

# **Spanish 2 & 3 Consistency Project: Norming. Establishing Assessment Tools and Grading Criteria.**

**November 13, 2015**

**In attendance:** Tom Lew, Alicia Class, Carmen Sotolongo, Donna Factor, Silvia Ribelles de la Vega, Maria Barrio de Mendoza, Yolanda Cuesta, Roberto Jiménez, Argelia Andrade, Andrés Moina, Margarita Talavera- Hoferer (project leader.)

## **Topic 1: Follow-ups and updates from our last meeting**

- Apparently there is a textbook voucher in place that can be used by students on financial aid. Some forms were distributed to request textbooks. Another issue, also related to the students' lack of preparation, is the free grace period offered by the publisher of our Vistas textbook to access the Supersite and E-book. It has been negotiated and extended to three weeks instead of two; this will also provide a good start to all students following the class without interruptions from the beginning
- We agreed on attending counselor meetings to discuss appropriate placement of students. Counselor meetings are every other Wednesday. They have expressed their interest in our concerns and would welcome our input. According to the counselors, they need our help and guidance about placement. They need some guidelines to send students to different language levels
- Major points of a questionnaire were discussed. Alicia Class and Marga Talavera will elaborate the questionnaire. Marga is also willing to prepare a multiple choice exam that will include essential grammatical questions for Spanish 1, 2, & 3, and it will be administered by counselors. A scantron with the answer key will be also provided, so that counselors have immediate feedback to find the approximate course. This exam can also be used by the staff at the Foreign Language Lab to assess students and propose placement if the students find themselves in the wrong class. A questionnaire and a multiple choice exam can be used as assessment tools during the pre-registration period or the beginning of the semester
- It was discussed that an informative video would also be essential in this process, not only for native speakers, but for all students. We can reinforce and promote our program, including a brief description of courses and their outcomes for every level. We can explain the advantages of completing all foreign language requirement at ECC and not at the receiving college or university, as well as the advantages of being bi-literate for the natives seeking employment. We need two instructors who could be responsible for this project

## **Topic 2: Establishing the performance/proficiency level for Span 2 & 3 learners**

- Marga Talavera presented the differences between performance and proficiency, as well as the ACTFL guidelines for both concepts.
- Marga also explained the different types of rubrics that are used depending if the assessment is for performance or proficiency. Performance rubrics could be used to assess students throughout the year. E.g. End of chapter summative test. Proficiency rubrics could be used three times a year (SLO pre-test, midterm test, SLO post test.)
- At ECC, we are using proficiency rubrics at the end of the semester for SLO evaluation; some instructors use the performance rubrics to assess specific assignments or lesson tests
- Performance descriptors established only 4 levels of proficiency: novice, intermediate, advanced and superior. ACTFL levels of proficiency also includes distinguished, a level achieved by native-like speakers
- Proficiency levels were studied and compared with the levels of some of our recipient universities (UC and CSU.) The level that meets the expectations is actually the proficiency level of the course, but in foreign language teaching, instructors are aiming to the next higher level (the one exceeding expectations) in order to challenge students and approach them to the next targeted course. At ECC, we decided to be in compliance with the levels targeted by those senior universities and we agreed on the following:
  - Spanish 1: Novice High (Meets Expectations) to Intermediate-Low (Exceeds Expectations)
  - Spanish 2: Intermediate- Low (Meets Expectations) to Intermediate-Mid (Exceeds Expectations)
  - Spanish 3: Intermediate- Mid (Meets Expectations) to Intermediate-High (Exceeds Expectations)

### **Topic 3: Establishing assessment tools and grading criteria for Spanish 2 & 3 SLO.**

- It was presented that there is a need for consistent assessment tools. A series of *rubrics*, based on *ACFL Guidelines and Modes of Communications*, was introduced to help us be more consistent as we evaluate reading, oral (interpersonal and presentational modes) and written (interpersonal and presentational modes) proficiency for Spanish 2 and 3. Spanish 3 had an extra rubric to assess reading comprehension since there is a big emphasis on this component.
- In addition to presenting the rubrics, a proposed list of assessment tools was also introduced and fully discussed.
- Two sheets titled *Spanish 2 and Spanish 3 SLO Assessment Tools for Student Learning Summary* were provided. These sheets enlisted each SLO and different suggested tools for assessing them and a model rubric.

### **Topic 4: Agreeing on the Spanish 2 & 3 comprehensive final exam distribution of components: final exam templates**

- The Final Exam Template for Spanish 2 and 3 (course content) were elaborated and fully discussed.
- For Spanish 2 course the established percentages per component were: Grammar, 30%/ Vocabulary, 15%/ Speaking/ Listening, 20%/ Writing, 15%/ Culture, 11/%, and Reading, 10%.
- For Spanish 3 the percentages per component were: Grammar, 30%/ Vocabulary, 15%/ Speaking/ Listening, 25%/ Writing, 20%, and Reading, 10%.
- Curiously, those results are almost exactly the suggested percentages required in the *Course Outline of Records*, which reinforces that our intuitions about teaching are very much aligned with what has been established for the course.

#### **Topic 4: Application of grading criteria and rubrics with students' samples: assessing the SLO.**

- The faculty agreed that evaluating and grading the writing skill was our priority.
- Two rubrics (presentational and interpersonal modes) for assessing SLO #3 "Writing" were reviewed by the faculty and agreed to use when evaluating the sample essays: *Spanish 2 Final Presentational Essay Rubric*
- A short norming session was facilitated. The faculty members were asked to focus on the line between passing and not passing (C vs. D/F) We were given two writing samples to assess and copies of the agreed-upon rubric
- We went around the room to see if the rubric was used similarly by all
- First, we each assessed individually, then we met in groups
- We did the same procedure with Spanish 3 language level. We use two writing samples and copies of *Spanish 3 Final Presentational Essay Rubric*
- Lastly, we discussed the rubrics and the essays with the entire group
- The two rubrics used seemed to be on target with our needs. In general, instructors felt more confident and familiar about using the rubrics that were agreed upon during the Consistency Project and results showed lesser discrepancies

(Adjourned at 3: 40 p.m.)