

Visiting Instructor from Spain

This academic year the Department of Spanish welcomed Roberto Ausín, a guest lecturer from Spain. Roberto is originally from Burgos but has lived in Logroño, La Rioja, for many years where he worked as a General Contractor after receiving a degree in Civil Engineering. After fifteen years in the industry Roberto decided to change career paths and pursue his love of teaching by earning a Master's degree in Secondary Education from the University of La Rioja. After graduating, he became intrigued by the opportunity to teach abroad in the Languages, Philosophy and Communication Studies Department at Utah State University. The opportunity came through an exchange program spear-headed by Dr. Maria Luisa Spicer-Escalante. Roberto applied for the competitive position and was chosen as the best candidate.

In August, 2016, Roberto arrived at Utah State University and began teaching Second Year Spanish. He immediately created a positive rapport with colleagues and students alike. He has a talent for engaging students and motivating them to work hard to improve their language skills. He is adept at recognizing students' strengths and interests and incorporating both into his curriculum. He has a unique ability to create lesson plans that bring energy into the classroom. His students reported that it was clear to see that Roberto enjoys teaching.

He is also a valued colleague among Spanish Instructors. He volunteered as a guest in other Spanish classes to bring in cultural aspects of daily life in Spain. He is generous in sharing teaching ideas and welcomed input from other Instructors. Roberto is always willing to give a hand or offer advice to anyone in the office. One of Roberto's colleagues reported the following about him:

Working with Roberto has been a wonderful and enlightening experience both as a teacher and as a friend. He is the epitome of enthusiasm and optimism and has a special

ability for making others feel good about themselves. I met Roberto during my first semester of teaching college Spanish and I always had oodles of questions about Spanish and teaching. At times I felt a bit overwhelmed and Roberto was so, so good about answering my questions and encouraging me. Every single time I talked with him I came away with new ideas and a renewed confidence and optimism about my teaching. I have seen him have the same effect on students when he comes to help in my classroom and during office hours. His enthusiasm for language learning and teaching is truly contagious and makes him a joy to work with!

Due to his successful teaching, Roberto will continue to teach Spring Semester at Utah State University where a new group of students will have the opportunity to be exposed to his unique perspective and cultural background. It is a great advantage for students to see a different world view in Roberto's class and hopefully Utah State will continue to bring visiting instructors into our language classrooms to further extend the cultural aspect of language learning.

-written by Katie Marín