Heritage Language Courses

The Department of Spanish and Portuguese offers a track designed for Spanish heritage speakers who communicate effectively in their home, community language or have lived in a Spanish speaking country for an extended period of time and wish to develop their Spanish language proficiency/competency.

The courses in this track are designed to meet the particular needs of heritage learners. We validate the linguistic and trans-cultural experiences and knowledge they bring. Our goal is to build upon that knowledge and experience by expanding their oral and written registers, improving their reading skills, exploring issues related to identity and culture, and connecting them with Hispanic organizations in Seattle.

Students' testimonials

Ricardo's Testimonial

Abel's Testimonial

Heritage language courses

In order to take the first course of the series, Spanish 216, you must request an interview. Do not worry if you have never taken Spanish in middle school or high school, or if you have only completed 100, 201, or 202 level in a community college. Just make an appointment for an interview and see if you qualify for this course. Please contact first our advisor, Dalia Correa (spsady@uw.edu), and then get in touch with the instructor responsible for this track, María Gillman (mgi@uw.edu), to make an appointment for the interview.

SPANISH 216 - Spanish for Heritage Learners
Spanish 216 is the first course of a series of four designed specifically for heritage speakers. The general objectives of this course are to develop competence in students' reading and writing skills, to master certain grammar points particular to heritage speakers, to help them improve their presentational skills and take into an account the experiences and influences of their bilingual and bicultural upbringing.

SPANISH 314 - Spanish for Bilingual/Heritage Students
Spanish 314 has also been designed to help heritage speakers continue with their formal study of Spanish. In this course students will become aware of certain norms of written Spanish, such as the use of spelling, punctuation, accent marks and certain grammatical points. They will also continue to build their lexicon and become aware of the different variants of Spanish in order for them to feel confident in their use of the language in different settings.

SPANISH 315 - Spanish for Bilingual/Heritage Students
Spanish 315 is a reading and composition class that engages heritage learners in exploring social and contemporary topics with a variety of readings from newspapers, magazines, essays and online media. One of the main objectives of this course is to develop strong writing skills in Spanish. Students will practice not only argumentative writing, but also practical writing, such as writing a letter or an article. Students will review and recycle the most challenging grammar topics and vocabulary in order to continue building confidence and skill in writing in Spanish.

SPANISH 316 - Stylistics and Composition for Heritage Students
This is the last language course of the series for the heritage learners program. The main objectives of the course are to expose students to a variety of literary formats and to help them interact with the literary text. Additional goals are to increase comprehension, stimulate students' interpretative and analytical skills and finally, to find their own voice as writers by incorporating their unique experience as heritage learners and strengthen their own writing style.

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