

The term 'heritage language' denotes a language learned at home that is different from the dominant language of the community, and a 'heritage speaker' is someone who speaks or even just understands that language.

Starting in 2008-2009, the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department launched the Heritage Language Program, whose fundamental premise is that heritage speakers, who are neither typical students of a foreign language, nor fluent speakers, require a different kind of instruction that enhances the language skills they already have, and amplifies their cultural literacy. The Heritage Language Program allows students to work towards high levels of proficiency in their heritage language and to pursue their personal and professional goals.

The aim of the program is two-fold: i) to strengthen the ethnic and cultural identity of heritage Spanish language learners while promoting the development of a linguistic proficiency that can foster career and professional possibilities for this student population, and ii) to promote and advocate for the maintenance and linguistic vitality of the heritage language in the local Hispanic community through a programmatic component that promotes strong outreach, service-learning and socio-cultural interaction at the community level.



Who is a heritage learner?

Heritage learners of Spanish are students who have been exposed to Spanish in their homes or communities from a young age. As a consequence of that early exposure, they can understand and/or speak the language and have a personal connection to it. The Spanish for Heritage Learners program at Colorado State University offers classes for every student level, from beginning to advanced.

Spanish for Heritage Language Learners



Contact Information

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Colorado State University

Foreign Languages and
Literatures

Heritage Language Program



Our program offers three different courses at elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels in order to satisfy the language needs of the diverse population at Colorado State University. To enroll in one of our courses, students need to contact one of the following:

Maura.Velazquez-Castillo@ColoState.EDU

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LSPA 180A2 (Fall 09)

Who is this class for?

Spanish 130 is the first of a series of courses for heritage learners (equivalent to LSPA105-107). If you grew up in an environment where Spanish was spoken frequently and are oftentimes capable of understanding spoken Spanish but encounter considerable difficulties in producing the language, this is the right course for you.

What is the focus of the course?

In this course you will develop your conversational skills in Spanish, expand your vocabulary, be introduced to the written language, and strengthen your listening skills in a positive and supportive environment. A main focus of the course is to help students build confidence to use Spanish in a wide range of social contexts. In addition, students will be introduced to the main linguistic varieties and cultural patterns of the Spanish speaking world with a special emphasis on the Spanish varieties and cultures in the US.

LSPA 230 (Spring10)

Who is this class for?

Spanish 230 is designed for students who were exposed to Spanish-speaking environments at an early age or students who already took LSPA130. As a consequence of this early contact, students in this class can understand and carry on everyday conversations in the language. It is the second course in the SHL program and it is equivalent to fourth-semester language proficiency (LSPA201).

What is the focus of the course?

This course builds on the linguistic competence students already have in order to expand their proficiency for language use in a wide variety of situations. Although the main focus of the class is written and oral development, all skills, including reading and listening, are practiced in a positive and supportive environment. Through course readings, videos, class debates, group-work, written assignments, and oral presentations, students will achieve greater flexibility in their oral, written, listening, and reading abilities in the language. Grammar and spelling issues that are problematic to students are also covered.

LSPA 330 (TBA)

Who is this class for?

Spanish 330 is designed for students who already took LSPA230 or have had contact with Spanish from an early age but typically have grown up in the United States. As a consequence of this exposure, they may have not had enough contact with written and/or formal uses of Spanish. It is the third course in the SHL program and it is equivalent to LSPA301

What is the focus of the course?

This course is a continuation of Spanish 230 and the third in the Spanish for heritage learners program. It focuses on expanding the learners' academic proficiency in oral and written discourse while it promotes their critical thinking skills. In addition, this course reviews advanced grammar and orthography topics for students to strengthen their written abilities.