). No previous knowledge of linguistics is assumed. A minimal knowledge of Latin is helpful, though not required. Students are expected to become familiar with basic linguistic terminology in both English and Spanish. The course assessment will consist of short written assignments, presentations, and longer research paper.

Spanish 770:

Introduction to the Profession

Will Morgan

M 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

586 Van Hise

Welcome to Spanish 770. This course is titled, Introduction to the Profession, with a sole emphasis on the language teaching component of the profession of language education. This course is designed in a workshop style in which we will dive into the responsibilities of language educators, including, but not limited to: a history of language education in the United States, theories of language learning and teaching, communicative language teaching methods, lesson planning, material creation, grammar instruction, assessment design, proficiency-oriented curriculum building, and much more.

Most importantly, this course is designed to provide the most modern teaching methods for lower-division Spanish courses that can be applicable in most, if not all, language departments beyond the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In this course, you will be challenged to participate in critical discourse about the profession of language education, to hone your teaching practice in alignment with the teaching philosophy of the Spanish Basic Language Program (SBLP) in the Department of Spanish and

	<p>Portuguese, and to develop essential skills in course design and lesson planning that reflect proficiency-based instruction.</p> <p>By the end of this course, you will have gained practical experience in course design, assessment creation, lesson implementation, and AI integration, equipping you with the skills necessary to succeed in academic and professional teaching environments. This course not only strengthens your ability to teach Spanish effectively but also prepares you for the job market by fostering critical engagement with contemporary pedagogical innovations and best practices in the field.</p>
<p>Spanish 802</p> <p>Against Nature</p> <p><i>Area: Spanish American II</i></p> <p>Prof. Marcelo Pellegrini</p> <p>T 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm</p> <p>1120 Van Hise</p>	<p>In the Western modern intellectual tradition, Nature has a moral and an aesthetic authority. It is the model for human behavior and the model for our idea (and, eventually, our concept) of beauty; it is also the preeminent metaphor we use to describe what comes “naturally” (meaning, “effortlessly”) to us, whether that be a thought or a work of artistic imagination. We, in sum, give Nature an unsurpassed “truth value.” But what if we questioned this? What if we thought against this idea of Nature as an authority and a model? Drawing on Lorraine Daston’s seminal work, this seminar investigates how literature has made use of this markedly modern intellectual frame. The course brings Latin American literary texts into dialogue with key works in literary theory and philosophy to question how Nature has been imagined, defined, and contested. Moving across genres, periods, and critical traditions, the course examines how literature stages tensions between the natural and the artificial, the biological and the cultural, the given and the constructed.</p>
<p>Spanish 851</p> <p><i>Don Quixote</i></p> <p><i>Area: Golden Age</i></p> <p>Prof. Steven Hutchinson</p> <p>W 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm</p> <p>1120 Van Hise</p>	<p>As is well known, apart from the Bible no work of literature in the world has been more translated, published or written about than Cervantes’ <i>Don Quixote</i>, and it is widely regarded as the first modern novel. Dostoevsky said this about it: “There is nothing in the world more profound or powerful than this work. This is the ultimate and greatest word that human thought has yet produced, it is the bitter irony expressible by man, and if the world were to end and someone were to ask there, somewhere, ‘Well, did you understand your life on earth? What conclusions did you reach about it?’ one could silently point to <i>Don Quixote</i>.”</p> <p>In this seminar we will read the novel in depth in its original Spanish, respond to its humor and vitality, open it up to critical discussion, turn it into a space of interpretative freedom, examine its historical context, consider its universality and ‘humanity’, reflect</p>

on the major themes and questions it poses, explore how it continually renews itself and speaks to contemporary concerns, inspiring writers and other artists, and so on.

PORTUGUESE

Portuguese 772
Women's Voices of the
Indigenous Americas
Prof. Kathryn Sanchez
M 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm
1120 Van Hise

How do Indigenous women writers reimagine relations among land, water, kinship, and community in a time of ecological crisis? This course explores literature, art, and theory by Indigenous women across the Americas, examining how storytelling becomes a site of cultural survival, ecological knowledge, and decolonial thought. Through poetry, narrative, and essays, we engage with Indigenous women writers who articulate connections among land, water, kinship, language, and memory that challenge colonial hierarchies of knowledge and rethink human relationships to the living earth. These texts foreground Indigenous cosmologies, feminist struggles for land and language, and forms of relational thinking that connect human and more-than-human worlds.

Drawing on approaches from Indigenous feminism, decolonial studies, archival memory, theories of water, environmental humanities, and queer Indigenous theory, we will also engage with theoretical writings by authors such as Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Verónica Gago, Rita Segato, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Marisol de la Cadena, Yásnaya Elena Aguilar, and Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. Moving across literary studies, anthropology, and environmental thought, the course highlights Indigenous women's writing as a vital archive of knowledge, creativity, and resistance while inviting us to imagine more just planetary futures.

Course taught in English. Students may read texts in Spanish, Portuguese, or English translation.