



**College of Humanities & Social Sciences**  
*Department of World Languages, Literatures & Cultures*

**Spanish Course Placement Guidance: Heritage Speaker vs. Native Speaker of Spanish**

When scheduling students in Spanish classes, please find out whether they are **heritage** speakers or **native** speakers of Spanish by asking whether they completed high school in the US or a country where Spanish is the official language. **Spanish heritage speakers** have different options than **native speakers**.

**Heritage speakers are...**

- Students who **completed high school in the US** and had exposure to Spanish in their home or community.  
**Keep in mind:**
  - ❖ These students may be born in a country where Spanish is the official language **or** born in the US.
  - ❖ They may have attended some years of school in a country where Spanish is the official language and some in the US.

Heritage speakers with intermediate fluency have the option to take **Span 2155 Spanish Language and Culture for Heritage Speakers** (Contact [spanishua@lsu.edu](mailto:spanishua@lsu.edu) for permission to enroll in section 3 for fall 2025). Upon completion of this core course in the Spanish minor, credit can be awarded for Span 1101, 1102, 2101, 2102 to meet a foreign language requirement. Heritage speakers may also take the Spanish placement exam or see the Spanish Undergraduate Advisor ([spanishua@lsu.edu](mailto:spanishua@lsu.edu)) for placement assistance or information about the Spanish major or minor.

**Native speakers are...**

- Students who **completed high school in a country where Spanish is the official language**.  
**This includes:**
  - ❖ International students who completed high school in a Spanish speaking country.
  - ❖ Puerto Rican students who completed high school in Puerto Rico.
  - ❖ US resident or citizen students who completed high school in a Spanish speaking country.

Native speakers who wish to take Spanish may contact the Spanish Undergraduate Advisor ([spanishua@lsu.edu](mailto:spanishua@lsu.edu)) to register for 3000/4000-level classes and for information about the Spanish major or minor. Students who fit this definition of “native” speaker may **not** take the Spanish placement exam and will **not** receive foreign language credit for Spanish lower-division courses (1000 or 2000-level). See the LSU General Catalog for options to fulfill a Foreign Language Requirement for a specific Degree Program.

**Spanish Placement Exam**

All students **other than native speakers** (as defined above) can request to take a placement test through their major college or during orientation. The [placement exam form](#) requires a signature from the college and the Dept. of World Languages, Literatures, & Cultures ([worldlang@lsu.edu](mailto:worldlang@lsu.edu)). Instructions are on the form and testing should take place at the LSU testing center before the deadline to drop and add courses.

**Departmental placement procedures:**

**Heritage speakers** who self-place or are placed into Spanish 1101, 1102, 2101, or 2102 by an advisor outside of the Department of World Languages will be screened through a class survey and interview with a Spanish Program Administrator. Through this process, heritage speakers will be placed into the appropriate course based on their Spanish proficiency.

(updated 2/13/2025 by Dr. Andrea E. Morris, Spanish Section Head and Associate Chair, [aemorris@lsu.edu](mailto:aemorris@lsu.edu))