Graduate Courses in Spanish 2022-2023

Our graduate courses in linguistics, literary & cultural studies open up opportunities for you in academic & professional contexts requiring advanced cultural knowledge & Spanish proficiency. We are excited to offer the following courses, all of which are open to students in the Washington Metropolitan Consortium and at other universities.

Summer 2022

SPAN 502/SPAN 551: Hispanic Sociolinguistics. Tuesdays & Thursdays 4:30-7:10 pm (online synchronous). Dr. Jennifer Leeman, jleeman@gmu.edu

This course provides an introduction to the macro-sociolinguistics of Spanish, especially (but not exclusively) in the US context. Using the frameworks of language ideologies and racialization, we'll examine the relationship of Spanish, varieties of Spanish and translingual practices to various national, ethnic, and gender identities. We'll also critically analyze history of the Spanish and Spanish-speakers in North America; the demographics of Spanish in the US (including patterns of language maintenance and shift); the portrayal of Spanish in public discourse and the media; and a wide range of language policies.

Fall 2022

FRLN 575: Heritage Language Education. Tuesdays 4:30-7:10 pm (online synchronous). Dr. Jennifer Leeman, jleeman@gmu.edu

FRLN 575 provides an overview of heritage language education in the US, including the ideological and policy contexts in which it is situated. Students learn about the linguistic and sociocultural characteristics of HL speakers as well as key issues in HL educational policy and practice, including the most prominent pedagogical models and approaches. We'll discuss a wide range of approaches to HL research, as well as the pedagogical implications of that research. The course is also designed to promote students' critical analytical ability regarding the underlying assumptions of HL research studies and pedagogical proposals. For their final project, students can choose to focus on HL research, policy or pedagogy. Taught in English but students may submit written work in Spanish.

SPAN 503/551: Spanish Linguistics for Educators/Educational Perspectives on Spanish & English Contact. Thursdays 4:30-7:10 pm (online synchronous). Dr. Jacqueline Serigos, jserigo@gmu.edu

Students will explore the linguistic profiles of heritage speakers, with a special emphasis on evidence of Spanish English language contact and its pedagogical implications. Following the basic building blocks of linguistics, students will analyze heritage language production from phonological, morphological, syntactic, and pragmatic perspectives with an emphasis on sociolinguistic variation. This course will make use of real-world data, allowing students to discover linguistic features and their trends across various heritage speaker communities. We will consider the application of these insights to language learning and teaching.

SPAN 510: Methods of Literary & Cultural Studies. Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 pm (in-person) Dr. Rei Berroa, rberroa@gmu.edu

Study of key trends in literary and cultural studies from classical poetics to 20th-century formalism and structuralism to late 20th- and 21st-century post-structuralism and identity studies. Students will learn how to apply methods to the analysis of Spanish-language literary texts, films, television programs and other cultural practices.

Spring 2023

SPAN 551/SPAN 574: Critical Approaches to Teaching Spanish-language Culture/Borders and Migration. (online asynchronous) Dr. Ricardo Vivancos-Pérez, rvivanco@gmu.edu

This course will focus on the study of human rights issues in recent border-crossing narratives by migrants & refugees, as well as in films that focus on their experiences of isolation, discrimination, adaptation & community-building. We will learn basic notions & concepts in border studies, immigration studies, intersectionality theory & human rights discourse, & will apply them to the study of autobiographical narratives, novels, poetry, artwork & films about migrants & their experiences crossing borders. Readings will focus on crossings of the US-Mexico border, the borders of Europe and Australia & the experience of migrants from Mexico & Central America, Africa, & the Middle East. Course assignments & discussions will have an emphasis on how to effectively incorporate theory & cultural production in the teaching curriculum.

SPAN 575: Teaching Spanish for Social Justice. Day & time TBA (online synchronous). Dr. Ellen Serafini, eserafi2@gmu.edu

This language teacher education course exposes students to the core concepts and methods in critical approaches to language pedagogy with a focus on teaching Spanish in an institutional environment, two different languages, and mixed settings. The course builds on knowledge of basic sociolinguistic concepts, fosters a critical understanding of the sociopolitical dimensions and outcomes of language teaching in the U.S., and provides students with rich opportunities to examine relationships between language and race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality in educational contexts as well as how such relationships lead to either oppression and exclusion, or access and empowerment. To demonstrate their growing awareness and agency as critical language educators, students will have multiple opportunities to identify, interrogate, and question their own inherent biases and ideologies about language and their potential impact in the classroom. In addition to critiquing mainstream language teaching materials, students will design language tasks and whole teaching units that reflect principles of critical language pedagogy and devise formative assessments to measure critical learning objectives.

Summer 2023

SPAN 574: Critical Approaches to Teaching Spanish-language Culture. Tues & Thurs (hybrid: online & in-person) Dr. Lisa Rabin, lrabin@gmu.edu

Study and application of critical pedagogical approaches to teaching literature and culture in bilingual, heritage, mixed and L2 Spanish classrooms. We will learn how to use these methods towards expanding students’ critical thinking on the interrelatedness of language and other cultural practices to historical and social processes and their use in their own lives. Teachers will have opportunities to create materials with a range of texts and media.

Visit our website for more information on our courses, interdisciplinary MA programs and the Graduate Certificate in Spanish Heritage Language Education or email us at mclgrad@gmu.edu or shle@gmu.edu