

MODERN LANGUAGES PROGRAM REVIEW
Spring 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Modern Languages offers instruction in the following in five language disciplines: American Sign Language, French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. The study of languages expands understanding of the other countries and their cultures and the diverse cultures within our own society. In order to enhance the study of a language the Department Modern Languages also offers courses in linguistics, culture and civilization, literature and history.

The department faculty currently consists of the following:

<u>Disciplines:</u>	<u>Full-time:</u>	<u>Hourly:</u>
ASL Interpreter Education	2	8*
French	0	6
Italian	1	4
Japanese	0	2
Spanish	0	10
	1 LTS	

*Outreach classes

The majority of courses offered through the Department of Modern Languages meet both graduation and transfer requirements for both the CSU and UC systems. Certain courses and programs, such as French 81 (Practical French for Business) and the Interpreter Education Program (ASL-English), also provides specific career-related courses of study.

Additional or alternative services, such as the Pierce College Extension Program or Contract Education, offer a unique and creative avenue for the Department of Modern Languages to present non-traditional courses to special populations, such as business or service personnel and non-traditional languages such as Farsi, Armenian or Arabic.

The most serious problem facing the Modern Languages Department is lack of classrooms and full-time faculty. The Modern Languages building was torn down and has not been replaced. The department went from six rooms to three rooms dedicated to the Modern Language Department. In the summer of 2006, the department will be moved to the "Village" which will be a temporary facility to be used while new buildings are constructed. The fear is that the department will have even fewer rooms in which to conduct classes. If this occurs, it will have a direct effect on the offering of courses which allow students to effectively matriculate from one level of a language class to another, or to complete degree programs in a timely manner. For programmatic

growth, course offerings must be expanded, which require the hiring of additional faculty.

A second serious problem for the Modern Languages Department is the lack of innovative media support by way of a multi-media language lab.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The department is currently working with the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Team in identifying and developing learning outcomes and their measurement for several of the classes.

The major goal of the department is to:

- Teach students to be functional in the language they have chosen to study.
- Underscore ethnic and cultural diversity for students who seek a broad liberal arts education in preparation for a variety of professions.
- Prepare students whose careers will be furthered by the knowledge of a foreign language and culture.

To accomplish these goals, students will be able to

- Demonstrate fluency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in the target language.
- Demonstrate ability to reason and present sound arguments in both oral and written discourses.
- Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis of traditional culture and civilization.
- Analyze and clearly articulate the interpretation of literary texts.

For *American Sign Language*

The major goal of the discipline is to:

- Demonstrate competency in comprehending signed text (visual) and in signing.
- Demonstrate ability to reason and present sound arguments in signed discourses.
- Demonstrate critical thinking in the analysis of Deaf culture and the Deaf community.
- Analyze and clearly articulate the comprehension of literary texts in ASL (video/CD/DVD).
- Demonstrate the ability to use, read and write a transcription system for ASL (ASL 3 and higher levels).

For the *ASL-English Interpreter Education Program*

- Prepare students for a career in interpreting for Deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing people.

- Prepare students for related careers that involve the need for competent communication with Deaf and hard-of-hearing people who use ASL or some other type of signed communication.

ACTION PLANS – CURRICULUM

The study of language starts with beginning language courses and progresses to advanced study. The following sequences suggest how students might move through the course offerings in the various languages:

French

Course Number	Course name
1	Elementary French 1
2	Elementary French II
3	Intermediate French 1
4	Intermediate French II
5	Advanced French 1
6	Advanced French II
8	Conversational French
10	French Civilization
81	Practical French for Business
101	French Language Laboratory

Italian

Course Number	Course Name
1	Elementary Italian 1
2	Elementary Italian II
3	Intermediate Italian 1
4	Intermediate Italian II
5	Advanced Italian 1
6	Advanced Italian II
8	Conversational Italian
10	Italian Civilization and Culture

Japanese

Course Number	Course Name
1	Elementary Japanese 1
2	Elementary Japanese II
3	Intermediate Japanese 1
4	Intermediate Japanese II
8	Elementary Conversational Japanese
27	Cultural Awareness Through Advanced Conversation

Spanish

Course Number	Course Name
1	Elementary Spanish 1
2	Elementary Spanish II
3	Intermediate Spanish 1
4	Intermediate Spanish II
5	Advanced Spanish 1
6	Advanced Spanish II
8	Conversational Spanish
9	Hispanic Civilization
10	Latin American Civilization
11	Great Books of Spanish Literature
12	Contemporary Mexican Literature
15	Great Books of Latin American Literature
16	Mexican Civilization
21	Fundamentals of Spanish 1
22	Fundamentals of Spanish II
24	Spanish for Medical Personnel
25	Spanish American Short Story in Translation
26	Understanding Latin America Through Film
27	Cultural Awareness Through Advanced Conversation
48	Introduction to Spanish Translation 1
49	Introduction to Spanish Translation II
65	Mexican Literature and Culture
101	Spanish Language Laboratory

Note: French, Italian, Japanese and Spanish offer courses in Directed Study 185, 285, and 385 (1,2,3 units respectively) every semester as per student needs.

- As of Fall 2005 the Department has been offering elementary courses 1 and 2 every semester in each language.
- The Department offers all language sequences 1 through 6 in Spanish every semester.

- The Department offers French 3 through 6 and Italian 3 through 6 every other semester.
- The Department offers Japanese 3 and 4 every semester.
- The Department has been offering the Conversation Courses (8) every other semester. We plan to offer this course every semester in the future. The Civilization, Culture and Literature courses will be offered every other semester on an alternative basis.

American Sign Language/Interpreter Education Program

Fall Semester 1:

ASL 3	American Sign Language III	4 Units
ASL 101-C	American Sign Language Lab	1 Unit
ASL 16	Creative Signing	2 Units
ASL 30	Fingerspelling I	1 Unit
ASL 40	Introduction to Deaf Culture	3 Units
*English 101	College Reading and Composition I	3 Units
*G.E.	Social and Behavioral Sciences	<u>3 Units</u>
		17

Spring Semester 1:

ASL 4	American Sign Language IV	4 Units
ASL 101-D	American Sign Language Lab	1 Unit
ASL 5	Introduction to Interpreting	3 Units
ASL 31	Fingerspelling II	1 Unit
*Anthro.104	Human Language and Communication	3 Units
*Speech Comm 121	The Process of Interpersonal Comm	3 Units
OR		OR
Speech Comm 101	Oral Communication I	<u>3 Units</u>
		15

Fall Semester 2:

ASL 6	English-to-Sign Interpreting/Transliterating	4 Units
ASL 101-E	American Sign Language Lab	1 Unit
ASL 10	Sign-to-English Interpreting/Transliterating	4 Units
ASL 22	Professional Issues and Practice I	2 Units
*G.E.	Math 115 (or equivalent)	<u>5 Units</u>
		16

Spring Semester 2:

ASL 55	Interpreting	4 Units
ASL 65	Transliterating	4 Units
ASL 23	Professional Issues and Practice II	2 Units
*Health 10	Health Education	2 Units
*Phys. Ed.	Physical Education Activity	1 Unit
*Gen. Ed.	Natural Sciences	<u>3 Units</u>
		16

Other Courses Offered in ASL/IEP:

- ASL 15 (ASL Linguistics)
- ASL 25 (Conversational ASL)
- ASL 1-4, ASL 40, and Anthro. 104/Ling. 1 meet the Humanities requirement for graduation.

*UPDATING PROCESSES:*Course Outlines

The Course Outlines for all Spanish classes are being updated and they will serve as a model for the updating of Course Outlines for all of the other language classes. The updated Course Outlines will be completed by August 31, 2006.

Course Outlines for ASL 1-4 have been updated.

Syllabi

The adjunct faculty are given a sample syllabus but are given the flexibility to create their own versions.

Web Pages

It is recognized by the members of the faculty that making course information available via the Internet is important. It is the responsibility of each instructor to identify the desired contents for his/her web page and then to work with the on-campus support to create the web pages. Some faculty members have begun this process and others need to make this a priority.

*CHANGES IN LEARNING PATTERNS AND INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGIES
and OPPORTUNITIES TO BROADEN LEARNING:*

Instruction in languages is supplemented with a variety of information and activities to stimulate learning among students who respond more effectively to visual and participatory activities:

- Movies in the studied language
- Foreign newspapers are made available
- Notices about events at places such as the Italian Cultural Center
- Information about opportunities to experience the culture of the country, such as travel packages and special “days” at the college where the activities all focus on one of the languages taught at Pierce.
- Outings at restaurants specializing in food of the studied country.
- Classroom sessions where students share, in the language being studied, their interviews with someone fluent in the language. This exercise increases the ability for the student to think and speak extemporaneously.
- Language Clubs

American Sign Language

Many students come to this college without well-developed learning skills and study habits. In response to this, the ASL instructors provide, in many classes, specific activities, materials and programs to help student develop these skills/habits:

- Recognizing that students may be more easily reached with visual supplemental learning aids, the students, in many classes, are provided with guided learning packets/graphic organizers that, among other things, provide extra work with essential content units. These function either as homework packets or lab worksheet packets.
- Tutors are provided and optional one-unit labs are available for each class.
- “Study Buddy” lists are created and circulated so that the students can form study groups, crucial to the study of any language.
- Vast amounts of extra-curricular activities are posted for the students.
- The college library contains videos/DVS, books and magazines in all languages.

ACTION PLANS – FUTURE DIRECTIONS

I. Long-Term Vision (5-10 years)

Language Lab

Pierce College offers the greatest variety of language courses, and yet, Pierce College is the only large college within the Los Angeles Community College District that does NOT have a language lab. Our language lab was eliminated from the curriculum when a state audit determined that the lab was not properly supervised and because there were not sufficient funds in the college budget to provide that supervision the lab was dropped from the language curriculum/facilities. Part of the language-learning process also includes the requirement that students be able to do “hands-on work with language stimulus materials (audio, video, interactive multimedia, etc.) A state-of-the-art language laboratory is an essential to an institution that teaches languages and the building and staffing of such a lab is imperative in order for the Modern Language program at Pierce to remain competitive.

Additional Full-Time Positions

The key to a successful Modern Languages program is a sufficient number of full-time faculty. As seen in the Introduction to this document, the ratio of full-time faculty to adjunct faculty is unacceptably low. If the languages taught were to remain the same, the number of full-time faculty should be increased as follows:

ASL	1
French	2
Italian	1
Japanese	1
Spanish	3

Additional Languages

The current international focus, economically and politically, is on Asia and the Middle East. There is a growing need for people who speak Chinese, Vietnamese, Farsi and Arabic. The Modern Languages Department should offer courses in one or more of these languages in order to be relevant in the decades to come. A shortage of classrooms and a limited budget make the realization of this difficult. Research to assess the demand for such classes would need to be done prior to beginning the lengthy process of introducing these new classes into the curriculum, nonetheless, it is essential that the process begins.

Short-Term Vision (2-4 years):

Student Outcomes Assessment

The Modern Languages Department recognizes the need for concrete measures to assess student progress through the sequence of beginning, intermediate and advanced courses we offer our students. In the four basic areas of linguistic competence, (listening comprehension, reading comprehension, written expression and oral communication) we are developing the specific tools necessary for capturing student achievement, and designing the minimum standards for acceptable student progress semester to semester.

To provide one example, in the area of oral communication we are working with the Oral Proficiency Interview standards for measuring students' skills. This standard scale for assessing oral proficiency was developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). During the 2006-2007 academic year we will need to train all instructors of Spanish, French and Italian in the OPI in order to meet our goal of moving students from one level to the next in consecutive semesters. The OPI is arranged in the following manner:

1. Novice: No functional ability; speech limited to memorized material.
2. Intermediate: Can ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics; is able to handle a simple situation or transaction.
3. Advanced: Is able to narrate and describe in the past, present and future time/aspect, and handle a complicated situation or transaction.
4. Superior: Is able to support opinion, hypothesize, discuss abstract topics, and handle a linguistically unfamiliar situation. (Adapted from The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview Tester Training Manual)

Goals for Student Achievement in Oral Proficiency

- To advance students from Novice to Intermediate by the end of the beginning sequence (e.g., Spanish 2);

- To advance students from Intermediate to Advanced by the end of the intermediate sequence (e.g., Spanish 4);
- To advance students from Advanced to Superior by the end of the advanced sequence (Spanish 6)

There are gradations within these four broad categories (e.g., Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid, and Intermediate High) that can further refine our goals with individual students.

Current and Desired Outcomes: Pedagogy

- Before implementation of OPI, discuss current strategies for enhancing student skills in oral communication; define and articulate effective strategies.
- After first semester results with student test group, meet to discuss results and determine effectiveness of current pedagogical strategies.
- Agree on basic instructional principles:
 1. All beginning language courses are taught primarily in target language;
 2. All intermediate and advanced courses are taught almost exclusively in target language;
 3. All courses use a multi-media approach to enhance student abilities in oral communication and comprehension, such as radio broadcasts, videos/DVDs in target language, interactive computer activities, Power Point presentations by students and recorded student interviews with native speakers.
 4. Courses should provide the opportunity for student led discussion and debate on current events through newspaper, magazine and Internet sources, the implementation of language tables and opportunities for community service working with target populations.
- Develop new strategies to promote student achievement in the area of oral communication based on the results of first student cohorts.

Departmental Goals for 2007-2008

- To have trained all instructors of Spanish, French and Italian in the Oral Proficiency Interview.
- To have rated a test group of students at the end of the first semester of Spanish/French/Italian 1, Spanish/French/Italian 2, Spanish/French/Italian 3 and Spanish/French/Italian 4.
- To rate progress in oral proficiency after one semester in all the above-mentioned language sequences.

Other Measures of Student Success

- Using the same basic rubric that ACTFL has established for assessing student proficiency (1-4, Novice to Superior, with gradations), we can measure student progress in written communication and reading/listening comprehension.

- Direct measures of the above would include: exams, papers, projects, reports, quizzes, presentations.
- Repeatable, sample assignments (such as the administering of the CAPE exam) can be designed to measure student improvement over one semester and one language sequence in much the same way as the OPI is used to measure improvement in oral communication.
- Indirect measures of student achievement, such as the impact of cultural and linguistic proficiency in the target language in the workplace, can be measured through pre- and post surveys, interviews with graduates and focus groups with selected groups of students.

Expansion of curriculum in Spanish

Course Proposals

After consulting the course catalogs for LACC, PCC, ELAC, LA Valley, Saddleback, Orange Coast College and other community colleges in the LACC and OCCC district, we have found the following commonalities in course offerings in Spanish:

Spanish for Native Speakers: Typically, courses that follow the beginning and intermediate track but are designed for students who speak Spanish conversationally but are deficient in grammar, writing, and reading skills. Many texts exist that focus on the needs of the native Spanish speaker; we should design a series of courses that meet the requests of our large, Spanish speaking population who are bored and unchallenged by conventional Elementary and Intermediate Spanish courses that assume no knowledge whatsoever of the Spanish language.

Medical Spanish/Spanish for Business/Law Enforcement: Most community colleges have several targeted courses for the professions. Pierce has “Spanish for Medical Personnel” on the books, but has not offered the course in the last several years. Other introductory Spanish courses targeting the professional community should be offered, but with a clear sense of purpose: Do we offer a certificate program? Should Spanish for the professions be taught at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced level?

Introductory Courses in Literature and Culture taught in Spanish: Several of the community colleges catalogs reviewed (such as LACC and Saddleback) offer “great book” courses and culture courses (both Spanish and Latin American) that are taught in Spanish. Currently, Spanish 5 and 6 introduce students to Hispanic literature and are taught in Spanish, and Spanish 11 (Great Books of Spanish Literature) is in the General Catalog but has not been taught in years; however, our Spanish 25 and Spanish 10 courses are taught in English, to the detriment of the student population the vast majority of whom are native Spanish speakers and expect to be able to take the class in Spanish.

Writing Skills Courses: Most community college catalogs fold in ‘writing skills’ to their introduction to Hispanic literature courses, but there exists a great need at Pierce to teach writing and research skills BEFORE students advance to upper level courses. Pierce has a large population of native Spanish speakers whose primary academic concern is the quality of their writing in Spanish. Introductory and Intermediate Spanish classes are simply not designed to meet this need in their current configuration.

Recommendations:

- Fall 2007: Offer “Academic Writing Skills in Spanish” immediately after a student completes Spanish 4 with a grade of “B” or better, or by permission of instructor for native Spanish speakers.
- Spring 2007: Offer Spanish 25 and Spanish 10 in Spanish, or offer equivalent courses in Spanish.
- Fall 2007: Offer a series of introductory and intermediate courses for native Spanish speakers who wish to focus on formal grammar, writing skills and the reading of a variety of literary and non-literary texts.
- Fall 2007: Offer more Spanish courses for the professions. Consider at which level these should be available to students.

Other Programmatic Considerations

- The Modern Language Department lacks instruction German, another major traditional language offered in four-year institutions. Currently no student wishing to begin the study of German at Pierce College is able to do so. The department would like to reintroduce German into the curriculum.
- The study of art, literature and culture make the study of a language more meaningful and interesting. To expand complete understanding and appreciation for a language, courses in these areas need to be developed and offered on a regular basis. The department will have discussions with complementary programs (Art, Architecture, Music) to explore possible coordination of course material.
- As stated above, there is a need for employees in the medical profession to learn Spanish that focuses on basic medical terminology. The department offers Spanish 24, Spanish for Medical Personnel, but this course needs to be marketed in medical arenas. A partnership with nearby medical institutions should be developed to insure the relevance of the curriculum and provide a steady supply of students taking the course.

- Never-before-offered classes need time to grow in popularity, therefore a necessary component of the success of new classes has to be the support of the administration to allow time for a new class to prove itself.
- Some of the best students in language classes are older. They take these courses for life enrichment. The department should develop language-related programs to present through the Encore program and encourage the attendees to enroll in the language courses.
- The department plans to work with the college library to expand its holdings of videos, DVDs, books and magazines in the languages taught at the college.

French, Italian, Japanese

The Modern Languages Department intends to implement the following improvements in the Italian program:

- Offer Italian I and Italian II every semester by Fall 2006
- Explore pedagogical practices that more effectively promote student learning, such as a reduction in class size
- Offer conversation classes every semester
- Offer culture and civilization courses
- Offer language courses on Saturdays
- Propose Italian cinema course by Fall 2007
- Propose Japanese/Italian lab 101

American Sign Language

- ASL is a program that is eligible for VTEA funds. The ASL instructor will prepare a VTEA Plan.
- The ASL program wants to implement the development and staffing of a multi-media language lab to the Learning Center as part of lab opportunities for all language students, but especially for ASL and Interpreting students. A large number of multi-media carrels are needed where students could view videos/DVDs or listen to audios/CDs. Most high tech language labs include a master board whereby an instructor has the ability to “listen in/peek in” on a student doing work at each carrel.
- Develop an internship class or lab where students would receive credit for doing supervised practicum work interpreting in a variety of settings, including classroom interpreting.
- Develop modules of online or hybrid classes whereby working interpreters, who are required to attain national certification as well as to accrue Continuing Education Units (CEUs), could receive specific instruction in selected topics of relevance in the field.

Communication and networking

The establishment of regular communication and networking between our department and other institutions is vital:

- High school counselors need to learn directly from our department the curriculum that is offered to encourage these students to enroll in a community college after graduation. The relationship between the two institutions will also ensure that the students are given the correct information about the courses required to meet their educational goals.
- Coordination with other colleges offering a similar curriculum, such as Valley College, will ensure that the course offered complement each other rather than compete. Valley College has remodeled and updated their Language building and the department is assigned specific rooms which allow visual materials (travel posters, news articles, etc.) specific to the language to adorn the rooms, creating a better learning environment. These superior facilities may provide serious competition between the two colleges for language students.
- Regular communication with four-year institutions will assist students with articulation and transfer.

American Sign Language

- Establish a dialogue with the nursing and other programs with accrediting bodies, with the goals of implementing changes in order to become accredited by the Conference of Interpreter Trainers.
- Establish an Advisory Committee, including members from other institutions, such as CSUN, and agencies, such as Accommodating Ideas, and organizations, such as Sorenson Communications, Inc.
- Meet with Linguistics/Anthropology 104 faculty to update World Sign Language components of their curriculum.

Communicating with Students

- Communicating with our students via the Internet is important and the department needs to improve this method of communication. While support on campus support is available for the developing of websites, it is the responsibility of each instructor to determine the contents of his/her website. Those instructors who do not yet have websites will identify the information they want students to be able to access on their websites.
- Those faculty members who have not mastered the use of email as a tool to communicate with their students will learn to send email messages, respond to them, and include attachments where appropriate.

Language Lab

There are two corporate donors interested in helping the college realize the language lab. Over the next few years the department will work with Dennis Washburn, director of the Pierce College Foundation, Tom Oliver, Pierce College Development Officer, and Mark Pracher, Pierce College Grant Writer to help coordinate this endeavor.

