



12 December 2012

Dear Dr. McLucas,

I had the pleasure of observing Dr. Germán De Patricio as he was teaching his Intermediate Spanish II class at 10:00am on November 12, 2012. I have also had the opportunity to review the course syllabus and a chapter exam created for the class. Dr. De Patricio is a competent and dedicated instructor whose enthusiasm for teaching made for a lively class.

Class observation

Dr. De Patricio arrived to the class several minutes early in order to converse in Spanish with his students in a relaxed manner. At the beginning of the class, he asked all the students how they were doing and then directed them to complete an exercise in the textbook in pairs. As the groups were working, Dr. De Patricio circulated among them to see if they had questions and also to record in his gradebook whether or not they had completed their homework. He also returned their film reviews and asked several students whether or not they would recommend the films that they saw to other students. Through these warm-up activities, Dr. De Patricio managed to not only ease the students into the Spanish-speaking context of the class, but also to turn administrative tasks into an opportunity for students to use their Spanish. I was impressed with the rapport that he had developed with his students and with their willingness to speak in Spanish at all times, even when they were doing group work.

Following this warm-up, Dr. De Patricio turned the students' attention to the screen where he had projected the exam that they had taken in the previous class. He called on several students to provide the correct answers and where there were doubts he provided explanations. His ample use of humor and his personalization of some of the questions engaged the students in what otherwise could have been a dry exercise. He also made it more interesting by explaining cultural information that appeared on the exam in subtle ways.

This activity was followed by a grammar explanation of the forms and uses of the imperfect subjunctive on a Power Point. Dr. De Patricio asked for volunteers to read portions of the presentation. The examples that he provided were not only clear but also humorous. He called on various students to react to the examples by thinking of how they could relate them to their own personal lives. He then used comical drawings so that students could visualize the grammar point and followed up by asking students if the point was understood. The students were then directed to the exercise in the textbook that they had completed at the beginning of class to reinforce the grammar. Dr. De Patricio made certain that everyone in the class had the opportunity to respond. He also took the time to answer questions that arose completely and thoughtfully. He praised the students often and encouraged them to elaborate on their responses.

The final activity of the class was a brief video clip of a Spanish situation comedy. Since the students have seen other clips of this same program, they are familiar with the characters and were able to answer Dr. De Patricio's pre-viewing questions regarding the background of the show in Spanish. Both Dr. De Patricio and his students demonstrated great enthusiasm for this activity. He instructed the students that following the video they would need to write a

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paragraph in Spanish summarizing the clip for the next class. The students directed their full attention to the video clip and comprehended enough of the gist of the conversations to be able to laugh in the right places. Afterwards, both Dr. De Patricio and some of the students made some general comments about the characters and the class was dismissed.

Throughout the entire lesson, the students were attentive and knew what was expected of them. Almost all of them were active participants and contributed meaningfully to the class. Most were motivated to master the course material. Likewise, Dr. De Patricio was well-prepared with a clear idea of the lesson's objectives and how he wanted to achieve them. He achieved an effective balance of professionalism and humor that the students obviously appreciated.

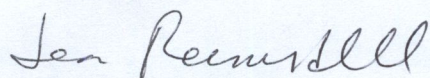
Course design and methodologies

In reviewing the syllabus and a chapter exam for the course, I found them to be appropriate to this level of instruction. The evaluation of students is distributed across participation, homework, a presentation, a film review, and exams in a fair and effective manner for an Intermediate Spanish II class. The learning outcomes correspond to those of ACTFL criteria for classes required of pre-professional teachers of Spanish as well as to classes in the Core 12: Global Perspectives category. The exam tests the students' knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar from the chapter as well as their reading, writing, and listening skills. The exam is clear and each section is weighted appropriately.

I would characterize Dr. De Patricio's teaching methodology as eclectic. He insists on using the target language at all times, which enhances the learning experience for the students. In an effort to allow students to learn from their mistakes, he reviews their work with them and explains difficult points in Spanish. While he is comfortable making traditional grammar explanations, he is also effective at implementing communicative activities such as those surrounding the video clip. The end result is that the students are immersed in the Spanish language, used in a variety of functions, in a non-threatening environment. My only suggestion would be to allow more time for students to create with the language in a less structured way, perhaps in groups. Overall, however, I was greatly impressed with the level of student involvement in the class and with the students' ability to express themselves in Spanish. This is a direct reflection of Dr. De Patricio's own passion for the subject and of his teaching style.

I very much appreciated the opportunity to observe Dr. De Patricio and his students, who are engaged and approaching advanced fluency in Spanish. He is a talented instructor who is devoted to his students and he provides an invaluable service and expertise to the Department of Foreign Languages.

Sincerely,



Lea Ramsdell, Ph.D.
Professor of Spanish

Seen by: Gená de Patricio Date: 12-12-12