



Language News from California Colleges and Universities

UC language consortium awarded federal grant

DAVIS—The University of California Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching has received a prestigious \$300,000 award from The Language Flagship 2009 Promoting Diffusion of Innovation grants program, sponsored by the National Security Education Program, to develop teaching materials for the advanced level in Arabic. Professor Robert J. Blake, director of the consortium, is the principal investigator, with collaboration from professor Kirk Belnap, director of the National Middle East Language Resource Center at Brigham Young University.

"Arabic Encounters: A Bridge to Superior Proficiency" is a three-year project that will design and produce audio and video materials focusing on the professions. It aims to accelerate the Arabic Flagship students' progress toward superior listening and speaking and true communicative competence. A series of interviews along with online interactive and multi-skill activities will infuse the Arabic curricula at the Arabic Flagship centers—the University of Texas, Michigan State University, the University of Maryland—as well as UC and BYU campuses with exciting opportunities to engage with professionals from the Arabic-speaking world who typically converse in a blend of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and vernacular speech. Via "Arabic Encounters," students will acquire linguistic skills, develop cultural sensitivity and learn strategies for processing authentic communication with the Arabic-speaking world.

The consortium is a system wide entity, established in 2000 by the UC Office of the President to maximize the university's resources in foreign languages.

"We're very pleased to participate in this program," UC Vice Provost Daniel Greenstein said. "UC's language and teaching expertise will help us prepare students

to use Arabic in careers such as business, diplomacy, engineering and medicine."

For more information about the UC Consortium for Language Learning & Teaching:

<http://uccllt.ucdavis.edu>

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Chicago Community Colleges Establish Language Requirement

Looking at the experience of Chicago community college students who seldom had ventured outside their area, Chicago City College Chancellor Watson thought that something was missing: the interaction with other cultures which today's students need. After some examination of the issue, the Chicago community colleges decided to establish a one-year language requirement for students who wish to obtain an associate's degree beginning fall 2009. The strategy was to give students interaction with the world while also teaching them language skills.

This new language requirement means that the seven Chicago colleges will be obliged to hire more faculty members in languages to respond to the newly created classes. While some students who have had sufficient secondary language study may be exempted, the requirement thus may energize Chicago area high school language programs, too.

The Chicago chancellor also stated that as most universities have a language requirement, the students transferring from the Chicago colleges will likely be more successful at their transfer destination.

LCTLs at the California State University

Edith Benkov, President CSU Foreign Language Council

Summer immersion, intensive language programs, and language institutes are a key feature of the California State University's commitment to language diversity and global communication. A number of programs across the state sponsored by the Strategic Language Initiative, LARC (a National Foreign Language Resource Center), and the Confucius Institutes, merit special notice.

The federally funded CSU Southern Consortium for the Strategic Language Initiative (SLI) Program offers Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, and Russian—all languages with significant national and global importance. Students accepted into this highly competitive program benefit from a unique language development experience that includes a six-week language immersion in summer '09, individualized language study during the academic year ('09-'10), and for SLI students who reach at least mid-intermediate level of the target language, the opportunity to participate in a study abroad program designed to further advance students' language proficiency and broaden their cross-cultural experience. The programs are geared to heritage, non-heritage and non-native speakers. Each university in the Consortium focuses on a different language: CSU San Bernardino—Arabic; CSU Long Beach—Mandarin; CSU Los Angeles—Korean; CSU Fullerton—Persian; CSU Northridge—Russian.

This summer, SDSU-LARC will offer a wide range of programs, including five-week intensive language courses in Arabic, Persian, and Russian. This unique program, developed for the ROTC, allows students the opportunity to study Arabic, Persian, or Russian in an intensive format and earn up to 10 units of foreign language credit at SDSU. LARC also sponsors Distinguished Level Arabic and Persian, a summer day camp in Persian, and a pilot-Chinese day camp, as well as a nine-week Critical Language Teacher Training Institute.

Two CSUs now are home to Confucius Institutes: San Francisco State University and San Diego State University. The Confucius Institute at San Francisco State University (CISFSU) was the first established in the western United States and was formally inaugurated in 2006, in response to the increasing need for learning Chinese in the United States. It services the Northern California region. SDSU's Confucius Institute, inaugurated in 2009, focuses on promoting the development of Chinese language education in the greater San Diego region and Baja California. The CSU-CIs are models of international cooperation, fostering historical understanding and cultural collaboration on both sides of the Pacific.

Skills for the 21st Century

By Lorraine D'Ambruoso

JNCL recently sent out a list of web sites that address the issue of the skills our students will need to negotiate and succeed in the 21st century.

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120
(21st Century Skills Framework)

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=120
(Core Subjects; World Language is second on the list.)

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=256&Itemid=120
(Global Awareness Skills/Initiatives)

These three web sites accent the importance of world languages and cultures in the education of our students. Of special interest is the comment on the need to weave interdisciplinary themes into core subjects. Please go to these web sites and use this information as you advocate for the importance of our discipline.

Of Interest to the Profession

Many thanks to JNCL (Joint National Committee on Languages), Gregory Nedved and the National Museum of Language for the following information:

The National Museum of Language, located in College Park, Maryland, is proud to announce the creation of what it believes to be the world's first International Flag of Language.

The Museum conducted a contest for school children and young adults to design the winning entry as the Museum's contribution to commemorate UNESCO's International Year of Languages last year. It received entries from all over the world. A panel of judges selected the winning entries and determined the final design.

The judges liked the idea of a tree representing languages. There are three shades of green leaves representing living languages, dead languages, and future languages, respectively, on a brown two-tone tree trunk. Curves flowing away from the tree represent the spread of knowledge gained from languages. The original flag will be displayed at the Museum and hopefully at other sites as well. "Although the flag belongs to the Museum, it also belongs to the world," says Gregory Nedved, project coordinator.

The National Museum of Language, a small museum that explores the transformative powers of language, opened to the public in May 2008 after more than ten years in the making. A trail-blazer in the field—there are only a few museums in the world with a similar focus—the Museum examines the history, impact and art of language. As a trail-blazer, it was only fitting that the Museum take on the task of creating this language flag.

One of the treasures on this web site is the "Five Minute Linguist." The "Linguist" is not a single person, but a cross-section of the language profession that has come together to produce this show. It is a collective effort by language experts from all parts of the country to respond to questions about languages and linguistics and information about language resources, people and organizations in linguistics, linguistic blogs, language text and computer tools, university language and linguistics programs, and jobs in the language profession.

For information on the Museum itself, and to see the new flag of Language, go to the NML web site at www.language-museum.org.

Professional Growth Opportunities for World Language Educators

ACTFL 2009 Conference - San Diego, CA - Nov 20-22, 2009
CLTA Conference - San Diego, CA - March 10-14, 2010
SWCOLT Conference - Albuquerque, NM - April 8-10, 2010

For the Elementary School Teacher: "Rooting for Your Roots"

Christi Moraga, the 2006 Northeast Teacher of the Year, believes that we should encourage elementary school children to "Root for their Roots" — that means to encourage them to respect their heritage languages and cultures through extra-curricular activities. She shared three ideas in the recent NNELL (National Network for Early Language Learning) Journal. While our members already teach languages, usually in immersion programs, these are ideas that we might share with all of the elementary and middle school teachers that we know.

Idea Number One: Create a Heritage Language Bulletin Board. Several times each year, students are invited to create drawings of specific cultural traditions with a phrase from their heritage language. Last year, they used "Friends" and "Happy New Year," among others.

Idea Number Two: Establish an after-school "Taste of Languages Club." Students sign up to bring in an ethnic snack and prepare a short presentation on their heritage language and / or culture. One example that won the ACTFL 2005 Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language is the culture-language box. The students decorate the outside of boxes with flags and pictures from the countries where the language is spoken. They then contribute recipes, food wrappers in the target heritage language, coins, brochures, dolls, etc. The boxes become part of a lending library, used and especially appreciated by fifth graders who must complete an immigration project for their Social Studies classes.

Idea Number Three: The CT COLT (Connecticut Council of Language Teachers) Rhyme Celebration:

This statewide event celebrated its 18th birthday last year. The theme for this year's rhyme contest was "Long Live the Animal Kingdom!" It offered students the chance to create rhymes, songs and tongue twisters about animals. Teachers prepare students who use the language they are studying in class, but also encourage heritage learners to prepare

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solos, duets and group renditions. You can go to www.ctcolt.org for more information and to see photos of children participating in the contest.

Whether students create language boxes or heritage bulletin boards or participate in the rhyme contest, everyone benefits as students, faculty, parents—indeed the entire community—share and celebrate the linguistic and cultural richness of the languages spoken in their communities.