

Culture and Language in Costa Rica: Intermediate and Advanced
(with additional introduction to technical and colloquial medical terms)
(Duke University SP92A)

This course is intended for students that already possess an intermediate background of the Spanish language. The chief goals of this course are to expand vocabulary and conversational skills with emphasis in technical and colloquial terms that will increase understanding of medical and biological information. The course, taught entirely in Spanish, introduces new vocabulary and emphasizes grammatical rules within the context of specific themes chosen to enhance students' familiarity with Central American customs and cultural institutions that shape daily life and affect human health. Emphasis will be given to classroom discussions supplemented by writing and reading exercises. Relevant works by Costa Rican and other Latin American writers will be introduced. Students will be tested early at the start of the program to be placed in Spanish classes at the appropriate level for them.

The course begins with a series of introductory lectures and exercises. After that, a two-week program, which includes a homestay with a Costa Rican family, will take place in San Jose, providing ample opportunity to improve Spanish skills and to gain insights into contemporary Costa Rica. During this period, classes meet daily for five hours per day (mornings). The afternoons are used for cultural activities such as cooking, music and dance, and occasional site visits, which are also an integral feature of the course. An introduction to medical, biological, and environmental terminology will provide the tools necessary to interview persons and patients, and explain or discuss health- and disease-related issues. In addition, students will engage in Spanish-language activities at the OTS field stations throughout the semester.

At the end of the semester, students are expected to have gained sufficient fluency to participate in Spanish components (lectures, readings, interviews, etc.) of other courses in the semester program. Students will have ample opportunities to use these skills throughout the semester.

Specific goals (Intermediate Spanish)

1. Learn to tell and write a story in the present and past tenses
2. Be able to express reactions to different situations
3. Be able to communicate using the indicative forms in the correct way
4. Learn medical technical vocabulary and colloquial medical terms
5. Learn basic biological and environmental terminology.
6. Conduct some interviews related to medical, biological, and environmental issues

Specific goals (Advanced Spanish)

1. Learn to express hypotheses in relation to past and present events
2. Learn to use the subjunctive present with precision
3. Handle complex grammatical structures
4. Learn medical technical vocabulary and colloquial medical terms
5. Learn basic biological and environmental terminology.
6. Conduct some interviews related to medical, biological, and environmental issues

Grading

Grades are based on homework, an oral presentation, participation and class work, and a final exam.

Type of Evaluation	Grade (%)
Homework (5% each one)	25
Research project (10% oral report, 10% written report)	20
Participation and class work	30
Final exam	25

Additional Policies & Procedures

The Organization for Tropical Studies and Duke University comply with and will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines in addition to policies and procedures outlines in the Duke University Undergraduate Catalog.

American with Disabilities Act

“Duke University does not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s disability and complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act in its admission, accessibility, treatment and employment of individuals in its programs and activities. The University provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institutions academic and employment requirements. For more information, visit or call the Center for Students with DisABILITIES. For more information on University policies and services to students with disabilities, see the Undergraduate Catalog.”

Additional Notes on Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty (i.e. plagiarism, cheating) will not be tolerated. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty will be subject to the policies and procedures set forth by Duke University as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Statement on Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as taking the words or ideas of another person and using them without citation as though they were your own. As such, acts of plagiarism include using song lyrics, words from an interview, words or ideas from a conversation or in-class discussion, words from a lecture by a professor, jokes from a comedian, or lines from a movie or dramatic play, in addition to more traditional sources such as articles from peer-reviewed journals, news sources, books, or magazines, in a scholarly work of your own without crediting their place or person of origin. In this class, students will be expected to properly cite all sources from which words, information, and ideas in their papers come, including quotation marks for precise wording and in-text citations for all ideas, as well as a full bibliography at the end of the paper. As we will be using APA style, please consult the APA website, <http://www.apastyle.org/>, for specific instructions on proper citation.

According to the Duke University policy on plagiarism, students found to have plagiarized in classwork or written assignments will be given a grade of “F” for the paper on which they have been found to have plagiarized and may be subject to an official investigation of their academic honesty by the University. This investigation, even if the student is found to have been innocent, will be **permanently documented** on the student’s academic transcript. If you are uncertain about the citation criteria for an idea in your paper, please see the instructor and ask before submitting. Your honesty is greatly appreciated, and will serve you in all of life! For more on University policies regarding plagiarism please see the handbook.

Class Attendance & Authorized/Religious Absences

Regular and punctual attendance is expected. Attendance begins on the first day of class. Attendance is taken every class period. Class attendance is essential for participation, performance, and intellectual progress. Attendance is generally an indication of how serious of a student one is, and will most likely account for the success, or lack of success, of a student. In this class, attendance is a symbol of participation, which represents part of your grade. Notes taken during class will enhance that physical presence by allowing you to capture essential information, meaning, and details of the course. University authorized absences and religious absences are provided in accordance with Duke University policy and state law.

Acting Responsibly

Any acts of misconduct as defined by the Student Code of Conduct, which is available from the Dean of Students Office, will be referred to the University and may be subject to the university Code of Conduct and Discipline.

Please remain respectful of others' and our (i.e. your instructors) time. Turn off cell phones, let others speak, and be on time to class, field trips, and activities. Tardiness is inconsiderate and unacceptable. Please let us know if you will not be able to make it to class. It is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate for any missed time.

Also, please mind your food and drinks; avoid creating disruptions related to eating/drinking during class or other activities, avoid spills, crumbs, etc. and clean up after yourself immediately. Remove any trash you or others create.

Finally, an essential element to successful class meetings is your preparation. Please read and complete assignments on time, and be prepared for class participation and discussion. We will do everything in our power to provide you with a positive and inclusive learning environment and will guide and assist you in your learning experience. But, ultimately, your education is your responsibility. Please take this responsibility seriously.