MONTCLAIR
S T A T E   U N I V E R S I T Y

CHIN 101, FREN 101, GERM 101, ITAL 101

Updated: June 5, 2024
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Program

Teaching Innovations Program (TIP): a year-long program that supports faculty teams in developing or redesigning a course or academic program

Intervention

1. Questionnaires
   - Given twice in the semester, focusing on Global Communicative Competence, Global Engagement, and Intercultural Knowledge*
2. Syllabus additions
   - Land Acknowledgement Statement and its translation in the target language on syllabi
   - Anti-bias statement
3. 30-Minute Mini-Lesson
   - Languages Link to the Land

Participating faculty

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Implementation

In Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, many World Languages and Cultures faculty (those doing the interventions as well as those who were not) had students complete the survey on global communicative competence, global engagement, and intercultural knowledge at the beginning and end of the semester.

One section each of CHIN 101, FREN 101, GERM 101, and ITAL 101 adjusted their syllabus to include a land acknowledgement statement in English and the target language.

These sections also each included a 30-minute lesson entitled "Languages link to the land" in their courses. This included creating personal language maps and discussing linguistic diversity in class. This lesson directly addresses DEI and the cultivation of intercultural competency, a skill students and employers both understand as being crucial to tomorrow's workforce.

Course Redesign Goals and Analysis

Summary

Goal 1: Better understand students' perspectives on multicultural, multilingual, and global career readiness.
Status: MET

Discussion: Student surveys showed that students value international travel and careers. In response to the question "How important do you find taking on a career position with international and/or multilingual elements?," 73% of students ranked this at 4 or above, with 6 being the highest, same as the survey questions below. Also related to this, in response to the question "How likely are you to travel to a country where this language is spoken?" 89% of students described this as somewhat or very likely. It was heartening to see these strong majorities of students valuing international and multilingual elements of their education as important to their career planning.

Goal 2: Improve faculty understanding of student motivations, and improve student awareness of multilingual perspectives as a part of world language and culture learning
Status: MET

Discussion: Surveys helped us better learn how many beginning language students value multicultural and multi*lingual* perspectives. When asked how important they found approaching issues from multiple cultural perspectives, 86% gave this an importance level of at least 5 on a 6-point scale.

Related to this, student emphasis on the importance of **multi*lingual*** – and not just multicultural – perspectives was also interesting to us. When asked how important they found "initiating contact with people with other **linguistic** backgrounds, 87% of students ranked this as at least 4 out of 6.

This was a strong reminder of how essential multilingual communication is to today's student body in New Jersey, and to their professional advancement both to communicate with multilingual communities in New Jersey, and to connect with global industries.

These numbers reminded us of the ways in which Montclair stands out as a university with international ties and investments, and how one of the special things that the University offers students is exceptional access to additional valuable languages that they did not have access to during high school.

In-progress element: We look forward to inviting an expert to help build faculty tools for

working on this with the newest pedagogical techniques. (See "next steps" below).

Goal 3: Capitalize on beginning language classes' potential to build campus belonging and community
Status: MET

Discussion: In response to the question, "How likely are you to stay in touch with at least one classmate after the course ends?" in the pre-semester survey, 17% of students said this was "very likely." This increased to 25% by the end of the semester, representing a 47% increase. This points to the way in which the interaction, experimentation, playful exploration, and intercultural exchange that takes place in beginning world language and culture courses boosts student sense of belonging and networking.

Also, in response to the question, "Do you have contact with people from the culture(s) represented by your language class?", the number of students who responded that they do have contact to these global cultures "at school" increased from 23% to 43%, suggesting that students are perhaps becoming more aware of the cultural and linguistic diversity of campus life through their language course. The number of students who chose "no," meanwhile, decreased from 40% to 32%, indicating improved multicultural connectedness following the first world language and culture class than before.

Particularly in light of the world language and culture requirement in the new SEEDS curriculum, the increase in student connection that results from World Language courses suggests that world language and culture curriculum should continue to emphasize this fundamental cross-cultural community-building aspect of their curriculum and pedagogy.

Goal 4: Use student interest and experience to build awareness and commitment to world language minors and double majors.
Status: MET; IN PROGRESS
Discussion: In response to the question, "How likely are you to pursue a minor in this language?" at the beginning of the semester, 32% of students said they were "somewhat or very likely," and at the end of the semester, 36% of students were somewhat or very likely, reflecting a 12.5% increase.

This is a reminder of how important the world language and cultures requirements are, since this is the first opportunity many students have to pursue a language, and a significant portion of these students plan to reach a level of professional proficiency through a minor that can add to their global career readiness at graduation.

Student Perspectives

With reference to the language mapping activity, students said that this left a mark on them and that it was "a highlight." Faculty who used this for the first time noted the "positive feedback" they received from students.

Next Steps

In fall 2024, more World Language and Cultures courses will include a land acknowledgement statement and anti-bias statement in English and the target language on their syllabi.

We also did a faculty survey measuring what classroom decolonizing practices faculty are using already and which they would like to learn. Some of the results include:

- 44% would like to learn more about including a land acknowledgement statement and anti-bias statement on the syllabus in English and the target language.
- 39% would like to learn more about involving students in designing syllabus and/or assessments.
- 44% want to learn more about using no-cost textbooks.
- 36% want to learn about including lessons on language survivance and how this relates to world language courses.
- 35% want to learn about discussing languages other than English in and across local, national, and international boundaries, and want to practice dialogue-based learning.
- Many faculty also shared their favorite decolonizing practices in the survey.

As a result, we plan to collaborate on a skill share for faculty to learn from each other at a fall 2024 department meeting. We also hope to invite a pedagogy expert who specializes in one of these areas in World Languages and Cultures teaching to run a workshop for faculty.

Appendix

Link to slides presented at 2024 Faculty Showcase:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/13JLAZJSwDtdeyhMWYS4R0JMmguKMZjMx/edit#slide=id.p1