Columbia LRC Distance Language Pedagogy Seminar

The Columbia LRC offers an asynchronous, self-directed four-session sequence of trainings for Columbia language teachers who wish to gain an in-depth introduction to the theory and practice of distance learning. These workshops will address issues in second-language pedagogy in the distance format in a systematic way, and are meant to provide a solid basis for language instructors who will teach in any distance modality.

Goal:

        After completing this seminar, Columbia language instructors will be equipped with a grounding in the theory and practice of distance language teaching, which will strengthen their pedagogy in their distance classes, or classes that have a distance component.

Objectives:

- Instructors will examine the differences between face-to-face language teaching and distance language teaching.

- Instructors will gain an awareness of the affordances and constraints of the distance environment, and how these impact course design, in-class activities, out-of-class activities, and assessment.

- Instructors will participate in small group discussions and hands-on activities to reinforce their understanding of the concepts discussed in the presentations.

- Instructors will consider how preparing for teaching in this format can allow them to engage with and incorporate ideas from the latest SLA scholarship, which can endure even after Columbia returns to face-to-face instruction.

Who can participate:

        Any Columbia language instructor.

When:

        This course can be completed in Canvas at the instructor's own pace.

How can I access the course?

        Please write to lrc@columbia.edu to be added to the Canvas page.

Structure:

Session I Differences between face-to-face language teaching and language teaching in the distance format.

There are many differences between face-to-face (f2f) and remote language instruction. Some are obvious, while others only emerge over time. In this session, we will examine the particularities of the dis-

tance format by starting with the specialized vocabulary that has emerge to describe it. We will look at how teaching remotely requires a rethinking of assumptions about the language classroom, and how it requires both teachers and students to take on different roles. We will discuss the notion of "presence," and how students and teachers are "present" to one another in markedly different ways, and how reviewing these notions before teaching a distance class is essential for having a successful language-learning experience.

<u>Suggested Reading</u> (all readings available on Canvas page):

Garrison, D. R. (2007). Online community of inquiry review: Social, cognitive, and teaching presence issues. Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 11(1), 61-72.

Kern, R. (2014). Technology as pharmakon: The promise and perils of the internet for foreign language education. *Modern Language Journal*, 98, 340– 357.

Session II: Course and Syllabus Design for a Distributed Learning Environment

In this session, we will consider how the distance format requires a rethinking of some of the assumptions of course and syllabus design. Instructors need to be aware that this format is new to most students, and therefore it is essential to make expectations of their role clear from the outset of course meetings. Syllabi for distance courses need to be detailed, and need to specify how and when interactions will occur. They should take into account that students will not be able to meet instructors or fellow students face to face, and so they should incorporate a variety of modes of interaction. Because the interpersonal mode is all the more difficult to achieve in the distance format, explicit or overt instruction should be occur asynchronously when possible.

<u>Suggested Reading</u>:

Rubio, F., Thomas, J. & Li, Q. (2017). The role of teaching presence and student participation in Spanish blended courses. In Thomas, M. & Gelan, A. (eds.), Analytics in Online Language Learning and Teaching. Journal of Computer Assisted Language Learning

Session III: Classroom Management and In-class Activities

In the distributed distance format, communication is multi-channel and multi-modal. This session will consider the implications of this importance difference between face-to-face and remote instruction. On the one hand, it can make traditional forms of language pedagogy frustrating and tiring, and can lead to distraction and "tuning out". At the same time, designing activities and managing students' attention in a way that capitalizes on the format's inherent strengths allows for greater participation and learning. We will discuss how the Multiliteracies Framework can serve as a useful point of reference in redesigning pre-existing in-class activities, and creating new ones as well.

<u>Hands-on activity</u>: conceive of an in-class task or activity from scratch, setting aside how you may have done it in the face-to-face format. Share this with your fellow instructors and get their feedback.

Suggested Readings:

Blyth, Carl. (2018) "Designing meaning and identity in multiliteracies pedagogy: From multilingual subjects to authentic speakers." *L2 Journal* 10.2.

Meskill, Carla and Natasha Anthony (2010). Language Learning and Teaching in Oral Synchronous Online Environments. In *Teaching Languages Online* (pp. 27-62) Multilingual Matters (2010).

Session IV: Assessment in the Distributed Format

This session will address one of the most significant challenges in distance teaching: how can instructors assess their students fairly and in a way that is logistically feasible? We will discuss how moving from fewer high-stakes, summative assessments and towards more frequent, lower-stakes, formative assessments in varying formats can allow for a clearer picture of students' language learning to emerge, and can more productively utilize students' time. This type of transformation requires a reconfiguration of the syllabus, as well as a familiarity with a variety of online tools. This session concludes the sequence of trainings.

Suggested Readings:
Goertler, S., & Gacs, A. (2018). Assessment in Online German: Assessment Methods and Results. Die Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German, 51(2), 156-174.

Rubio, F. (2015), Assessment of Oral Proficiency in Online Language Courses: Beyond Reinventing the Wheel, The Modern Language Journal 99, pp. 405-408.