

SPANISH CLASS INSTRUCTORS



Jim Allen

I grew up in a small rural village in Michigan with 3 sisters and our parents. After I received my first BA from the University of NH, I relocated to Chicago, then Denver, and settled in Arizona in 2010. My husband Tom and I are part-time residents of SCW, where we spend the warmer months at our home in Lakeside, AZ, travelling and/or taking road trips in our RV.

The drive to learn Spanish for me was a result of a trip to Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula when I was 30. I knew my one year of high school Spanish wouldn't serve me well, and it didn't, so communication was difficult on that trip. As I prepared to depart Mexico, I said to myself, "*I want to return here but next time I want to be able to communicate.*"

Once back in Denver, I learned that Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSCD) offered evening classes in Spanish. After taking my 4th class, my faculty mentor, a Cuban American professor said *Jim, if you take these other classes, you can have a second BA*, so that is what I did. During the same time, I had opportunities to travel multiple times to Mexico where I studied at El Centro Bilingüe in Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico (now Universidad Internacional (UNINTER)) while also spending large amounts of time in Mexico City.

From there, I went to Colorado State University (CSU) as a Spanish Language & Literature M.A. candidate. I finished my MA coursework at the University of Madrid where 50 participants from France, Italy & the USA received fellowships from King Juan Carlos to immerse ourselves in the Spanish culture and language. Post-CSU, I went to work in the corporate world, but also, I served as a part-time adjunct faculty member at MSCD and the University of Colorado at Denver for 10+ years while I worked in my "day job". I stopped teaching more than 20 years ago due to career demands.

Since that time, my work with Accenture, a multinational consulting & technology business, allowed me some opportunities to use my Spanish, but not enough to shake off the dust. To date, my travel to Spanish speaking countries has been to Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay, and Spain.

When we moved into SCW in 2021, I promptly joined the Spanish Club; however, I did not participate until Spring 2023. I enrolled in *Destinos* with Lola Crilly in hopes of getting an opportunity to practice. From this course, I have transitioned from student to instructor; however, I believe I will constantly be learning about the Spanish language.

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Lola Crilly

I was born and raised in one of the most beautiful cities in the world, Madrid. I am the fourth of five children all born within a period of six years.

At the tender age of 19, I came to the U.S. on a summer-long visit to Seattle, where my sister and her husband lived. Little did I know that during that fabulous summer I would end up meeting the love of my life, John; we dated for as long as I could continue to renew my tourist/student visa. We then decided to go to Spain to get married and spend our honeymoon in my home country.

A couple of years after our return to Seattle John and I decided to join the Navy for the next 20 or so years, he as a sailor, me as a sailor's wife. That's how our big adventure began! Together we traveled the world, and during those years we've lived in Hawaii, San Francisco, San Diego, Spain, Italy, Washington DC, back to Spain, followed by Turkey. We finally picked Colorado for our final tour of duty, mostly because our two sons were still in high school and we wanted to finish high school in the U.S.

We retired in 2010 and came down to Arizona to begin the second phase of our adventure. Because of my lack of teaching experience, I was at first skeptical about joining Club Español as an instructor, but as I got into it, I realized that I had found my "other true love", teaching Spanish to my SCW friends and neighbors.



Christine Dendy

As a Canadian, French was a mandatory second language in high school and I went on from there for my last high school year to study in Sweden, and learn Swedish by immersion. While there I studied Russian and continued with that and German when I went to university on my return. Linguistic studies caught my interest but life and took me on different career paths. I still ended up working in many interesting countries, but never long enough to learn the languages. Now retired and spending winters in SCW, I soon discovered our Spanish Club and the amazing opportunity to try to learn Spanish.

We are so fortunate to have so many volunteers who guide and teach us! I am still very much a student, but delighted to assist where I can with our classes, and appreciate the challenges – and the fun of meeting so many interesting friends in the process.

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Mary Fry

I cannot remember a time when I was not interested in languages, even if it was pig Latin. As a child living in Japan, I wanted to learn Japanese and French. Upon returning to the States, an uncle, who spoke four languages, gave me two sets of French flash cards. I was thrilled. In high school I studied Latin, Spanish, French and, of course, English. I tried for several months to learn Polish from a grammar book that my mother gave me. Needed help! In college and intermittently after college, it was Spanish.

Living and working in Nogales, Az for a year put me in contact with wonderful native speakers. I visited several Mexican cities and took a week train trip to Mexico City. Years later, before my family crisscrossed Costa Rica for two weeks, I crashed-coursed Spanish for 3 months.

In Sun City West, I joined the Spanish Club and feverishly renewed my pursuit of Spanish fluency. During the Great Closure, I took up Italian and French to experience the challenges presented by new languages. These challenges ameliorated by reading a comparative grammar book for the Romance languages. Helpful but thick.

This spring I was able to visit several cities in Portugal, Spain and Italy. Currently, I pursue opportunities to speak with native speakers. The experiences are always unique and rewarding.

Over the years, I have accumulated a Bachelors, 2 Masters, various certificates and a PhD. I have taught from preschool to GED to doctoral students, worked on various state education committees, made conference presentations, and spent 22 volunteer-years in youth activities. I have children, grandchildren, and an amazing husband of 52 years.



Dora Gruber

I was born in Switzerland and brought up speaking the dialect of Berne. In first grade we learnt to speak and write "good" German and from fifth grade onward we had five French classes per week ending High school speaking fluently and writing almost without errors.

I originally learned Spanish when working at the U.N. in New York. After two years of studying the language with a Spanish teacher (from Spain), I passed the language proficiency exam and worked with Spanish documents in addition to English and French. Trips to Mexico, Guatemala and Peru reinforced my knowledge.

In 1991, I emigrated to the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador) where only Spanish was spoken and spent 18 years on the island of Isabela running a hotel. My Spanish is now a fluent Latin American Spanish with a definite Ecuadorian influence.

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Dolores (Lola) Hudson

I grew up in Powell, Wyoming in a Spanish-speaking family and later moved to Denver, Colorado where my family was friends with many other Spanish-Speaking families. My dad had a Mexican band and every Saturday there was a dance. Those were fun times and Spanish was the main language.

I went to school and learned English so soon I spoke both languages fluently. I married Terry and joined Mission teams in Denver and in Spokane. I was the main translator and could translate from English to Spanish and Spanish to English quite handily. We were with these teams in Juarez and Tijuana from 1992 to 2022. Terry was on construction side and I hung out with the Mexican people.

We moved to Sun City West in 2018 and joined the Spanish Club. Since then, I have been assisting in various classes and look forward to having a class of my own.



Mary Ann Jasken

I am a retired language teacher. I spent my working years teaching language to refugees and immigrants and working as a consultant for the Minnesota State Department of Education. In that capacity, I taught language teaching methods for adults.

I began learning Spanish at age 57, spending time in Mexico living among the people, learning their language and culture and discovering their beautiful villages and cities. I'm excited to bring those experiences to others interested in the Spanish language and culture. I began my adventure with Club Español as a student in 2010. I've been having fun teaching and working with our club curriculum since 2012.

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Minú Parra Johnson

I was born and raised in a rural town in México. My parents, sisters and brothers contributed enormously to my happiness and education when I was a child.

Because I was born in a small rural town, my parents decided to send me off to attend junior high in Cananea, Sonora, high school in Mexicali, Baja California and the university in Monterrey, Nuevo León, which gave me the opportunity to become responsible and independent.

I came to the United States to study English and, surprisingly, I met my husband. I have been married to him for 33 years and I have two wonderful sons. I am very happy to be a member of Club Español and share my knowledge with whomever is interested in learning my culture and native language.



Renee Kayser

I grew up on a farm in Montana raised by my Portuguese grandfather and my German grandmother. My aunt, who was a foreign language instructor in Washington state, would give me children's books written in Spanish. This began my fascination with foreign languages and countries.

I received my degree in Secondary Education with a major in English and Spanish minor. I then earned my Masters' Degree in Gifted and Talented Education. I continued my education by completing certification to teach in the fields of journalism and visual arts, mainly photography.

In 2006 I retired from teaching in Colorado. I am now in the classroom with my fellow retirees for continued frolic and fun as we enjoy our lifelong learning quests.

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Brenda Kruse



Teaching was not my first career, or second, or even third. In fact, it never made the list at all. The last career, from which I retired, was in health care, and even that wasn't my first career. But that circuitous route taught me that it's not always a straight line to the end, nor does it need to be.

Toward the end of my "paying career", I noticed increasing numbers of Spanish speakers among the people that we served, and decided that it would really be worthwhile for me to learn to speak Spanish in order to be able to communicate with them (not to mention that interpreters and translating services at times were not available and even at best are not

cheap).

I started on my own, rapidly became discouraged, and then discovered that the Spanish Club in Sun City West offered classes. What a treat! I was able to avail myself of classes when we were here, and through the COVID year, one of the teachers (Mary Ann Jasken) even held class via Zoom.

The number of patient, knowledgeable and generous people in the club who are willing to share their love and expertise of the language and culture continues to amaze me, and is one of the reasons that I am teaching as an encore career. And my journey to learn Spanish continues as well.



Joyce Lusty

Education:

1967: BA in Economics and Russian with a Secondary Education Endorsement, U of Utah

1990-1991: Two-year course in Translation, Literature, and History, Universidad Católica de Chile, 1990

1992: MA in Spanish Language and Literature, U of British Columbia

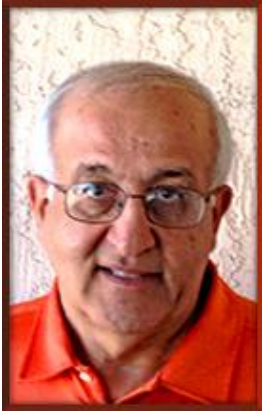
Teaching and Administration Experience:

1981-89: High School Spanish and Mathematics Instructor, Whitehall, Montana

1992-1996: Adult Basic Education and ESL Coordinator for Northeastern Nevada, Elko, Nevada. I taught and administered Workplace Literacy, GED and ESL Programs. Also taught University Spanish.

Between 1989 and now, we have lived over 10 years in Latin America where my husband has worked as a project manager for gold companies. Countries where we have lived include Chile, Venezuela, Honduras, and Argentina. While in Latin America, I worked as a translator for America Economía magazine, and translated environmental mining studies for consultants. I also taught ESL to Hispanics and tutored Spanish part-time for ex-pats.

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Jim Khami

My life has been a series of events involving foreign language and international experience. Having immigrated from Baghdad, Iraq at age 3½, the first foreign language that I learned was English. My ethnic background and mother tongue are Chaldean—a modern-day dialect of Aramaic, an ancient Semitic language. I studied Latin in high school and Italian in college.

In my junior year I was invited to spend the summer leading a group of 20 in a community development project in Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico through a national outreach program known as Project Encounter. It had never been my plan to learn Spanish but I taught myself basic Spanish by following lessons on 10 phonograph records called *Listen and Repeat*. By the time I arrived in Mexico I had a working knowledge of Spanish and the ability to communicate. Three months later I was immersed in my love for all things Spanish and Mexico.

After graduation I lived for 13 months in Italy and the Middle East where I picked up some knowledge of Arabic. On my return to Detroit, I interviewed in Spanish with the department head of a parochial high school and was hired to teach Spanish I and II but had to obtain a teaching certificate, which I did at Wayne State University, advance placing in Spanish literature classes. In Spanish linguistics class I wrote and presented a 10-page paper in Spanish on the influence of Arabic in the development of Spanish during the Moorish occupation of Spain and the origin of Spanish words that begin with “al”.

After retirement from my career as a lawyer, I joined the Spanish Club and began teaching in 2014. My approach is to encourage students to listen to the language and develop the ability to understand and use it while also learning grammar. I believe that learning a foreign language is the key to appreciating people from other countries, along with their history and culture. Living in SCW and joining Club Español has led me to making new life-long friends not only in class but through our travels together to Spanish-speaking countries.

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Brian McFarland

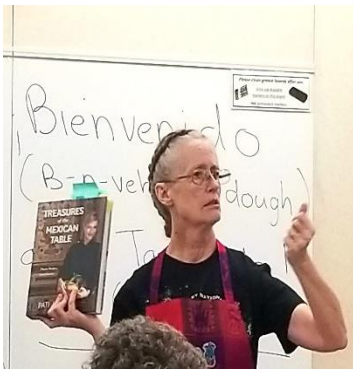
My name is Brian McFarland. My wife of 35 years, Kathy, and I moved to Sun City West as full time residents last year. Our two children live in California. I am a retired bilingual special education teacher with 30+ years of experience. I have a Master's Degree in Special Education and a "School of Hard Knocks" degree in Spanish.

I started working on my father's cotton farm in central California when I was 12 years old earning 75 cents an hour but getting a bonus learning Spanish from the farm workers. Following graduation from college with an agriculture degree I worked as an agricultural biologist in Brazil, Argentina, and California. I learned Portuguese in Brazil and became fluent in Spanish working in Argentina, Mexico and back in California.

Teaching students with special needs that spoke Spanish was a special blessing. This was a challenging career move but extremely rewarding (and 5 years of night school!). I enjoyed teaching a fun Spanish class with up to 50 elementary students. I would have my students with special needs as teacher's aides and also mainstream younger students with disabilities into the class for social skills, structure and order, and just for fun.

Ten years as a volunteer teacher in prisons in California was a rewarding experience. In evening classes I taught decision-making skills to Spanish speaking inmates from Peru, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Mexico, and Guatemala. You can learn a lot from these inmates!

I look forward to having you in my class!



Kathy McFarland

I enjoy teaching SCW Spanish Club students how to make traditional, "from scratch" delights in La Cocina Latino-americana.

As a retired math teacher, I taught my students how to be creative when solving math problems. I have now transferred that creativity to my Spanish Club cooking classes by offering students creative solutions to cooking Latin American food. From teaching students how to use a traditional tortilla press when making tortillas to going through the multi-step process of making tamales, students leave class well fed and well informed on how to apply the recipes at home.

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Brenda Melcher

A family trip to Mexico when I was seven years old began my fascination with the Spanish language and led to my becoming a Spanish teacher. My early university years culminated in a degree in Education with majors in Spanish and Public Speaking and a minor in English followed by a Master's degree in Communication.

For 21 years I taught high school Spanish in Normal, Illinois, and served as the Foreign Language Department Head and ESL Director. During that time, I enjoyed taking student groups to Spain and Mexico. When I was chairperson of the Rotary Exchange Program and through our local University International Host Family program, my husband and I hosted numerous high school and university exchange students in our home from Brazil, Panama, and Costa Rica. My travels include multiple trips to Spain and Mexico as well as trips to Costa Rica, Brazil, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands.

In 1989, I completed a second Master's in Educational Administration and spent the next 14 years as the district's Director of Professional Development and Community Services. Upon retiring from the school district in 2003, I established my "Learning Connections" consulting business and contracted with the Illinois State Board of Education and the University of North Carolina for statewide work in educator development for another 15 years.

My husband Steve and I came to SCW in 2009. Initially we were "Snowbirds" but are now full-time residents. At the beginning of 2018, as I reached my 50-year anniversary as an educator, I brought my consulting business to a close. My very next decision was to reconnect with my love for Spanish – after a 28-year hiatus! By teaching and attending Spanish classes and now serving as the Language Class Administrator, I get to share my love of the language, improve my own skills and make wonderful new friends with a wide range of fascinating backgrounds.