



CIEE in Monteverde, Costa Rica

Course name:	Communicative Spanish
Course number:	SPAN 0001 MVCR
Programs offering course:	Monteverde Sustainability and the Environment Short Programs
Language of instruction:	Spanish
U.S. Semester Credits:	1
Contact Hours:	15
Term:	Summer 2019

Course Description

- Communicative Spanish is designed to facilitate a foundation in oral and written comprehension and expression, with an emphasis on Costa Rican manners of speech and idioms. The methods of teaching employed promote self-guided learning in a constructive and collaborative context that aid students in acquiring basic communication skills while also providing a foundation for independent advancement. The course content establishes a basis for students to communicate simply but effectively in academic, personal, and public contexts.
- The overall effectiveness of the course is enhanced by the fact that the lessons, activities, and class assignments are aligned with an integrated program of study, specifically the Monteverde Sustainability and Environment Short-Term Program. Homestay accommodations for students, co-curricular trips, and additional courses in the program support and encourage language-learning in context. Class dynamics are based on issues related to sustainability and the environment whenever possible. The international environment of Monteverde, along with the community's openness to US undergraduates, create a pleasant setting for language learning and cultural exchanges.

Learning Objectives

Students will develop skills including:

- Essential comprehension skills to understand and respond appropriately to simple spoken or written Spanish
- The ability to improve the quality of oral and written expression, by applying or building upon new knowledge and by making appropriate inferences
- The ability and motivation to learn independently and creatively
- Being capable of participating in basic conversations with Costa Ricans on personal, domestic, academic, environmental and cultural topics
- Understanding and being able to employ correct syntax

The student will acquire knowledge in:

- Pronunciation of the different phonemes of Spanish, in various contexts
- Recognition and use of the distinctive function of prosodic accent in Spanish
- Elemental use of diacritical accent marks in Spanish
- Key lexicon used in personal, domestic, academic, environmental and cultural contexts



- Essential vocabulary regarding numbers, days of the week, months of the year, and seasons; the environment, climate, and climate change; and home, personal, and academic life
- Verb conjugation: simple present and present continuous, simple past and past continuous, simple future future continuous; imperative
- Verb-subject agreement
- Use (and non-use) of subject pronoun in Spanish
- Pronominal verbs
- Direct and indirect object pronouns
- Indicative mood (present and simple past)
- Noun-adjective agreement
- Use of “usted” and “tu”
- The student will be able to use correctly expressions related to:
 - Greetings and farewells
 - Introductions and presentations
 - Descriptions of things
 - Descriptions of people (physically and in terms of personality)
 - Location of things and people in space, and events and actions in time
 - Requests for information
 - Possession
 - Tastes and preferences
 - Daily routine
 - Family relationships and friendships
 - Travels, plans, and projects
- The student will gain cultural training in
 - Costa Rican history, food, daily life
 - Costa Rican idiomatic expressions and manners of expression

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Teaching methods used are based on ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and MCER (Marco común europeo de referencia para las lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza y evaluación). Methodologies and techniques are varied, interactive, and focus on language production and effective communication goals. Active and constructive methods are mainly employed, and activities include questions-answer exchanges, theme-centered conversations, games, and listening and responding exercises. Students usually work in small groups or teams with an instructor (native speaker). Homework will center on online searches and readings, and subsequent written and oral reporting.



Assessment and Final Grade

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|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • Attendance/Homework/Participation | 20% |
| • Oral presentation | 20% |
| • Quiz on auditory comprehension (2) | 20% |
| • Written assignments | 20% |
| • Final exam | 20% |

Course Requirements

Attendance/Homework/Participation Attendance refers to being in the classroom on time. Participation means: paying attention voluntarily and providing answers, not speaking out of turn, working actively in group dynamics, avoiding the use of the native language, interacting with people, being focused and committed in class, and showing a positive attitude. Preparation refers to having materials and homework needed to start class on time.

Oral presentation

This refers to an oral presentation of 15 minutes' duration that the student presents to the instructor and classmates on topics chosen by the student.

Quiz on auditory comprehension (2)

There will be two quizzes in which students listen and respond to a speaker discussing real-life topics and employing grammar and vocabulary covered to date.

Written assignments

There will be short online reading and writing tasks. The tasks consist of searching online material for the answers to specific questions, then preparing written responses.

Final exam

This is a comprehensive examination in a varied format: multiple choice, sentence completion, short answer, associations, reading comprehension and listening. It will cover vocabulary, grammar, and Costa Rica expressions from the beginning of the course.

Block 1

- Grammar: The alphabet; personal pronouns; possessive pronouns; interrogative pronouns; regular verbs in the present tense: -ar, -er, -ir; regular past tense verbs; pronominal verbs in the present and past tense; the verbs "ser" and "estar"; use of "usted" and "tu"
- Vocabulary: Greetings, introductions and farewells; time of day and expressions related to time in the present and past; months and days of the week; cardinal numbers; parts of the house; food; fruits and vegetables; personal items; opposite words; nationalities; family and kinship
- Costa Rican expressions: No entiendo ni papa. ¡Suave, suave! ¡Pura vida!
- Written assignment:



- Online search and find (# 1): Costa Rican Culture (<http://guiascostarica.info/costumbres/>); Patrimonio Intangible de Costa Rica (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awEDV0U5UKE>)
- Online search and find (# 2): Costa Rican Sayings (<http://guiascostarica.info/refranes/>)
- Quiz: #1:
 - Auditory comprehension quiz: "Federico"
- Oral presentation (# 1):
 - Introduce yourself; say hello and goodbye; talk about daily routines and activities in the present or past; discuss characteristics of your homestay family, food; describe your family and relatives.

Block 2

- Grammar: Irregular verbs in the present tense: o changes to ue; i changes to ie; first person singular; gender and number in use of adjectives; the verbs ir and ser; simple future and future continuous; grammar review of last week's material
- Vocabulary: Nouns derived from verbs; adverbs of place; adjectives commonly used; the weather, seasons; natural phenomena; emotions and physical states; climate change, natural phenomena; local habitats and ecosystems
- Costa Rican expressions: ¡Qué vacilón! ¡Qué chiva!
- Written assignment:
 - Online search-and-find (# 3): Climate of Costa Rica (<http://guiascostarica.info/clima/> and <http://www.nacion.com/nacional/> and Volcanes de Costa Rica (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bf0eJXgCPas>)
- Quiz #2:
 - Auditory comprehension quiz: "Todos juntos"
- Oral presentation (# 2):
 - Describe and talk about the weather, climate change; describe travel, destinations visited in the past and trips planned for the future.

Block 3

- Grammar: Gender and number (demonstrative), irregular past tense verbs (Group 1), imperative verb tense; indicative mood (present and simple past); the verb "gustar"; review of grammar from previous weeks' material
- Vocabulary: cultural, government, historical, educational institutions; indigenous cultures of Costa Rica, national symbols; education and academic life
- Costa Rican expressions: Llegar a la hora del burro. Hablar paja.
- Written assignment:
 - Online search-and-find (# 4): National symbols of Costa Rica (<http://guiascostarica.info/category/simbolos/>); and Simbolos de Costa Rica (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJJVZVMh_DI)
 - Online search-and-find (# 5): History of Costa Rica (<http://guiascostarica.info/historia-de-costa-rica/>)



Block 4

- Grammar: irregular verbs in the past tense (Groups 2 and 3); direct and indirect object pronouns; prepositions “por” and “para” (their purpose and use); review of previous weeks’ material
- Vocabulary: sports, entertainment, hobbies, transportation, media, tastes and preferences
- Costa Rican expressions: Estar en la luna. ¡Al Chile! Ponerse las pilas. En dos toques.
- Written assignment:
 - Online search-and-find (#6): Noticias ambientales.
(<http://www.semanariouniversidad.ucr.cr/noticias.html>)
- Final Exam:
 - This is a comprehensive examination in a varied format: multiple choice, sentence completion, short answer, associations, reading comprehension and listening. It will cover vocabulary, grammar, and Costa Rica expressions from the beginning of the course.

Readings

- Quesada, M. (2002). *El Español de América (2ª ed.)*, Cartago: Editorial Tecnológica de Costa Rica.
- Rae (2010). *Ortografía de la lengua española (1ª ed.)*, Madrid: Editorial Espasa.
- Rae y Asociación de Academias de la lengua española (2005). *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas*, Bogotá: Santillana Ediciones Generales, S.L.
- Kendris, C. & Kendris, T. (2007). *501 Spanish verbs (6ª ed.)*, Hauppauge: Barron’s Educational Series, Inc.

Online Resources

- Guías Costa Rica. (2015). <http://guiascostarica.info/>
- La Nación. (2015). Noticias nacionales. <http://www.nacion.com/nacional/>
- Real Academia Española. (2015). Consultas lingüísticas.
<http://www.rae.es/consultas-linguisticas/departamento-de-espanol-al-dia>
- Seminario Universidad. (2015). Noticias.
<http://www.semanariouniversidad.ucr.cr/noticias.html>

Media Resources

- Flash Cultura en Costa Rica. (2008). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bf0eJXgCPas>
- Patrimonio Intangible de Costa Rica (Nuestra Cultura Viva) I Parte (2013).
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJJVZVMh_DI
- Simbolos de Costa Rica. (2013). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awED>