

## Syllabus and Expectations

Spanish II Honors 2013-2014 Ms. Foster

Course description: We will build upon the skills gained in Spanish I to enhance your ability to understand and communicate in Spanish. We'll continue learning about the people and countries where Spanish is spoken, as we progress in obtaining the cross-cultural understanding needed in today's world.

Your focus: It is critical that you focus on LEARNING as much and as well as you possibly can. It is NOT about the grade! Judging success by a grade is like judging someone by their clothes—it's on the *outside*. What matters is what's on the *inside*, that stays with you—the learning. If you make *learning* your focus, the grade will come naturally; but, if you just study to get a credit or grade, you'll find it harder to do build on past learning.

### Expectations during class time:

Your current occupation is listed as "student", and being a student is a valuable and important lifetime investment. Classroom behavior is expected to reflect this. As with any job, socializing is done during breaks (between classes) and at lunch. Similarly, you take care of personal needs (restroom, etc.) during personal, not work, time. Only those on the nurse's medical list or those whose parents have called me about an individual situation may leave class. So, plan ahead of time—go before the day's classes begin, during lunch and after school.

Be responsible – have your *own* work materials with you (textbook, workbook, paper, writing utensils, handouts, etc.). Only your class materials are allowed on desks (no purses, other work, etc.) Cell phones are not allowed to be brought into the classroom. Students whose actions suggest attempted use of a cell phone (from pocket, purse, behind a book, etc.) will be referred to the Dean of Students.

Class rules: Details will be presented in class, but can be summarized as:

- "Treat everyone as if they were Jesus."
- Be considerate, be conscientious, be adult.
- Conduct yourself as if on the job & working for a promotion. (You are.)

### Grading:

#### 1. Classwork/Assignments: 50%

Classwork grades may come from daily participation in the learning activities (focus on task, appropriate use of time, having your materials, effort to do your best to learn), from written practices (some graded on effort, others on correctness), or from oral responses in Spanish.

When we do have written work, it is often done during class. This allows you to (a) practice while it is fresh in your mind; (b) ask questions or get help if needed; (c) better avoid reinforcing errors; (d) insure that have done your own work. It is best done in pencil, so you can neatly make a change, whereas pen scratch outs and "overwrites" tend to be messy, illegible and risk not being accepted. Written work or other assignments that you were unable to finish during class must be completed *before you enter the room* the next meeting day. (That is, you are not allowed to do it at the last minute before the bell rings.)

*On-going home study-to-learn assignment:* You are assigned to spend an average of 15 minutes between each class meeting practicing & studying (but not just reading) the most recent class material. This is also an important habit for success in college!

## 2. Tests/Quizzes: 50%

Quizzes: Expect to have frequent quizzes to check your progress in learning and that your home study has been done. Although you're expected to have studied before coming to class, it's also a good to refresh your memory and look it over before the bell rings.

When a quiz or test is scheduled in advance, a student who misses only the class before, but returns on the previously announced test/quiz day is required to take the test. (This is no different than a paid employee who receives his work schedule in advance.)

*Accessing your grades:* This information is available online 24/7 to both students and parents via iNow Parent Portal. (Please understand that due to the time required to post grades online, I'm unable to repeat it verbally or by email.)

### Honor Code - The 9th Commandment

NOTHING justifies taking credit for work that is not your own. Like plagiarism, copying someone else's homework is deceit—you are taking what is someone else's and claiming it to be your own. Such action violates what Christ taught us and what we represent at OCHS. Both the person receiving and the person giving answers will receive 0's for the quiz, test or classwork, in addition to other disciplinary action as outlined in the student handbook. (I, personally, deny recommendation for memberships, scholarships, job references or rewards to those who cheat.)

Cheating includes:

- Copying answers from someone else (any amount)
- "Working together" (sharing answers) on an assignment to be done on your own
- Communicating in any form during a quiz, test, or other in-class graded activity
- Violating test-taking rules (looking anywhere other than own test sheet; putting hands anywhere other than on desk, including pockets and purses; having anything other than test sheet and writing tools on desk; talking or other communication; having writing on one's person or desk).

### Absences and Make-up Work

We don't want you to be at school if you are very ill or contagious. However, since you can get behind quickly in foreign language, make sure the absence is truly unavoidable. Do not schedule orthodontist or other appointments during foreign language class. It's not that this class is more important; it's because you can't catch up by just reading it in English. You're allowed to make up missed work, but it's impossible to make up all the missed information and learning that comes from class interaction.

*What to do if absent:*

Before returning to class, absentees are REQUIRED to go to my web page for information on missed learning and make-up work: <http://fosterochs.weebly.com/> or [ochs.owensborocatholic.org](http://ochs.owensborocatholic.org) (under "Academics"). If unable to log on at home, you can use computer in the Media Center before or after school to meet this requirement.

Make up learning and assignments must be done outside of regular class time and is due within a school week of the absence (unless other arrangements are made beforehand). It's the student's responsibility to remember, not the teacher's to issue reminders.

I am very glad to clarify and answer questions on missed lessons after you have taken the following initiatives:

- studied the missed material for understanding, as much as possible
- met with a classmate to help explain what you missed
- requested an NHS student tutor (recommended when additional, individualized assistance is needed or for extended absences)

Students who miss the original quiz or test day will be informed of the make-up date/time sufficiently in advance for arrangements to be made with parents, drivers, coaches, etc. Make sure that Mom & Dad know, alarms go off, your ride arrives on time, etc. Your teacher has many additional responsibilities and obligations for her time, so be sure you show up as expected since a second chance may not be given.

### Study Techniques (How to make an 'A' or 'B' in Spanish)

Imagine a sport or other skill you like, anything from football to softball to videogame or playing a musical instrument. Can you learn to be a good player by just sitting & watching? Will you be successful if you don't make a personal commitment to it? Does it make sense to sign up for an activity and think you'll do well without extra practice, drills and hard work? Of course not. Foreign language is no different. You have to be committed to learning, improving and practicing it.

Here are some successful techniques:

1. Practice the vocabulary word or material you're trying to learn as you both speak and write it. Do this several times until it starts to stay in your memory.
2. Try making flash cards or a study sheet of two columns--one with the Spanish words you are responsible for learning and a second column with the English meanings.

Then, cover up the English side as you look at the Spanish word. See if you can correctly pronounce it and remember its meaning. Next, and even more importantly, cover up the Spanish side as you look at the English. See if you can correctly write the Spanish word. Check your spelling! The word is not correct if it's spelled incorrectly.

3. Take advantage of the online practice resources provided with our textbooks.

- ★ ★ ★ 4. You'll only learn to *speak* Spanish by using it outside of class. Speak it with friends, in study groups or even at home alone. You'll never learn to speak it if you only do so for 85 minutes a day, just 2-3 days a week.

*My promise as your teacher:*

*You can expect me to be very caring, conscientious and dedicated to you. I want you be successful in your foreign language journey and hope you'll enjoy it along the way! Please do not hesitate to come talk to me if you have concerns or find yourself having difficulty. I can help.*

*M. Foster*

