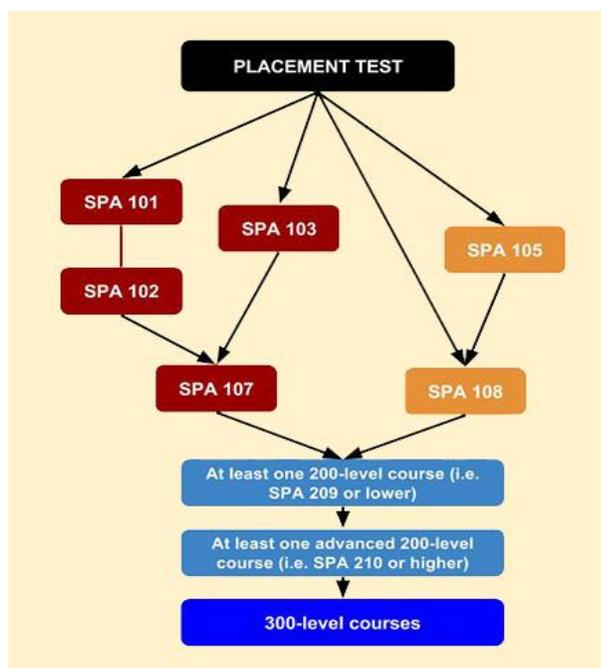


**Spanish Language Program at Princeton University:  
Course Assignment and Key Information for Als  
December 2016**

**General program information**

- In a given academic year, we have an average of 800 students enrolled in our 100- and 200-level language courses. For the '16-'17 academic year, we have 17 lecturers teaching Spanish language courses.
- Undergraduate students need to take the [Spanish Placement Test](#) to determine in which Spanish course they should enroll. The test is available on Blackboard during the summer, and is offered once more in September for students who failed to take it over the summer.
- Students who place out of this test or whose score on the AP or SAT II tests is sufficiently high can enroll in 200-level courses.
- Students who intend to fulfill the language requirement by taking Spanish courses at the 100-level, are placed into one of these two tracks: the **101-102/103 - 107 track**, or the **105-108 track**. The courses in the first track hold classes every weekday, and the courses in the second track hold classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
- Following the recommendations of the Dean of the Faculty, everyone teaching a Spanish course is expected to be on campus and available to their students during reading period.
- This graph illustrates our course sequence more clearly. The **101-102/103 - 107 track** is shown in **red** and the **105-108 track** is shown in **yellow**:



## Methodology of Spanish-Language Teaching: Seminar and Practicum (SPA500)

First-year graduate students are required to take SPA500 before teaching language courses in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese (SPO). This course is only offered in the spring, and is taught by Alberto Bruzos Moro, Director of the Spanish Language Program. However, in spring 2017, it will be co-taught by the Program's two Associate Directors, Catalina Méndez Vallejo and Sylvia Zetterstrand, given that Alberto is on sabbatical.

The course offers an introduction to key concepts and issues in the fields of second-language acquisition and language-teaching pedagogy in connection with the teaching of Spanish and Portuguese. Students acquire knowledge and develop skills that will prepare them to teach foreign languages. SPA500 has a strong practical component in that students observe classes that are currently being taught by lecturers in our Program, practice teaching techniques, and are guided in creating their own teaching materials.

Note that because SPA500 focuses on the pedagogical approach, courses and particular needs of the Princeton SPO language program it cannot be replaced by language-teaching methodology courses taken elsewhere.

### Course assignments in the Fall

Graduate students who took SPA500 in the spring will teach a language course the following semester, i.e., in the fall semester of their second year. Except in the cases described below, the usual course assignment for graduate students (AIs) who teach Spanish in SPO is as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Year in SPO program	Courses	Level
1st	no teaching (enrolled in SPA500)	
2nd	SPA101 (or SPA103)	beginners
3rd	SPA107	intermediate
4th	SPA105 or SPA108 (or SPA207)	intermediate-advanced
5th	no teaching	
6th (DCEs)	SPA105, SPA108, or SPA207	intermediate-advanced/advanced

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<sup>1</sup> For information regarding the Portuguese Language Program teaching assignment, refer to the documentation issued by the director of the program, Prof. Nicola Cooney.

As you can see, the teaching sequence is meant to give graduate students experience teaching at the various levels: from the beginner-level through the intermediate-advanced level. In particular, note that:

- In order to ensure the highest quality of teaching in our Program, the lecturer/AI ratio is important, especially, in the beginner-level courses that usually have 11-12 sections (120+ students). Therefore, if there is a large number of AIs who will be teaching for the first time, no more than four will teach SPA101; the others will be assigned to SPA103.
- Assignment to SPA101 and SPA103 will depend on the AI's availability to teach at the times where there are sections in need of an instructor.
- If a student is scheduled to teach a precept, she/he will not teach a language course that same semester.
- An AI will not be able "to skip" levels. All AIs should start either in SPA101 or SPA103, and work their way up through the higher-level courses. Students who have never taught a language course at PU must teach their first language course in the fall, not in the spring.
- As indicated in the table above, the usual course assignment for the 4th year is SPA105 or SPA108. However, an AI may be assigned to teach SPA207 in order to:
  - Balance the number of lecturers/AIs in a course
  - Resolve a scheduling conflict (e.g. an instructor may not be able to teach at a certain time)
  - Honor the Department's contractual obligations with lecturers
- The criteria for assigning AIs to SPA207 during the 4th year are:
  - Availability to teach the course at a certain time
  - The AI's personal background and teaching record (based on student evaluations and the directors' class observations)
  - All things being equal, assignment is random
- The usual course load for AIs teaching Spanish-language courses is: either one section of a course that meets everyday (101, 103, 107) or two sections of a course that meets three-times a week (105, 108, 207). These two options are comparable in terms of the amount of work involved. Although the second option involves teaching only three days a week (M-W-F) and, in general, having students with a higher proficiency in Spanish, it entails having nearly twice as many students, an extra hour of teaching per week, and evaluating work with content and language that is much more complex (in other words, scoring student work tends to be time-consuming).

- In the case of DCEs, we will attempt to offer them teaching in the fall and/or the spring based on the needs of the Program and availability. Information about the DCE status and the specific requirements for teaching are included in section XX of [Graduate Rules and Procedures](#). Students must fulfill all of the listed requirements in order to be eligible to teach language courses in their 6th year. If there are any questions, AIs should consult the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Students who work with members of our Portuguese Language faculty may be able to teach a Spanish language course if the Spanish Language Program directors determine that they are qualified to do so, and if there is a need for additional instructors in a given semester. In all likelihood, the need would arise in the beginners' courses: SPA101 and SPA103. These teaching assignments must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Course assignment in the Spring**

There are fewer courses in the spring than in the fall because SPA103 and SPA105 are not offered (SPA101 is not offered in spring either given that 101-102 is a single-course sequence). In addition, SPO has to ensure that the lecturers' teaching load is met as specified in their contracts. Therefore, it is very unlikely that graduate students can switch their teaching to the spring semester.

Nonetheless, occasionally, there may be a need for additional instructors in the spring. Should that be the case and if there are graduate students interested in teaching, the directors would take into account the following to determine who should teach:

- The reason for requesting to teach in the spring (e.g. necessary travel to an archive the following fall; studies at a partner university; etc.). AIs are urged to consult the Director of Graduate Studies about their particular case.
- The AI's teaching and personal background (based on student evaluations and the directors' class observations)
- All things being equal, requests to teach will be granted in the order in which they were received

The courses that AIs teach in the spring are determined by availability, after taking into account contractual obligations with lecturers and the course schedule. It is possible that this may require an AI to teach a course that is out of the sequence specified in the table above. In that case, the AI may be expected to teach the "skipped" course during the next teaching semester.

All requests to teach in the spring, as opposed to the fall, will have to be submitted by **November 1st**, and they will need to be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Given that the teaching assignment process has an impact on many people's schedules and on classroom assignment, AIs who wish to teach in the spring should commit to their decision and accept the course(s) that they have been assigned. If more than one student has expressed

interest in teaching in the spring, the Director of Graduate Studies will also determine who should be given priority. For the '16-'17 academic year, the director is Prof. Rachel Price.

### **Class observations**

Class observations are conducted in order to provide formative feedback and pedagogical support for all AIs, especially to those who recently took SPA500 (AIs in their second year). For these AIs, there is a two-step observation process: first, the Program Director observes one class; and second, one of the Associate Program Directors, or the course coordinator, observes another class.

For AIs who are teaching at PU for the second time (AIs in their third year), there is only one class observation that is usually carried out by one of the three Spanish Program directors. Observing the class of AIs who are teaching for the third time (AIs in their fourth or fifth year) is optional. If there is a class observation, it will be conducted by the course coordinator or by one of the three program directors. The classes of DCEs are not observed unless there is a reason to do so.

Class observations typically follow the same procedure: first, the person observing the class reaches out to the AI to schedule a date/time for the observation and to request class materials (e.g. class plans, syllabi, etc.); second, the class is observed; and third, the person observing the class and the AI meet shortly afterwards to discuss the observations.

Keep in mind that class observations are helpful not only for the Program directors, but also for the AIs. Observing a particular class allows the directors to follow up on the AIs' pedagogical and methodological development, assess the effectiveness of SPA500, and evaluate curricular development in specific Spanish courses. They are also essential to substantiate recommendation letters for graduate students who are on the job market by focusing on their observed strengths and capabilities. At the same time, having class observations allows AIs to become more aware of their teaching practices, discuss specific pedagogical procedures, and showcase pedagogical skills that would not be visible otherwise (e.g. by taking SPA500).

### **Other important information**

- Courses that meet M-F (SPA 101-102, SPA103, and SPA107) have 3 class meetings during Reading Period, both during the fall and the spring semesters. For the '16-'17 academic year, these dates are: January 11-13, 2017 (fall semester) and May 10-12, 2017 (spring semester). AIs should arrange to be on campus until their teaching obligations have been fulfilled, i.e. until Dean's Date: January 17, 2017 (fall semester) and May 16, 2017 (spring semester).

Prospective AIs will be given this information at the end of SPA500. All AIs will be reminded via a series of e-mails from: the Office of the Dean, the SPO language

program directors, and the coordinators of the courses they will be teaching. Additionally, the information is repeated during the beginning-of-semester meetings, and is included in the course syllabi.

- AIs are also required to attend the beginning-of-semester meetings of the courses they will be teaching. These meetings will take place on a designated day of the week, after Labor Day but before classes start. In addition, AIs who are teaching for the first time must attend an orientation in September where, among other things, they will become familiar with the *AprenDo* platform. These SPO meetings are independent of orientation sessions and other activities organized by the Graduate School for new AIs.
- AIs or DCEs teaching in the spring will have to attend the beginning-of-semester meeting(s) of the course(s) they will be teaching. These meetings take place the week before classes start. Course coordinators will notify the instructors well in advance (in December) of the exact date of those meetings. Note that the 2017 spring semester starts on Monday, February 6; therefore, AIs should plan to be on campus the week before in order to attend their course meetings.
- Although every effort will be made to accommodate DCEs students in their 6th year seeking teaching appointments in the Spanish Program in the department, these assignments cannot be guaranteed and depend on the needs of the language program. In the case that a student does receive course assignments during his or her 6th year, he or she will be given at most 2 courses in the fall semester and 1 course in the spring. In the spring semester his or her stipend will therefore be lower.
- In general, when a student receives an Assistantship in Instruction (AI) appointment for a given term, any other support from the University is adjusted accordingly to reflect the actual commitment to the AI and the other funding source(s). The relevant financial information is available in [AIs Guidelines for Combination of Support with University Fellowships or Assistantships in Research.](#)

If you have questions about any of the above information, please contact the Program directors.

**Portuguese Language Program at Princeton University:  
Course Assignment and Key Information for AIs  
December 2016**

Procedures for AIs in Portuguese largely follow those for graduate students in the Spanish program. However, the very small size of the Portuguese language program creates a dynamic that may demand flexibility on the part of all team members.

Enrollments fluctuate from year to year but we typically offer 8-9 sections of language in the Fall and 7 in the Spring. The Portuguese program currently has 3 lecturers (plus the Program Director) teaching language courses, in addition to any current graduate student AIs. (This means that in a given semester 8 sections may need to be split between 5 instructors, all of whom have complex contracts.)

Since there is no placement test for Portuguese, and students rarely study Portuguese at the high school level, placement is handled on a case-by-case basis. Students in doubt should be referred to the Program Director, Nicola Cooney.

The usual introductory sequence for Portuguese is 101-102-109 (ab initio) or 108-109, an accelerated sequence for Speakers of Spanish or other Romance languages. From 109 students will take 208 as the prerequisite for upper level courses. (POR 110 is a super intensive grammar course combining 2 semesters in 1 and open to graduate students, seniors and other researchers. This course may not be taken to fulfill the language requirement.)

Graduate students in Portuguese will take the Methodology course (SPA 500) with their Spanish cohort.

Teaching years are the same as for graduate students in Spanish (Fall of years 2,3,4) and ideally AIs will teach sequentially (e.g. 101-102-109 or 108-109) however this may not always be possible.

AIs will always work alongside a Head of Course and are also expected to attend POR team meetings.

POR language courses currently meet 3 or 4 days a week.

Those who teach a precept with a faculty member will not be required to teach that semester. Likewise, those who teach during a summer program abroad (Princeton in Brazil, Princeton in Portugal or a Global Seminar) will receive language teaching relief.

Students wishing to teach in the Spring semester should speak with the Program Director and the DGS as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to accommodate requests, however

Spring enrollments are significantly lower than Fall enrollments, and as such fewer language sections are offered. Once contractual obligations to lecturers have been met, pending enrollments, and taking into consideration any personal/academic factors at stake, Spring teaching may be assigned to AIs.

Likewise, students from Spanish who wish to teach Portuguese language and have the appropriate linguistic skills may be considered to teach a POR course provided that there are courses available. This has not yet been possible but could happen in the future. Priority must be given to lecturers and graduate AIs in the Portuguese program.

Please note that due to the structure and small size of the Portuguese program (as noted above), DCE status is particularly complicated and extremely unlikely to be offered.

For any questions please contact Nicola Cooney.