

Spanish 233: Legal Translation and Interpreting

Robin Ragan, Ph.D, CMI

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Spring 2021

3S on Thursdays 10:40-12:25

TA: Eric Espinoza

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Zoom <https://knox-edu.zoom.us/j/89387967639>

**This course is supported by a grant from the Modern Languages Association. The Humanities Innovation Grant seeks to “recognize interdisciplinary and collaborative projects that engage with questions of global, regional, or local significance; that have the potential to offer transformative experiences for learners; that foster lasting connections between individuals and their communities; and that draw on innovative and effective pedagogical practices.” Your course materials and expenses will be covered.

Course description: This course explores the field of interpretation and translation (Spanish-English, English-Spanish) in the context of immigration and migration to our southern border, with a focus on asylum seekers. Through collaboration with advocate groups, we will provide translations for real asylum cases, and in this way become familiar with evidentiary documents and asylum narratives. Additionally, we will practice interpreting with mock scripts to improve our interpreting abilities. Students will present on the country conditions that are leading to an increase in asylum claims in the Northern triangle, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba through first-person narratives, police reports, sworn statements and newspaper accounts.

Prerequisite: Spanish 205 (Introduction to Translation) or Spanish 206 (Introduction to Interpreting). This course will be ideal preparation for anyone looking to serve as a translator, interpreter, or advocate in this field. This course is taught in Spanish.

Learning goals:

1. Explain the asylum seeking process in the U.S: history, common practice and recent changes
2. Trace the geographical path of an asylum seeker and identify several border cities.
3. Familiarize ourselves with first-person stories of asylum seekers from Central America, Venezuela and Cuba.
4. Translate evidentiary documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates, medical reports, police reports, newspaper articles)
5. Interpret consecutively for mock immigration scenarios, in person and over the phone.
6. Explore opportunities to provide translation & interpreting services in Illinois, and in detention centers throughout the US or at the border.

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Course Design: The course will follow the chronological stages of an asylum seeker, starting with in-country conditions leading to departure, the journey to the U.S. border, the process of the credible fear interview and ICE detention, ending in release or deportation. You can expect to have around 5 hours of homework each week. All assignments and time estimates on Google Classroom.

March 25	Introduction to Course and Basic Concepts Asylum, Credible Fear Interview, Threats, Detention
April 1st	<i>¿Por qué decidió huir de su país?</i> Country Conditions: Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras Due: Country Conditions Presentation to class (10%)
April 8th	<i>¿Alguien le hizo daño durante el trayecto? ¿Dónde y Cómo cruzó la frontera?</i> The journey, caravans, la bestia, las patronas, arrival @ border, Border Patrol, geography of the border Due: Translation Project #1 (10%)
April 15	<i>¿Qué países atravesó antes de llegar a la frontera?</i> <i>¿Quiénes viajan con usted?</i> MPP/ EWI, Border Cities, tent camps, tent courts, 3rd country law, unaccompanied minors <i>Los niños perdidos</i> Sight Translation Practicum
April 22	<i>¿Cuándo llegó a este centro?</i> Conditions In Detention/ Prep for CFI/ Bond/ Covid/Humanitarian Parole Due: Translation Project #2 (10%) Guest Speaker: Douglas Oviedo Guest Speaker: No más muertes

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April 29	<p><i>¿Le cuesta dormir? ¿Se sobresalta con cualquier ruido?</i> Victim Services Interpreting/ Vicarious Trauma Due: Subtitling Project "Journey to a New Land"</p>
May 6	<p>LGBTQ Asylum Cases Victim Services Interpreting Part II Guest speakers: Bek Erl '19 Due: Transcription / Translation Project (10%)</p>
May 13	<p>Racism and Immigration Race-based asylum claims Interpreting Practice in class</p>
May 20	<p><i>¿Quién es su patrocinador?</i> Deportation/ Release in US, Asylum timeline, I-589, Working with kids Guest Speaker: Ashley Pineda, internship experience at Esperanza Legal Aid</p>
May 27	<p>Biden Admin/ Recent Changes End of MPP Ways to volunteer/ Next steps Interpreting Performance (20%)</p>
Presentation Final Exam	<p>Advocacy Group Presentation (10%) Final Exam (20%)</p>

Grade Breakdown:

Country Conditions Report 10%

Individual Presentation 10%

Detention Resistance Project 10%

Homework & Vocab Quizzes 10%

Translation Project 10%X2

Final exam 20%

Interpreting Performance 20%

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This is a plan. However, we may suddenly shift gears when conditions change that require us to do so. A deadline may shift due to unforeseen circumstances in an asylum case. Please be flexible and nimble as we approach this calendar.

Traumatic Course Content:

The material in this course can be traumatizing for anyone. Some members of our class may personally relate to the material having family members who have had to endure horrible life circumstances due to their official, legal status or due to the inhumane immigration policies of our government. Let's be kind and compassionate with one another. If you are struggling with the content or find yourself avoiding assignments due to their content, please contact me so we can work out a plan.