

Profe Benedict
Spanish 1
Veterans Tribute Career and Technical Academy
August 2009

Estimados students and families:

Welcome to Veterans Tribute Career and Technical Academy! I hope that you are as excited as I am to be a part of this great new school.

I am looking forward to meeting with all of you in the near future. This is my fifth year in the Clark County School District. I previously taught at Silverado HS. Before Silverado, I taught Spanish at Arcadia High School in Arcadia, CA.


Just a little about myself: my name is Scott Benedict and I grew up outside of Detroit, MI. I am of Maltese descent (Malta is a small island off the coast of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea). I moved to Los Angeles when I was twenty and now live in Las Vegas! I took Spanish, German, and French both in high school and in college and can currently speak both Spanish and German. Most of my French has been lost along the way! ☹️ I began college at Wayne State University in Detroit and graduated from California State University in Northridge, CA. Before I became a teacher I worked in the travel industry for Northwest Airlines, Princess Cruises, and United Airlines.

Attached you will find a course description as well as the student expectations and procedures. Please take a moment to read and discuss these with your child. With your help and support, I am sure that the 2009-2010 school year will be a very successful year!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 799-4710 or by email at profe@profeb.com. I have a website (www.profeb.com) where students can find many helpful Spanish resources, vocabulary and verb practice, obtain extra copies of any handouts, check what homework was assigned, and much more. Please encourage your child to use this website on a regular basis! Students have said in the past that the resources have helped them be more successful in my class. You can also access student grades at anytime through ParentLink. I update them every Monday. You should receive activation codes in the mail and the students will receive theirs at school.

¡Muchas gracias!

Sincerely,



Scott Benedict

SPANISH 1 CLASS EXPECTATIONS & HANDBOOK

TEXTBOOK: *Realidades, ¡Cuéntame más!* will be used as resources. No text will be distributed to students; however, *Realidades* is available for checkout upon request.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To participate in simple conversations in Spanish, using correct pronunciation, to share feelings, emotions, opinions, and information.
2. To comprehend simple oral and written communication on a variety of topics.
3. To present information to an audience in Spanish.
4. To explore the relationships among the practices, products, and perspectives of the diverse Hispanic cultures.
5. To connect knowledge of Spanish with other disciplines.
6. To recognize the distinctive viewpoints of other cultures.
7. To compare the nature of the Spanish language to native language.
8. To relate Hispanic cultures with individual ethnic backgrounds.
9. To employ the Spanish language both within and beyond the school setting.
10. To develop an interest in continuing the study of the Spanish language for personal enrichment.

COURSE OUTLINE: This one-year course is designed to acquaint students with the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish at an introductory level. The focus is communication in Spanish incorporating understanding of Hispanic cultures, connecting with other disciplines, comparing native language to Spanish, and participating in multicultural communities. The course provides practice in correct use of basic vocabulary and language structures to enable students to function effectively within realistic settings. Instructional practices will incorporate integration of diversity awareness including appreciation of all cultures and their important contributions to our society. The appropriate use of technology is an integral part of this course. This course fulfills one elective credit required for high school graduation.

METHODOLOGY: My class relies heavily on the TPRS® (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling) method of foreign-language teaching invented by Blaine Ray. It provides a language-rich environment that promotes foreign language learning by what sounds right. TPRS provides natural language acquisition in humorous, non-stressful situations. Strict grammatical instruction is not the focus, but through TPRS®, grammatical correctness is modeled throughout the class within the stories in much the same way we all learned grammar in our native language.

This type of class is dependent upon ACTIVE participation and develops fluency in Spanish through understandable Spanish language; therefore, the majority of class time will be spent in the target language. **Your progress is directly linked to your level of participation.**

TEACHER ACCESSIBILITY: I am available for any questions, concerns, or additional help before and after school. Additionally, you may email me at profe@profeb.com at any time. Emails received after 9pm will be answered the following morning before school. **Please don't wait until it's too late to ask for help!**

CLASS WEBSITE: There is a class website that can be found at www.profeb.com. Here you may check what homework was assigned, gain access to a Spanish web-dictionary and other Spanish resources, download extra copies of handouts, and much more.

GRADING POLICY: One thing you'll notice right away is that I grade differently. I use a **standards-based grading system** (those with elementary-aged children are already familiar with this).

What does a standards-based grading system mean? It means that your grades reflect **what you can do** with what you know. In my class, it's not good enough if you know all the grammar rules and know all the vocabulary. You have to be able to **USE** it to perform well in class.

At any given point, there will be clearly expressed targets for your learning. These are your focus when in class and preparing for class. You will be graded on **how well** you perform these targets.

Grades based on these standards (targets) become triggers for action. By using these grades, I can plan instruction so I can challenge and support ALL students. These grades help you and your parents know in which areas you are doing well in and in which areas you need a little more practice.

How is this different from traditional-grading systems? Instead of basing your grades on tests, quizzes, and homework, your grades will be based on how well you can speak and write Spanish, how well you understand written and spoken Spanish, how well you can USE various structures and vocabulary, how well you know the culture, and how well you complete homework assignments. All tests, quizzes, projects, and assignments will be broken down and entered into the various categories. Tests and projects are worth more than quizzes and homework. Instead of percentages, grades are determined through rubrics using a 5-point scale: A (4), B (3), C (2), D (1), F (0).

Letter grades are calculated using a weighted average as follows: speaking 20%, writing 20%, listening 15%, reading 15%, structures 7.5%, vocabulary 7.5%, culture 7.5%, practice 7.5%. Grades are updated weekly on Monday and will be posted both on ParentLink (parentlink.ccsd.net) and in class. **All grades posted are the current SEMESTER grades. Grades do not start over at the beginning of each quarter and are NOT rounded in this class!**

✓ **Grading Scale:**

above class level	3.7 - 4.7 (90-100%)	A
at class level	2.7 - 3.6 (80-89%)	B
almost at class level	1.7 - 2.6 (70-79%)	C
below class level	0.7 - 1.6 (60-69%)	D
far below class level	0.0 - 0.6 (50-59%)	F

- ✓ **Unannounced Tests and Quizzes:** With the exception of Quarter and Semester Exams, all tests and quizzes are unannounced. This is done in order to adequately assess what students have actually learned and retained, rather than assess what they have studied/crammed for.
- ✓ **Make-up Tests and Quizzes:** With the exception of quarter/final exams, all tests and quizzes have to be made up the day of your return because of their unannounced nature. **Any speaking or listening sections must be made up BEFORE or AFTER school. You will receive a failing grade on any test or quiz missed if you are truant.**
- ✓ **Low Test or Quiz Grades:** You are **highly encouraged** to make an appointment with me any time you receive a C or lower on any quiz or test for early academic intervention.
- ✓ **Projects:** All projects must be turned in with the grading rubric. If you are absent when a project is due, it must be turned in by another student or placed in my mailbox by 2pm on or before the due date. **NO LATE PROJECTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**
- ✓ **Practice:** Practice is usually given 3 times per week and generally is not given over weekends or school breaks. *Practice is checked RANDOMLY and the whole class or just one section of class may be checked! Only 100% completed assignments will be accepted!* On-time assignments will receive full credit (equivalent to an A), late assignment will receive half credit (equivalent to a C), and missing assignments will receive no credit (equivalent to an F). **Starting with the 5th week of each quarter, if you have an A average as posted on ParentLink, you do not have to do the practice for that week. If you choose to do the practice, it will act as extra credit.**
- ✓ **Quarter and Final Exams:** Quarter and final exams cover the major concepts covered in class including culture, vocabulary, structures, listening and reading comprehension, speaking, and writing. Final exams are worth 10% of the semester grade.
- ✓ **Final-Exam Grade Boost:** Provided you have worked consistently throughout the semester, have 6 or less missing assignments, and have 3 or less unexcused absences/unexcused tardies for the semester, **if your final exam grade is greater than your semester average, I will replace your semester grade with that of your final exam.**

CITIZENSHIP: Citizenship is a combination of classroom participation and daily-language practice (25%), unexcused absences (25%), unexcused tardies (25%), and classroom behavior (25%). If you pay attention, are prepared for class, are on-time with no unexcused absences, cause no major disruptions, **AND** have a minimum of 80 participation points, you will receive a Satisfactory citizenship grade. In order to receive an Outstanding citizenship grade, you must go beyond the average expectancy. **Any student sent to the Dean from this class may receive an Unsatisfactory citizenship grade. Truancies and excessive tardies may reduce your citizenship grade.**

- ✓ **Class Currency (Participation Points):** Each student begins each quarter with 70 of the current quarter's currency. You will receive extra currency for various participation activities in class, including speaking in Spanish to me and during class, volunteering for various activities, and games (+1 pt each). You lose varying amounts of currency for each absence, tardy, bathroom pass, misbehavior, using English when not appropriate, and other classroom distractions (minimum -5 pts each). You **may** make up lost currency by writing a 100-word essay in Spanish using at least 10 current vocabulary items at least twice (+5 pts each). **All Make-up Essays are due the following Monday.**

To calculate your participation, use the following formula:

$$70 - (\text{points lost}) + (\text{points for make-up essays}) + (\text{points earned}) = \text{percentage grade.}$$

ATTENDANCE, TARDIES, AND MAKE-UP WORK:

- ✓ **Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential to be successful in learning a foreign language. The Veterans Tribute CTA Attendance Policy will be enforced and any student with more than 10 absences may lose academic credit for the semester.
- ✓ **Tardies:** You should be in class on-time. **You are considered tardy if you are not in your seat AND working when the tardy bell rings.** If you are more than 30 minutes late, you will be counted absent. Students who are tardy will not be able to make up work missed at the beginning of class unless the tardy is excused. This includes tests and quizzes. The following Veterans Tribute Tardy Policy will be followed:
 - 1st tardy → warning/loss of 5 participation points
 - 2nd tardy → 10-minute detention/loss of 5 participation points
 - 3rd tardy → 20-minute detention/call home/loss of 5 participation points/N for Citizenship
 - 4th tardy → deans' referral/call home/loss of 10 participation points
 - each additional tardy will result in an automatic deans' referral and a loss of 10 participation pointsIf you arrive to class 15-30 minutes late without a pass, you will be automatically referred to the dean's office. If you arrive 31 or more minutes late without a pass, you will be marked absent and referred to the dean's office.
- ✓ **Make-up Work:** It is **YOUR** responsibility to make up any work missed during an absence. In addition to the work missed, you **MUST** write a 100-word essay using a minimum of 10 current vocabulary items at least twice for **EACH DAY** absent. All make-up work is due the following Monday after you return to class. If you were present when an assignment is given and absent on the day it is due or are absent because of a planned absence or school activity, you will be expected to turn in the assignment on the day of your return. **You may not make up any work if you are truant.**

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS: In addition to Veterans Tribute CTA's rules and regulations, **Responsibility, Respect, and Results** are classroom expectations.

It is **MY RESPONSIBILITY** to...

- ✓ behave in a way that shows **RESPECT** for myself, others, the environment, time and rules.
- ✓ behave in a way that encourages positive **RESULTS**.
- ✓ provide a physically- and emotionally-safe learning environment.
- ✓ design appropriate academic tasks.

It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to behave in a way that shows **RESPECT** for...

yourself

- ✓ be intellectually honest (see VTCTA Honor Code).
- ✓ do quality work.
- ✓ speak up if you have concerns or needs.
- ✓ set appropriate boundaries.

others

- ✓ Honor diversity
- ✓ Honor space
- ✓ **Time:** honor yours, mind, and ours.
- ✓ **Property:** take care of things (whether they belong to you, to your neighbor, the school, or to me).
- ✓ **Rules:** know the rules for both our school and our class.

the environment

- ✓ keep your desk and the area around your desk clean.
- ✓ help keep our school clean by picking up after yourself.
- ✓ do not bring open food or drink into our classroom.

It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to behave in a way that encourages positive **RESULTS** by...

- ✓ participating in class.
- ✓ doing all assigned work and practice
- ✓ managing your time
- ✓ working with assigned or chosen partners/groups to the best of your ability.
- ✓ bringing all required materials (paper, pen or pencil, etc.) and handouts to class each day.

YOUR RESULTS will be reflected in your class grades.

CELL PHONE AND ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

- ✓ Please be sure to **TURN OFF** and **PUT IN YOUR BACKPACK/POCKET** any cell phones, music players, Play Stations, etc **BEFORE** you get to class. **ANY VISIBLE CELL PHONES OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES WILL BE CONFISCATED** and returned to you **AFTER** school.
- ✓ **Once your cell phone or electronic device has been confiscated, you must turn it in to me for the duration of class for the rest of the year. There are no exceptions. Failure to do so will result in a deans' referral.**

DISCIPLINE: In my classroom I try to address as many disciplinary concerns as possible within the classroom. Most of the time a quick reminder or warning is all that is necessary. However, in rare instances, further action is required. In those cases, the following will be followed:

First Instance: Warning and loss of 5 participation points

Second Instance: Time Out, call home, and loss of 10 participation points

Third Instance: Detention, call home, loss of 10 participation points, and class contract

Forth Instance: Referral to the Deans' Office for further disciplinary action and loss of 15 participation points

As per school policy, some issues regarding safety, drug, alcohol, or smoking issues, or dress-code violations will result in the IMMEDIATE referral to the Dean's Office.

VETERANS TRIBUTE CTA HONOR CODE: In order to help promote academic honesty and integrity, the Veterans Tribute CTA Honor Code will be followed. **In addition any student caught cheating will receive a double F for that assignment, quiz, or test AND a U for Citizenship.**

Cheating is considered to be (but not limited to) the following:

- ✓ Copying or giving answers on any homework assignment, project, test, quiz, etc.
- ✓ Any talking during tests or quizzes
- ✓ Eyes looking anywhere but on your own paper during a test or quiz
- ✓ Acquiring any handout, test, quiz, or assignment without teacher permission
- ✓ Use of any electronic devices (for example: PDAs, cell phones, headphones, pagers, translators, etc.) during a test or quiz
- ✓ Unauthorized use of notes, book(s), cheat sheets, etc.
- ✓ Plagiarizing: "To steal and use (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own." (The American Heritage Dictionary 946)
- ✓ **Having a more advanced Spanish student or teacher/tutor edit your work or using any type of language translator, including web/online translators (The only online dictionary approved for this class is on my website)**

You can find a copy of the Class Expectations on the class website at <http://profeb.com>.
 Grades will be posted weekly on Parentlink (<http://parentlink.ccsd.net>).

Please read and discuss the class expectations with your parents or guardian and sign in the appropriate spaces.

I have read and understand Mr. Benedict's *Class Expectations* and fully agree to abide by its terms. I realize that I am responsible for the information that is contained in this document whether or not I actually read it.

 Student Name / Class / Period

 Student Signature / Date

 Parent or Guardian Signature / Date

Dear Parents:

I'm anxious to work with both you and your child this school year. I strongly feel that excellent communication between the parents and the teacher is integral to a successful learning experience. Our main line of communication is through ParentLink; however, feel free to contact me by email or phone with any concerns or comments you may have.

In order to make communication easier, please provide any contact information below and also note which method of communication you prefer. Thanks for all your efforts and I wish you and your child a successful academic year!

Sincerely,



Scott Benedict

Name:	
Parent Of:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Cell Phone:	
Email Address:	
I prefer to be reached by <input type="checkbox"/> home phone, <input type="checkbox"/> work phone, <input type="checkbox"/> cell phone <input type="checkbox"/> email.	
Other Important Information about my child:	