

## Cuesta is Back in Arroyo Grande!

After almost two years, teachers and students returned to in-person learning on the Arroyo Grande South County Campus. Students in all levels were asked what their experience was returning to the classroom and what they now enjoy about being back in the classroom. Read their responses below!



*Israel, Rosa, and Damaris*

"I feel so happy about learning in person again. I communicate more in class. I understand instructions better when the teacher explains in person, and I talk more with my classmates and practice my English in class."

**Rosa Nicolas De la Cruz, ESL 713**

"Unfortunately, I couldn't take classes online because there were distractions at home, and I couldn't concentrate in the same way as in person. I am happy to be learning in the classroom again!"

**Israel Brindiz, ESL 713**

"I took classes online, and this is my first time learning in person. I am really motivated to learn in the classroom, and I am already learning a lot! There are many opportunities to practice English with my classmates."

**Damaris Sandoval, ESL 713**

"I like being in class. I like my classmates. I also like to practice listening and writing."

**Conrado Aguilar, ESL 701/702**

"I am happy to return to classes in person because I learn better. I have more opportunities to practice speaking, writing, and listening."

**Elizabeth Garcia, ESL 701/702**

"I like to practice talking, and I like to read with partners in the classroom. I also like the teacher."

**Laura Martinez, ESL 701/702**



*ESL 701 & 702 Students with their Instructor Bill Compton*

"Personally, there were a lot of challenges to learning online. I feel very comfortable in the classroom. I like spending time and interacting with my classmates and teachers. I like the resources and materials we have in the classroom."

**Maria Priscila Mena, ESL 714**

"I definitely feel very happy to be in the classroom again. I like how easy it is to ask questions and get immediate responses. I also enjoy the interaction between the teacher and my classmates. I also missed the parties!"

**Richard De la O, ESL 714**

"I am really excited to be learning in person because even though it was interesting to learn online, it was also difficult. I like communicating in person. I can talk with my classmates about many interesting topics. It is also easier to concentrate in the classroom."

**Fedor Grishchenko, ESL 714**



*Richard and Fedor*

## Student Success

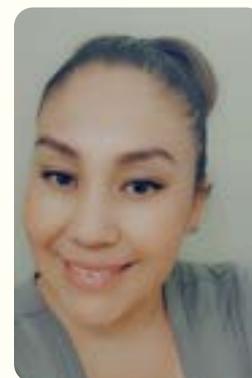


I started working at McDonald's as a cashier in February 2021 with very little English. In June 2021, after I learned more, I got promoted. Now I'm one of the night shift managers.

**Jesus Espinoza Barajas, ESL 725 & 714 student, SLO campus**

When I moved to the US in 2006, I didn't feel the need to speak English because everyone speaks Spanish. One time we had an emergency with our daughter when she was little and we couldn't find a translator available to help us. That was the main reason I decided to learn English. I have been studying since 2020, and now I can communicate in English. The last time I went to the dentist, I didn't need a translator for the first time and I felt proud.

**Sandra Avalos, ESL 735 & 799, online student**



Nelson Guzman studied for his citizenship exam for one month with the help of ESL teacher Teri Schouten. Teri was impressed by Nelson's intelligence and dedication. In addition to studying for the citizenship exam, Nelson works a full time job and a part time job and takes ESL classes. On April 6, 2022, Nelson passed his citizenship exam!

**Nelson Guzman, ESL 702, North County Campus**

My name is Emily. I am from Peru. I moved to the United States in 2015. I work as a C.N.A. In 2021, the manager at my work offered me a promotion to become a C.N.A Supervisor. I'm so proud of myself because although my native language isn't English, I got this opportunity. I want to thank all the Cuesta instructors for the teaching and patience they had for me. In conclusion, I would like to encourage each person to continue until they reach their goal.

**Emily Valdivia, ESL 799, online student**



## Student Highlight: Yanira Guerrero

I think English class has been a great help to me. When I read the articles about how immigrants, like me, were successful and how they changed their lives, I thought if they could, I too could do it. Since moving to the USA, my goal has been to work in my profession as a psychologist and empower women because I think we have a pain that has broken our emotions and makes us feel quiet and silent. So, I began to search for foundation courses about how to be an entrepreneur because I needed to know how to do it. I found two organizations that helped me with that: Immigrants Rising and Women's Business Center. In those courses I learned that I can be an entrepreneur, what my passions are, and what I can do well.



My business, Heroes Art, is still in development because I need to set up my company with the required documents. However, I have already taken the first step and participated in a craft fair in Paso Robles. Now, I am working on my webpage, [www.heroesart.org](http://www.heroesart.org), and other platforms where people can find my products.

The challenge is to be a woman artisan who empowers other women through art and helps them to heal, and to be an economically independent woman. The vision is that more and more women feel important and beautiful for themselves, and through that amulet or that piece of art that I teach them to

make, they can see how they can transform their history. My challenge is to be successful and to be able to touch and heal the souls of women who are thirsty for courage and recognition.

So far, my achievements have been to keep up and excel in the courses I am taking to improve my English skills and to start a business. Thanks to this, I won a grant from Immigrant Rising because I submitted this business plan called "Hero's Art the Shop."

I must continue to work hard in my business but also I want other immigrants to see that we can be successful if we knock on doors and seek help to get the tools we need to be successful in this country.



# Staff Highlights

**Alicia Paniagua,  
Associate Director of  
Instruction for South County**



*Good luck in your new role, Alicia!*

Alicia U. Paniagua is a first-generation Mexican-American college graduate who was born and raised on the Central Coast. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Azusa Pacific University (APU) and a Masters of Secondary Education from Loyola Marymount University (LMU). Alicia recently accepted a new position at Cuesta as the Associate Director of Instruction for South County. She is now providing leadership in educational programming in the South County. In this role, she helps make connections between Cuesta and community organizations. Alicia is committed to work that celebrates diversity and creates a safe and effective learning and working environment.

Let's welcome Gladis Villalpando! She is our new Bilingual Academic Success Coach, taking over for Alicia.

## **What services does Gladis offer in this role?**

She is here to help answer any questions for current or future ESL and GED students, provide one-on-one coaching to help develop study strategies, connect students to resources, and help eliminate any barriers to the learning process.

**Background:** Gladis was born and raised in Santa Maria and moved to Fresno for school. She became a two-time graduate from Fresno State with a B.S. in Recreation Administration and M.S. in Counseling. Gladis was a Student Success Advisor at Fresno State for two years and decided to move back to the Central Valley to help her community and be closer to family. She is also the daughter of farm working immigrants who worked over 30 years in agriculture. Gladis watched her mom attend ESL classes, so she knows the value of education as an adult. This is why she is very excited to be able to provide support to all the ESL and GED students at Cuesta College.

**Fun Fact:** Gladis enjoys traveling and hopes to do it more often. Her favorite trip so far has been to Spain.

*Welcome, Gladis!*

**Gladis Villalpando,  
Bilingual Academic Success Coach**



**How to contact Gladis:**  
Students can call her office at  
805.546.3941 or text at  
559.549.3870.

# Cuesta Families

The ESL Program at Cuesta is for students of all language proficiency levels. Students improve their ability to communicate, read, and write in English. Family members at the same and different English levels sometimes take classes together in Cuesta's ESL program. They can support each other, practice what they are learning together, and help motivate each other. Here are profiles of three of our current student families.

## Juana Carrillo and her daughters Erika & Beatriz Bocardo



*Beatriz, Juana & Erika*

### What ESL classes are you taking or did you take?

**Erika:** I completed the ESL program at Cuesta. I tried to learn English in different places, but I felt that I wasn't learning. I memorized a few things for a short period of time and then I forgot everything. When I started classes at Cuesta my first teacher, Lucy, was my miracle. She helped me understand English and I started to enjoy the classes. Since then, English became clearer in my head and I decided to keep learning more. I took other classes and now I am in the teaching program path.

**Juana:** I am in ESL 714 and ESL 725 on the SLO campus. I started studying in 2017 with ESL 701.

**Beatriz:** Right now I am taking ESL 799. I have taken 14 classes at Cuesta. My first class was ESL 705 and I am very proud of that class because it started my learning at Cuesta. I also took a technology class.

### How have ESL classes helped you?

**Erika:** Having fluent English helped me to communicate with the community, make new friends & develop my business as a Zumba instructor. When I started my cleaning business it helped me to communicate with my clients with professionalism and proper grammar and vocabulary.

**Juana:** They have helped me a lot because now I understand a little bit of English and I can write some words. I can ask for things when I am in the supermarket and I can read information about food and other important things.

**Beatriz:** Now I can communicate more fluently with many people. It has also helped to talk with clients at work and I have been able to make new friendships.

**How do you support each other with your English learning?**

**Erika:** I try to help my mom and my sister with their homework or questions they have.

**Juana:** My daughters help me a lot with my classes and we help each other by practicing at home. When we had classes on Zoom my whole family and friends helped me with my classes. My grandson helps by taking me to Cuesta for my classes because I don't drive.

**Beatriz:** We enjoy learning together. Since we are all taking classes we can share our experiences and talk together about everything that we have learned. I also get a chance to review the information that I have learned before when I help my mom with her classes.



*Erika, Juana & Beatriz*

**Erika:** To conclude, I want to say how thankful we are for the ESL program at Cuesta College. We would not have the success, happiness, and friendships that we do in the US without Cuesta.



*Yadira, Angela & Luis Alejandro*

**Siblings Yadira, Angela & Luis Alejandro Valiente**

**The Valiente family** is studying at the Arroyo Grande South County Campus and online. Yadira is in ESL 715, Angela is in 713, and Luis Alejandro is in 702.

**How have ESL classes helped you?**

**Yadira:** My English classes help me in my daily life to communicate with other people. For example, when I go to the park with my dog, sometimes someone asks me what my dog's name is or how old she is.

**Angela:** ESL classes helped me find a new job. Also English helps me in daily life to buy things.

**Luis:** English helps me to be able to communicate.

**How do you support each other with your English learning?**

**Yadira:** When we go to the supermarket or a restaurant where they only speak English, we help each other communicate with other people.

**Angela & Luis:** They correct me with a word's pronunciation. They teach me new words and phrases that I can use every day.

## Ruben Pita and his daughters Rubi & Evelyn Pita

Ruben, Rubi, & Evelyn are taking ESL 714 and 725 on the SLO campus together.

### How have ESL classes helped you?

**Rubi:** English classes have helped me understand more words and more people. I feel more comfortable when people are talking to me now.

**Evelyn:** English classes have helped me a lot. I understand people a little more, but I still need to talk more because I'm nervous! I think that English classes will help me more with that.

**Ruben:** Classes helped me at work to talk with more people and earn more money at work because I can speak with customers.



Rubi, Ruben & Evelyn

### How do you support each other with your English learning?

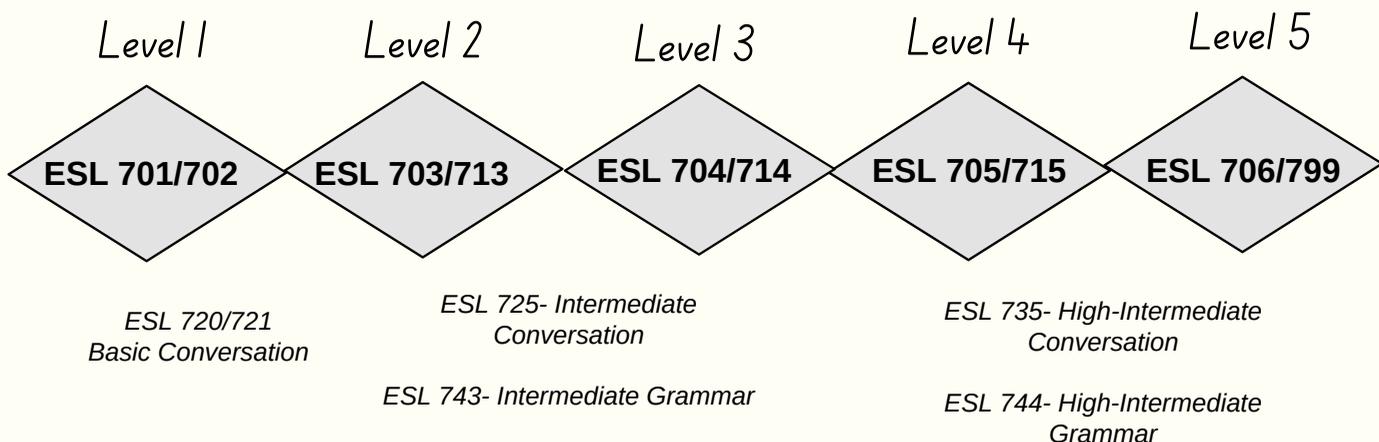
**Rubi:** My dad and sister motivate me to go to school and do my homework. I try to help my sister set goals for the future. I want to be an example to her and show her that if I can do it, she can do it, too.

**Evelyn:** My support is my sister because my sister helps me a lot. She has always been there for me for what I need and she is proud of me.

**Ruben:** We all try to speak English at home sometimes because we need to practice. I like to practice English with my daughters because I feel comfortable with them.

## ESL Program Levels

There are five main levels in the ESL program. Each level consists of two core level classes, one to take in fall semester and the other to take in spring semester. These core classes focus on integrated skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. When you successfully complete two classes, you earn a certificate. For each level, you can also take a conversation class. In the summer session, we offer basic conversation and grammar classes.



# Summer Classes

Classes are 6 weeks from June 14 - July 21, meeting Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 6-8:50pm.

**ESL 720 – Low-beginning Conversation:** learn pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar in basic conversations. This is for ESL 701/702 and 703 level students and is offered face to face only on the San Luis Obispo and North County Campuses.

**ESL 743 – Intermediate Grammar:** learn present, past, and future forms in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This is for ESL 703/713 and 704/714 level students and is offered face to face on the San Luis Obispo and North County Campuses and online.

**ESL 744 – High-Intermediate Grammar:** learn present perfect, gerunds and infinitives, adjective clauses, active vs. passive voice in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. This is for ESL 705/715 and 706/799 level students and is offered face to face on the San Luis Obispo campus and online.

## Registration Help Contacts

San Luis Obispo & Online - Gladis Villalpando (805)-546-3941 [gladis\\_villalpando@cuesta.edu](mailto:gladis_villalpando@cuesta.edu)

North County Campus - Maria Ramirez (805) 592-9627 [maelena\\_ramirez@cuesta.edu](mailto:maelena_ramirez@cuesta.edu)

As we are transitioning from the Pandemic, **ESL students will need to buy their own textbooks for classes starting summer '22.** It's a good idea to buy your book before classes start so you can be prepared. Buy them at the [Cuesta College Bookstore](#) or online through Amazon. Find the books below.



**ESL 720**



**ESL 743**



**ESL 744**

## Fall 2022

There will be many more options for in person classes in fall. Classes will be at all three of Cuesta's main sites: SCC, NCC, and SLO. In addition, there will be community classes in Oceano, Nipomo, Oak Park in Paso Robles, Pacheco, and Los Osos. The highest levels, ESL 706 and 735, will be online.