

Sabbatical Leave Report

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Fall 2017-Spring 2018 Sabbatical Leave

PROJECT: Spanish for Heritage Speakers Curriculum Development and Enhancement Project

This report summarizes the sabbatical project that I completed in Spring 2018. I am grateful for having been granted this sabbatical to train on heritage speaker pedagogy and teaching methodologies which, in turn, allowed me to create a partially online Spanish for Heritage Speakers course specifically designed to meet the intellectual and linguistic needs of VC's Hispanic population.

Completed Components of Sabbatical Project

Pedagogy and Methods Training

The first phase of my sabbatical leave project included 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 needed to gain a deeper understanding of the differences between heritage language learners and second language learners. I also needed training on the teaching strategies that are most effective for differentiated instruction for heritage language learners.

To fulfill the first phase of the project, I did the following:

- Completed the three-module online workshop entitled "Teaching Heritage Languages" 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
- Studied the following works:
 - Carreira, María and Beeman, Tom. *Voces: Latino Students on Life in the United States*. Praeger, 2014.
 - Chen, X., & Carroll, C. D. (2005). *First-generation students in post-secondary education: A look at their college transcripts*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
 - Stebleton, Michael (2011). *Understanding Immigrant College Students: Applying a Developmental Ecology Framework to the Practice of Academic Advising*. NACADA Journal: Spring, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 42-54.
 - McGurk, Julia (2013). *Will the Generation 1.5 Please Stand Up?* NPR Education Feb. 27, 2013: <https://ww2.kqed.org/education/2013/02/27/will-the-real-generation-1-5-please-stand-up/>
 - The PEW Research Center national survey on "Hispanics and Their Views of Identity" available at <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/04/04/when-labels-dont-fit-hispanics-and-their-views-of-identity/>
 - Rumbaut RG. *The Making of a People*. In: National Research Council (US) Panel on Hispanics in the United States; Tienda M, Mitchell F, editors. *Hispanics and the Future of America*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2006. 2. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK19896/>
 - Winn, Peter. *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*. University of California Press, 1992.
- Please see the PowerPoint presentation of a summary of what I learned from the completed

readings and research:

https://vccdventura-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/tdeclerck_vccd_edu/EWH1L4uW8xVOuvD9EUlekmwB9gMXBTvREAk0VivqTvzrw?e=ehTbnl

Curriculum Development and Preparation

The second phase of my sabbatical leave project included the development of classroom materials to be used in a Spanish Heritage Speakers course. I did extensive preparation and study to formulate online lessons, assignments, PowerPoint presentations, and select readings. I focused on creating curriculum that is pedagogically sound, engaging, and relevant to the specific needs of heritage speakers. I reviewed many open source Spanish textbooks to create a personalized curriculum that does not require students to purchase any expensive, making this course part of the zero textbook cost program.

Purpose of Sabbatical Project

The purpose of this sabbatical project is two-fold. As of the writing of this report (March 2019) this sabbatical has led to the following accomplishments:

1. The creation of a partially-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. The original proposal stated that the course would be fully online, but during the research of the project I learned that it would be more pedagogically sound to offer this course as partially online in order to "test" the curriculum by teaching it in a face-to-face setting first. To effectively build a meaningful, sustainable, and relevant heritage-speakers curriculum, the students need to have ample face-to-face interactions with the instructor and engage with fellow classmates, so that the curriculum can be modified to target the students' linguistic needs. Before teaching this course as fully online it is necessary for the instructor to witness and assess the students' reactions, engagement, and interest in the established curriculum. The first course offering of Spanish V03S was offered upon my return from sabbatical during the fall 2018 semester with 19 students enrolled. Since then, the enrollment has grown to 27 students as can be seen from the current course offering (Spring 2019). The goal is to continue growing this program by offering Spanish V03S for one semester during Fall 2019 to accumulate enough enrollment before offering Spanish V04S during the Spring 2020 semester.
2. The second purpose has addressed the absence of a trained faculty member to meet the unique language development needs of heritage speakers. The Ventura College Department of Modern Languages now has a trained instructor on heritage speaker pedagogy and teaching methodologies.
3. The implementation of this project has increased enrollment in Heritage Speaker classes to more accurately represent the linguistic make-up of the VC student population.
4. Better service for the linguistic needs and academic potential of VC's Hispanic population
5. Alignment of Heritage Speaking course sequence with a transfer degree

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 that better serves the linguistic and academic potential of our Spanish heritage speakers will increase the success of VC's Hispanic population. As presented in my original proposal, the data demonstrate an increased success

rate for heritage speakers who enroll in higher level Spanish courses meet the students at their current language skill level. 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 has addressed 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

The completion of this sabbatical project has contributed to my teaching and benefitted my students. The opportunity to train on heritage speaker pedagogy and teaching methodologies and to create a Spanish Heritage Speaker's course have refreshed and enhanced my teaching and service to students, and have contributed to the college's responsibility as a Hispanic Serving Institution. As an identified HSI, Ventura College and its Department of Modern Languages now sufficiently serves the linguistic needs of its heritage Spanish students. As an additional benefit, which was not part of the original proposal, I was able to complete this sabbatical project while living in Spain for 11 months. The further enforcement and development of my Spanish language skills and the cultural perspectives that I acquired while being immersed in a Spanish-speaking country is not something that I could have acquired without the lived experience. My time in Spain has widened my cultural perspective which, before the completion of this sabbatical, was primarily a Latin American point of view. Now I can make cultural and historical references to the origin of the Spanish language that I could not previously do.

Thank you for this opportunity to learn from this professionally beneficial sabbatical.

Respectfully yours,



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