

Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Proposal

Curriculum Development and Enhancement Project for Fall 2017-Spring 2018

Submitted by Tania DeClerck

Department of Modern Languages

October 2016

Instructor's Sabbatical Leave Status

Full-time Hire Date: August 2008

Part-time District Hire Date: January 2006

Previous Sabbaticals: 0

Background of Sabbatical Project

As an identified HSI, Ventura College and its Department of Modern Languages insufficiently serves the linguistic needs of its heritage Spanish students. Acquiring a second language is a far different process than developing existing language abilities, and yet VC's current Spanish program exclusively serves the needs of students learning Spanish as a second language while ignoring the unique needs of the numerous heritage speakers in our student population who would greatly benefit - academically, linguistically, and socially- from continued development of their existing Spanish proficiency.

The VC Department of Modern Languages currently offers 4 levels of Spanish language instruction:

- Introductory Spanish 1 and Introductory Spanish 2, designed for English Only students who have little or no prior exposure to Spanish language instruction.
- Intermediate Spanish 3 and 4, designed to meet the needs of those students who wish to continue to develop their Spanish as a second language skills.

Though Spanish 3S and Spanish 4S, designed to meet the unique needs of heritage speakers, are on the books, enrollment has been insufficient to justify running the courses independently in over 10 years. Low enrollment has been caused by 1) scheduling conflicts and 2) the absence of an engaging and relevant curriculum specifically targeted at meeting the needs and interests of heritage speakers.

There is a demonstrable need for heritage speakers' instruction. Of the **1509** students who have taken the Spanish assessment exam since February 2013, **676** have placed at or above Spanish V04. Despite these high assessment results, the program has struggled to fill the few sections of advanced Spanish courses. The total number of students who have enrolled in Spanish 04 since 2011 is 93 (14% of the 676 who could have taken an advanced Spanish course).

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Heritage Speakers in Spanish V01 2011-2016 | 3195 |
| Total Students in Spanish V01 2011-2016 | 5249 |

61% of students enrolled in Spanish 1 are heritage speakers. In addition to failing to meet the needs of heritage speakers, this overrepresentation of heritage speakers in a beginner language learner course creates an imbalance of skills and compromises the course curriculum and learning opportunities for second language learners.

| | | |
|---|-----------------|------------|
| Heritage Speakers who earned a D or lower in Spanish V01 2011-2016 | 766/3195 | 24% |
|---|-----------------|------------|

Nearly 1 in 4 heritage speakers earn a grade of D or lower in Spanish V01, a strong indication that the course curriculum and expectations are not suited to meet their needs.

| | | |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Heritage Speakers who earned a D or lower in Spanish V04 2011-2016 | 11/75 | 15% |
|---|--------------|------------|

The heritage speaker success rate jumps 9% from the introductory to the advanced course, indicating that a differentiated, heritage-speaker curriculum designed to serve their level of language would increase their level of success as well as better serve their level of Spanish proficiency.

Furthermore, no current instructor at VC is sufficiently trained and prepared to meet the unique needs of VC's heritage speaker population. Targeted training in heritage speaker instruction- including differentiation, sequencing, curriculum development, language foci, heritage speaker motivation and language use, and assessment- is required to effectively build a meaningful, sustainable and relevant heritage speaker program.

The purposes of this sabbatical (outlined below) would directly address the challenges of 1) low enrollment and 2) untrained faculty in meeting the needs of heritage speakers.

Purpose of Sabbatical Project

The purpose of this sabbatical project is two-fold. If granted this sabbatical, I will:

- 1) Create a fully-online Canvas Heritage Speaker Spanish Course Curriculum Sequence (SPAN 3S and SPAN 4S) designed to meet the intellectual and linguistic needs of VC's Hispanic population. This first purpose is intended to address the challenges of low enrollment mentioned above (schedule conflicts and lack of an engaging, relevant curriculum).
- 2) Train on heritage speaker pedagogy and teaching methodologies. This second purpose addresses the absence of a trained faculty member in meeting the unique language development needs of heritage speakers.

The purposes of the sabbatical will serve the following goals:

- 1) Increase enrollment in Heritage Speaker classes to more accurately represent the linguistic make-up of the VC student population
- 2) Better serve the linguistic needs and academic potential of VC's Hispanic population
- 3) Align Heritage Speaking course sequence with a transfer degree

Components of Sabbatical Project

- Pedagogy and Methods Training

The first phase of my sabbatical leave project includes research and academic study of the linguistic needs of heritage speakers. To engage and develop relevant curriculum specifically targeted to meet the unique needs of heritage speakers, I will need to gain a deeper understanding of the differences between heritage language learners and second language learners. I will also need training on the teaching strategies that are most effective for differentiated instruction for heritage language learners.

In order to fulfill the first phase of the project, I will enroll and complete the “Teaching Heritage Languages” three-module online workshop offered by the National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC). The NHLRC is a joint project of the UCLA Center for World Languages and the University of California Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching. Those workshops can be previewed at: http://startalk.nhlrc.ucla.edu/default_startalk.aspx

- Curriculum Development and Preparation

The second phase of my sabbatical leave project includes the development of classroom materials to be used in a Spanish Heritage Speakers course. The course outline for a Heritage Speakers course already exists and was updated Fall 2016. However, since I have not taught this course before, I will do extensive preparation and study to formulate online lessons, assignments, PowerPoint presentations, and select readings. I will focus in creating curriculum that is pedagogically sound, engaging, and relevant to the specific needs of heritage speakers. An engaging and relevant curriculum will be key to increased and sustained enrollment numbers.

Value of Sabbatical Project to VCCCD and Ventura College

Ventura County Community College District and Ventura College will benefit greatly from the objectives of my sabbatical project. Creating a sustainable Heritage Speakers’ program in order to better serve the linguistic and academic potential of our Spanish heritage speakers will increase the success of VC’s Hispanic population. The data presented above clearly demonstrates an increase success rate for heritage speakers enrolling in higher level Spanish courses. The college and the district could expect a significant drop in the rate of heritage speakers who earn a D or lower in Spanish 1 (currently 24%).

The project will help the district meet the board’s first Strategic Goal: “Increase Access and Student Success” and the college’s Educational Master Plan Goal #2: “Increase the Success of our Students while Closing Equity Gaps.” The equity gap presented by our current Spanish course offerings is distressing and unpardonable.

Furthermore, this sabbatical project addresses one of the Department of Modern Languages’ program review initiatives: Increase the number of students who enroll in intermediate and advanced-level Spanish courses.

Value of Sabbatical Project to Ventura College Students

This project will serve all 1000+ students that enroll in Spanish each year, whether heritage speakers or second language learners. A uniquely designed curriculum that draws heritage speakers out of beginner Spanish learner courses serves their specific needs while restoring curricular and pedagogical integrity to the first four levels of Spanish learning courses. Spanish language learners will no longer find themselves enrolled in a course in which they must “compete” with heritage speakers. Beginning level instruction will return to a full focus on early language learning without having to concern itself with meeting the needs of heritage speakers.

Value of Sabbatical Project to the Instructor

Completion of this project during my sabbatical leave will contribute to my teaching and be a benefit to my students. The opportunity to train on heritage speaker pedagogy and teaching methodologies and to create a fully-online Spanish Heritage Speaker's courses (SPAN 3S and SPAN 4S) will not only be an opportunity to refresh and enhance my teaching and service to students, but will also contribute to the college's responsibility as a Hispanic Serving Institution.

Thank you to the committee for their time and consideration.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tania", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tania DeClerck
Professor of Spanish and
Modern Languages Department Chair

Spanish Enrollment and Course Success Rates by Ethnicity

| Course | Ethnicity | 2011-2012 | | 2012-2013 | | 2013-2014 | | 2014-2015 | | 2015-2016 | |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| | | Enroll | Success | Enroll | Success | Enroll | Success | Enroll | Success | Enroll | Success |
| Span V01 | Asian | 48 | 83.3% | 48 | 79.2% | 51 | 74.5% | 46 | 71.7% | 35 | 74.3% |
| | Black | 26 | 46.2% | 23 | 56.5% | 24 | 62.5% | 16 | 50.0% | 17 | 76.5% |
| | Hispanic | 663 | 73.2% | 685 | 75.2% | 653 | 79.3% | 662 | 75.5% | 532 | 77.3% |
| | Native Amer | 9 | 66.7% | 6 | 50.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 6 | 33.3% | 2 | 50.0% |
| | Pacific Islander | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 4 | 75.0% | 1 | 0.0% |
| | Two or More | 48 | 68.8% | 33 | 63.6% | 46 | 63.0% | 38 | 63.2% | 47 | 63.8% |
| | Unreported | 10 | 50.0% | 6 | 66.7% | 6 | 83.3% | 8 | 87.5% | 8 | 100.0% |
| | White | 362 | 71.3% | 329 | 67.8% | 296 | 73.0% | 240 | 67.5% | 211 | 71.1% |
| Total | 1,167 | 72.0% | 1,131 | 72.3% | 1,078 | 76.3% | 1,020 | 72.5% | 853 | 74.9% | |
| Span V02 | Asian | 8 | 50.0% | 13 | 76.9% | 13 | 84.6% | 8 | 87.5% | 6 | 83.3% |
| | Black | 9 | 55.6% | 6 | 50.0% | 4 | 100.0% | 2 | 50.0% | 4 | 75.0% |
| | Hispanic | 240 | 82.5% | 215 | 83.7% | 187 | 82.9% | 179 | 79.3% | 143 | 82.5% |
| | Native Amer | 2 | 50.0% | 3 | 66.7% | 2 | 100.0% | | | 1 | 100.0% |
| | Pacific Islander | 2 | 50.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | | | | |
| | Two or More | 12 | 83.3% | 13 | 84.6% | 8 | 75.0% | 7 | 85.7% | 7 | 71.4% |
| | Unreported | 2 | 100.0% | 5 | 80.0% | 2 | 100.0% | 2 | 50.0% | | |
| | White | 100 | 73.0% | 107 | 68.2% | 98 | 72.4% | 66 | 80.3% | 70 | 82.9% |
| Total | 375 | 78.4% | 363 | 78.2% | 315 | 80.0% | 264 | 79.5% | 231 | 82.3% | |
| Span V03 | Asian | 2 | 100.0% | 6 | 66.7% | 9 | 100.0% | | | 1 | 100.0% |
| | Black | 3 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | | | | | 1 | 100.0% |
| | Hispanic | 74 | 91.9% | 82 | 80.5% | 51 | 80.4% | 35 | 88.6% | 32 | 87.5% |
| | Native Amer | | | | | | | 1 | 100.0% | | |
| | Two or More | 3 | 66.7% | 1 | 100.0% | 2 | 100.0% | | | | |
| | Unreported | 1 | 100.0% | | | | | | | 1 | 100.0% |
| | White | 32 | 87.5% | 28 | 92.9% | 27 | 92.6% | 7 | 85.7% | 11 | 90.9% |
| | Total | 115 | 90.4% | 118 | 83.1% | 89 | 86.5% | 43 | 88.4% | 46 | 89.1% |
| Span V03S | Hispanic | | | | | | | | | 18 | 83.3% |
| | Total | | | | | | | | | 18 | 83.3% |
| Span V04 | Asian | 1 | 100.0% | | | 1 | 100.0% | | | | |
| | Black | | | 1 | 100.0% | | | | | | |
| | Hispanic | 20 | 75.0% | 13 | 76.9% | 12 | 83.3% | 14 | 92.9% | 16 | 100.0% |
| | Two or More | | | | | | | | | 1 | 100.0% |
| | Unreported | 1 | 100.0% | | | | | | | | |
| | White | 9 | 77.8% | 8 | 75.0% | 2 | 100.0% | 2 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% |
| Total | 31 | 77.4% | 22 | 77.3% | 15 | 86.7% | 16 | 93.8% | 18 | 100.0% | |
| All Span | Asian | 59 | 79.7% | 67 | 77.6% | 74 | 79.7% | 54 | 74.1% | 42 | 76.2% |
| | Black | 38 | 52.6% | 31 | 58.1% | 28 | 67.9% | 18 | 50.0% | 22 | 77.3% |
| | Hispanic | 997 | 76.8% | 995 | 77.5% | 903 | 80.2% | 890 | 77.1% | 741 | 79.4% |
| | Native Amer | 11 | 63.6% | 9 | 55.6% | 3 | 100.0% | 7 | 42.9% | 3 | 66.7% |
| | Pacific Islander | 3 | 66.7% | 2 | 100.0% | 2 | 100.0% | 4 | 75.0% | 1 | 0.0% |
| | Two or More | 63 | 71.4% | 47 | 70.2% | 56 | 66.1% | 45 | 66.7% | 55 | 65.5% |
| | Unreported | 14 | 64.3% | 11 | 72.7% | 8 | 87.5% | 10 | 80.0% | 9 | 100.0% |
| | White | 503 | 72.8% | 472 | 69.5% | 423 | 74.2% | 315 | 70.8% | 293 | 74.7% |
| Total | 1,688 | 74.8% | 1,634 | 74.5% | 1,497 | 77.8% | 1,343 | 74.6% | 1,166 | 77.4% | |