



# Scholarship of Excellence in Teaching

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# Project Goal

- ▶ To make the Cultural Presentation, the required signature assignment for all World Languages students, a more meaningful, rigorous academic experience for my Elementary Spanish II students
- ▶ To inspire **guided agency** or increased student ownership of their learning by way of providing meaningful context and practical support

# The Problem

- ▶ A large percentage of students choose simplistic topics (popular Mexican foods, Día de los Muertos, Quinceañeras, Soccer in Spain) which may or may not be of interest to them.
- ▶ Topics, as conceived, do not require critical thinking, personal reflection or analysis of the importance of the topic to understanding Hispanic culture.
- ▶ Research sources come from non-academic websites

# Scholarship

▶ **Curiosity** (*How Humans Learn*—Joshua Eyler)

I wanted to create an atmosphere that was “friendly to curiosity” which allowed for the “act of asking questions as the engine for cognition”

(What the Best College Teachers Do—Ken Bain)

I wanted to “. . .promote{d} intellectual excitement and curiosity rather than worry and doubt over making the grade.”

▶ **Critical Thinking** (*The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking*—Richard Paul and Linda Elder)

Elements of Reasoning—Having a clear question

Intellectual Virtues of the Fair-minded Thinker—Intellectual Humility

▶ **Relevance** (*Culturally Responsive Teaching*—Geneva Gay)

“Curriculum content that is relevant and meaningful to students positively impacts their learning and academic performance.”

# The Cultural Presentation

## Previous Project Description

You will complete a presentation on an aspect of Hispanic culture in Spanish for this course worth **10% of your final grade**. The dates for these presentations are marked in the syllabus.

This presentation will require you to complete some independent research and report factual information on the topic you select. Topics need to be approved by your professor. A list of suggested topics is included, but please do not limit yourselves to these.

# The Cultural Presentation cont.

## ▶ **Project Description--Revision**

A 21<sup>st</sup> century education requires that students have a deep understanding of global issues and that they acquire and hone the skills necessary to conceive of and apply their knowledge to possible solutions to these issues. Among the most essential skills are the ability to think critically, to communicate effectively with others (especially in cross-cultural situations), and to reflect on and evaluate one's own place in the world and recognize personal perspectives based on that position.

As a student of Spanish, you have committed yourself to learning about, and when possible, experiencing cultures outside your own, specifically those of the Spanish-speaking world. You are expanding your ability to communicate to those outside of your own culture and language and are opening yourself to myriad perspectives and realities of the Hispanic global community.

# Previous Suggested Topics

- ▶ Parties and celebrations in Hispanic countries or communities
- ▶ Health habits, concerns, and traditional remedies in the Spanish-speaking world or populations
- ▶ Dwellings and households in the Hispanic world
- ▶ Vacation activities and destinations in the Spanish-speaking world
- ▶ Environmental concerns and conversation movements in the Hispanic world
- ▶ A market or plaza in the Spanish-speaking world
- ▶ Major cities and urban life in the Spanish-speaking world

# Suggested Topics Revised

- ▶ How has culture change regarding gender identity impacted the Spanish language?
- ▶ What role does street art play in the country of El Salvador?
- ▶ Why is maintaining traditional cooking methods of *barbacoa* tacos important in Mexico?
- ▶ Why are so many Venezuelans immigrating to Colombia and other parts of the world?
- ▶ What social, cultural and political elements contribute to the extraordinarily high murder rate of young women in Juárez, México?
- ▶ How do Joe Biden's proposed policies and Donald Trump's policies in Latin America differ?

# What Students Did

## ***Cultural Presentation Worksheet***

Use this worksheet to guide you through the process of completing the Culture Presentation for Spanish 102. This project is meant to be enjoyable and informative and it is much more likely to be so if you approach it in an organized manner, taking the time necessary to contemplate and research the topic, and prepare your presentation. ¡Adelante!

### **Step One: Choose a Topic**

In question form, what are two things you are curious about regarding your topic?

State one assumption you have about your topic before beginning your research.

Explain how researching this topic will deepen your understanding of the Spanish-speaking world.

**State your topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Examples of Students' Curiosities and Topics

## ▶ **Venezuelan Migration**

- ▶ Why are so many Venezuelans leaving their homes?
- ▶ How did conditions get so bad?

## ▶ **LGBTQ Spain**

- ▶ What are the laws surrounding LGBTQ rights and what is it like to be gay in Spain?

## ▶ **Gang Violence in El Salvador**

- ▶ What is the impact of gang violence in El Salvador and what are the steps being taken to combat it?

## ▶ **Mexican Drug War**

- ▶ What caused the drug war in Mexico?
- ▶ What are the political, social, and economic effects of the drug war in Mexico?

## ▶ **U.S. and Cuban Health Care**

- ▶ What are the differences between socialism and capitalism and how do each affect health care?

# Student Topics from Previous Semester

- ▶ Dominican Carnaval
- ▶ Día de los Muertos
- ▶ Simón Bolívar
- ▶ Cusco, Peru
- ▶ Traditional Dominican Foods
- ▶ Traditional Festivals in Spain

# Cultural Presentation Worksheet cont.

## **Step Two: Begin Your Research**

It is so important to use reliable and diverse sources for your research. Otherwise, your information could be inaccurate and one-sided. Please begin searching your topic on the [MC Library webpage](#).

To determine if a source is appropriate for your presentation, ask yourself if it helps to answer the questions you posed in Step One of the worksheet.

List your three (or more) sources you will use for your presentation. You must use [MLA citation format](#).

Source 1

Source 2

Source 3

More

# Cultural Presentation Worksheet cont.

## Step Three: Create Your Presentation

A good presentation is concise, organized, informative and pleasing to experience visually and auditorily. Choose pictures, video, music, etc. that compliment what you will say in your presentation.

Your presentation should be between 5-7 minutes long and you should expect to create between 6-8 slides for the body of your presentation. Please use only the grammar structures we have learned in class (present, preterite, imperfect tenses) and remember that your audience is other Spanish 102 students. You want them to understand your presentation!

You may, of course, need to look up vocabulary we have not covered in class.

However, please **do not** use online translators for entire sentences or paragraphs. Construct the body of your presentation using your text and notes as references.

Use these prompts to help you construct the body of your presentation:

# Cultural Presentation Worksheet cont.

## **Title Slide**

(Be aware that only the first word in a Spanish title is capitalized unless the word is a proper noun).

**Your Name**

**Course Name**

**Semester**

**Professor's Name**

## **Slide 1** **Heading**

- Write 2 sentences in Spanish that clearly and succinctly convey this slide's general content.
- Include images, pictures, and/or audiovisual media that further illustrate this slide's content.
- Beyond your 1-2 written sentences, what additional explanations, information, and connections can you provide in spoken form?

# Cultural Presentation Worksheet cont.

## Reflection Slide

The information on this slide may be written in English.

Answer these questions (in English) to encapsulate your specific conclusions and overall learning.

Explain, with details, in what manner this research project expanded your knowledge of Spanish-speaking cultures and skills in written and oral Spanish.

In what concrete way can you connect what you have learned to your own culture, studies, or life experiences?

Were you able to answer your initial questions regarding your presentation topic? What additional questions emerged from your research?

Were your initial assumptions about your topic accurate? Explain.

# Examples of Student Reflections

- ▶ This project helped me understand how the healthcare system in Cuba is different than the United States. Cuba's healthcare system is free for everyone despite having limited resources while in the US we have more resources but it costs more to have access to them unless you have a low income. **I also practiced and improved my written and oral Spanish skills**
- ▶ I learned that **having more resources doesn't mean better outcomes**. My research showed me that people in Cuba are more satisfied with their health than in the US even though the US spends millions of dollars on healthcare.
- ▶ Yes, my researched allowed me to understand the main differences between socialism and capitalism and how each one affects healthcare. **I would like to do more research to find out how socialism and capitalism affects other aspects of life (i.e. economy, education, elections, etc.)**

# More Student Reflections

- ▶ This project has allowed me to research an issue affecting not just Mexico, but many Spanish-speaking countries. By researching this issue, I also learned in what ways it affects Spanish-speaking cultures as there is a large societal impact. It **helped me to practice my written and oral Spanish as I was required to write and present in Spanish.**
- ▶ Most of what I learned was about drug trade and cartels. I've been blessed to have never experienced that first-hand. **Although I do work on cannabis research at my internship; I can connect it to what I've learned about the role of the DEA in drug trafficking.**
- ▶ I was able to answer my initial questions regarding my topic. **Other questions that immersed were regarding the mass drug-related disappearances in Mexico. I'll have to do more research on it.**
- ▶ My initial assumptions on U.S. involvement were accurate. I assumed they were somehow contributing to the continuation of drug-trafficking and violence in Mexico.

# More Student Reflections

- ▶ I feel this assignment **helped my knowledge in Spanish speaking cultures grow immensely**. I was able to see how these cultures are able to hold and follow these traditions for so long it was very impressive to see and go further in depth about they're ability to stay consistent.
- ▶ Being a man who was also born from parents outside of the US it **makes me want to get more in touch with my culture and how I can be more involved in it** . I realize that I haven't been as involved with my own country's carnival or traditions as much as I should and to see the effort and work they put in to making it happen year in and year out is nothing short of amazing
- ▶ I was able to answer my initial question about how much the culture of Bolivia is effected by Carnaval de Oruro . My **additional question** is how well received are people who are not from Bolivia . I'm curious if they well educate the tourists on the culture.
- ▶ Yes I was able to answer my initial assumption . It seems that even to this day these practices are heavily embedded into the heart of Bolivia . One part that stuck out was when that artist Rilda Paco opposed the Carnaval due to the hypocrisies . She spoke about how she does not have an issue with it , but that we should see it for what it has become and not what it used to be. **I thought that was an awesome perspective since most of the articles that I had read seemed to have everyone in Oruro so heavily invested in the carnival.**

# Post-Presentation Survey

Please respond honestly to the following questions about your experience of the Cultural Presentation. The purpose of this survey is strictly to help me modify the assignment if necessary to be a more effective assignment. The survey will not be graded.

1. What was your topic and why did you choose it?
2. How and where did you find the informational sources you used for your presentation? Did you seek assistance from Prof. Jones, an MC librarian, or another person? If so, was that assistance helpful?
3. What were the biggest challenges for you in the writing and organization of your presentation? What were the biggest challenges regarding the presentation of your Power Point?
4. What was the most enjoyable or rewarding aspect of this project?
5. What is the most important thing you learned about Hispanic culture from this project?
6. If you gave a Cultural Presentation in Spanish 101, how would you compare that experience to your experience of creating and giving your Spanish 102 presentation? Did it require more effort or research? Did you have to think more critically about the topic as opposed to simply stating facts?

# Student Survey Responses

- ▶ **4. If you gave a Cultural Presentation in Spanish 101, how would you compare that experience to your experience of creating and giving your Spanish 102 presentation? Did it require more effort or research? Did you have to think more critically about the topic as opposed to simply stating facts?**
- ▶ I did a lot more research for the 102 presentation. My 101 presentation was on a topic that I already knew about and was about tourism, so not a lot of heavy thinking needed. The situation in Venezuela is so complicated, so it did take a lot of thought to sift through everything I learned and try to present an overall picture with enough details to make sense and help others learn something new.

# Correlation Between Project Strategy and Student Performance

- ▶ Some students struggled to express the more complex concepts they researched.
- ▶ Many students indicated their desire to know more about their topics.
- ▶ Many students were able to connect in a personal way to their topics.

# Enhancements for the Future

- ▶ Include guidance materials and practices related to the writing and oral production of the presentation

# Self-reflection

- ▶ Students will and, in fact, want to rise to the occasion to challenge themselves if given the opportunity and support.
- ▶ As an educator, it is more respectful of the students, the course material and the process of learning to guide students more actively.

# Reflection on SET

- ▶ A most-needed “shot in the arm” for my teaching
- ▶ Professional readings
- ▶ Engagement with colleagues
- ▶ Practical application of concepts learned