



## 2011-2012 Departmental Description SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The Spanish program at Uskudar American Academy is new to the school having been introduced in the 2011-2012 year. The goals of our program are to develop fluency in the Spanish language, to become familiar with Hispanic culture and literature, to encourage students to view the world with a global perspective and to enable students to gain foreign language skills that will enhance both their studies and their lives. The five-year high school program focuses on the continuous development of students' Spanish language skills. This development is achieved using the four basic communication skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Teachers maintain student-centered classrooms, which is a new experience for many students. While an active classroom is expected, excellent classroom management skills should be employed at the same time to make sure that a learning environment is maintained at all times. Collaboration amongst teachers within and without the department is expected. The second language department consists of three language programs, French, German and Spanish, and currently has 8 full-time foreign language teachers from the USA, France, New Zealand, Germany and Turkey.

### PREP SPANISH I

The Prep Spanish language program is a one-year, immersion program that comes at the beginning of the high school years. It has the goal of preparing incoming students for the study skills they will be expected to use in all of their high school years while also introducing them to the Spanish language, literature and culture. In addition to Spanish, German and French as a foreign language, core courses in Prep are English Literature and Language, Turkish, Math, Science, PE, and Music.

Students enter the Prep program after the 8<sup>th</sup> grade through a competitive nationwide exam. Spanish students are placed in classes that average 18 students in size. Because of its high status among Turkish schools, Uskudar American Academy attracts some of the most intelligent students in the country.

The Foreign Language curriculum maintains a strong emphasis on a continuum of skills throughout the year. Prep Spanish 1 will introduce students to the Spanish language using basic communication skills. Students will be provided with instruction that teaches a basic understanding of Spanish culture, vocabulary, and grammatical concepts. Being a Romance language based on Latin, Spanish vocabulary shares its roots with many of the more difficult words in the English language. Studying Spanish will give students important insights into etymology, vocabulary, grammar and syntax which will help them in their studies of other second languages such as English. Students will be working with key concepts, vocabulary and grammatical structures that allow them to utilize basic practical Spanish in a variety of situations one may encounter when traveling in a Spanish speaking country. The students will be able to reach the A1 level of the European Language Passport Exam at the end of the year. A variety of audio visual technology designed to enhance the learning experience will be used. Students will be expected to keep a notebook of class lectures as well as working a minimum of two hours per week on assignments outside of class. Weekly assignments and quizzes will lead to content covered on major exams.

### GRADE 9 & 10 SPANISH II

During the 2011-2012 school year Spanish I was introduced to both the Prep level and grade nine students. As a result, both grade nine and grade ten classes will be offered Spanish II in the 2012-2013 school year.

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Spanish 2 is a four-lesson weekly course that uses the basic communication skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in a continuation of beginning Spanish 1, but on a much more sophisticated level. This course stresses basic vocabulary and fundamental sentence structure in the past and future indicative tenses and the subjunctive mood. The course develops basic aural and reading comprehension using the textbook and workbook along with a variety of audio and visual aids designed to enhance learning in an enjoyable yet academic manner. Students hold simple conversations and write short compositions in the past and future. Students read simple texts and further study Spanish and Latin American culture. Students will be able to reach the A2 level of the European Language Passport Exam by the end of the year. The study of Spanish as a second language will greatly increase students understanding of word origins, grammar and syntax which could lead to better scores on standardized tests such as the SAT. Students will be expected to keep a notebook of class lectures as well as working a minimum of two hours per week on assignments outside of class. Weekly assignments and quizzes will lead to content covered on major exams.

## GRADE 11 SPANISH I as an ELECTIVE

This course will introduce students, in an abbreviated fashion, to the Spanish language also using the four basic communication skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students will be provided with instruction that teaches a basic understanding of Spanish culture, vocabulary, and grammatical concepts similar to that found in the four-period main course without going into great detail. Students will be working with key concepts, vocabulary and grammatical structures that allow them to utilize basic practical Spanish in a variety of situations one may encounter when traveling in a Spanish speaking country. A variety of audio visual technology will be used throughout the course to enhance the learning experience. Students will be expected to work a minimum of two hours per work outside of class on assignments, participate fully in daily lessons and keep a current notebook logging classroom topics. Weekly quizzes and assignments will reinforce content covered on major exams. Acquisition of Spanish vocabulary, which is based on Latin, will increase students' knowledge of English vocabulary of a higher speech register also based on Latin and could lead to higher scores on the all-important SAT scores. Students will be able to reach the A2 level of the European Language Passport Exam by the end of the course.

## GRADE 12

Currently Spanish is not being offered in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

## GRADING

According to the Turkish Ministry of Education guidelines, any class meeting three or more periods per week must set a minimum of three (3) written grades. These will mainly be tests (processed and written examinations); while one may be an extended project. Any class which meets two periods per week is required to set a minimum of two (2) written grades. In addition, courses have oral grades which reflect class participation, quizzes/homework, oral presentations, and the use and quality of spoken Spanish.

## COURSE PREPARATION

Students are expected to attend class prepared with the required materials and completed assignments. Maintaining a homework or assignment book is recommended to avoid missing an exercise or assignment. All courses require class materials that are outlined in the course description given to students the first week of school. Students are expected to participate and share ideas with the class in a courteous and open manner. Students are encouraged to read Spanish materials, magazines, or books, in addition to the assigned class work. Vocabulary and comprehension of the Spanish language is further

developed in this way. Students are expected to speak only Spanish in higher level classes with English being permitted when appropriate in the lowest levels. Turkish is never to be spoken in class.

## TERM HOMEWORK/PROJECTS

The Turkish Ministry of Education requires each student to complete a term homework project in one course in all grades. Suggested projects in the Spanish Department include the creation of a magazine, newspaper or a film, or any other ideas the student may propose. Students follow the designated guidelines and format for the project. Time spent on the project is spread throughout the six months of work. The project submitted should be an example of the student's ability, ideas, and originality.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Spanish teachers are provided with a laptop computer, equipped with Microsoft Office, for their use. The laptops can be connected to the LCD projectors in the classroom ceilings for projecting lessons and films onto the wall. Classrooms are equipped with interactive white boards (smart boards). Supplementary materials such as DVDs, videos and audiocassettes, as well as cassette/radio/ CD players, and printers are located in the foreign language office. Other responsibilities include attending department and weekly level meetings, writing curriculum, holding office hours, covering for colleagues' absences, and becoming an active team member.

## SPONSORED CLUBS

Every member of the faculty is expected to participate in the extra-curricular life of the school. The members of the Foreign Language Department are involved with a number of clubs. The Spanish club is one of these.

In addition, members of the department are involved with the Model United Nations Club which participates in domestic and international conferences. Every December Uskudar American Academy hosts the English-language Turkish International Model United Nations conference (TIMUN) which is attended by 450 students from Turkish and international schools. Currently the school has both a French and German component of the MUN with Spanish being planned for the future.

Members of the Foreign Language Department may choose to sponsor non-foreign language related clubs and activities which include Book Club, Drama, Photography, Yearbook, Prep Football, and Chess among others.

## FUTURE PLANS

The Spanish language program continues to evolve. Every year existing courses are examined and new courses are created to accommodate the expanding curriculum. Rubicon Atlas is the new curriculum mapping program which will aid this process. New department members are expected to become knowledgeable in the use of this curriculum mapping software. Teachers should be comfortable in teaching all aspects of Spanish: language, composition, literature, writing, critical thinking, spoken arts, study skills, technology, and research on all levels.