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Center Staff

Antonia Schleicher  
Executive Director

Laura McClellan  
Assistant Director

Esther Ham  
Director of Online Language Education

Maria Shardakova  
Director of Assessment

Xiaojing Kou  
Coordinator, Center for Language Technology

Karthik Sreenivas  
Graduate Student Hourly
Overview

The Center for Language Excellence (CLE) has maintained its support and sponsorship of foreign language instruction and learning during the 2015-2016 academic year, the Center’s second year in its service to the Indiana University community and beyond. This report underscores the major activities the Center strategically organized during the year under review. Worthy of mention here is CLE’s first time implementation of the Online Foreign Language Course Development workshop that trained the grant recipients to develop and successfully mount their separate language online courses in consultation with the CLE Director of Online Language Education.

Mission Statement

The Center for Language Excellence promotes, supports, and enhances the learning and teaching of languages at Indiana University through the following activities:

1. **Proficiency-Based and Standards-Based Instruction**
   a. Promote the attainment of Proficiency-based and Standards-based instruction in all languages taught at the university
   b. Support proficiency-targeted outcomes at all language instruction levels
   c. Support learners in the process of life-long language learning
   d. Support and promote best practices in planning, techniques, and artifacts for language learning, including
      i. supporting and promoting best practices in curriculum development for language learning and teaching
      ii. identifying and developing best practices in language teaching across university language programs and department through observation, empirical research, and assessed outcomes
      iii. supporting the development of language learning materials based on sound pedagogical practices and approaches

2. **Professional Development and Research**
   a. Provide professional development workshops, institutes, seminars for all language instructors to incorporate effective language learning and teaching principles and strategies in their classroom activities
   b. Promote professionalization of language teaching staff through funded research, and curriculum and course development
   c. Provide support and training in best practices for evaluating language teaching faculty and staff
   d. Support language teaching and learning, applied linguistics and pedagogy through lecture series, demonstrations, and model classrooms.

3. **Assessment of Language Learning Outcomes**
   a. Identify and support the development and use of best tools to assess language learning outcomes
   b. Provide training for language faculty and staff to use best assessment tools

4. **Online Language Education**
   a. Support the development and coordination of online language education courses
   b. Support online language learning, including the development of online and hybrid language courses and online language learning materials
   c. Provide training for language instructors to teach online and to use online assessment tools
   d. Support research in online language education
Operations

The Center for Language Excellence (CLE) enhances the support for language instruction across all language programs and departments by providing activities that acknowledge and share best practices, sharpen existing strengths, and provide support to programs with limited capacity to provide a full spectrum of professional development opportunities for their language instructors. This section highlights the activities of CLE during the year 2015-16.

In line with its proficiency and standard-based goals, CLE organized workshops on developing language curriculum using the Understanding by Design Framework, commonly known as the Backward Curriculum Design. A second workshop focused on developing learning plans, teaching interpretive, interpersonal and presentational modes of communication.

CLE also organized a workshop on using authentic materials to teach foreign languages at the elementary level.

CLE fulfilled its mission of training language instructors to develop and teach online courses by organizing various workshops, such as: Online Language Course Design 101/102; Speaking Activities and Tools in the Online Language Class; Best Practices Distance Education; and Motivation in (Online) Language Courses.

For the first time this summer, CLE, with support from the IU College of Arts and Sciences; the Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR); the Inner Asian Uralic National Resource Center (IAUNRC); the Russian and East European Institute (REEI), and the National African Language Resource Center (NALRC), was able to launch and implement the Online Language Course Development Workshop. The Center awarded a grant of $5,000 to each participating language instructor for Portuguese, Modern Greek, Norwegian and Hungarian respectively to develop an online course for each of their languages. There was a one week face-to-face workshop after which the language instructors developed the actual online language course during the subsequent eight weeks. Each instructor at the end of the workshop presented their online project to many foreign language instructors who are also interested in developing similar online courses. Esther Ham, Director of Online Language Education for CLE, who currently teaches Dutch online, was the trainer for the online course development.

In the area of assessment, there were a series of presentations such as: Intercultural Competence Assessment; Developing an Online Foreign Language Placement Test: Sharing Experiences/Setting Your Own Goals; and Canvas is Your Friend: Using Canvas to Create Assessment Activities.

CLE organized an American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) “OPI Assessment Enhanced Familiarization Workshop” at the IU Bloomington campus. The Center now plans to organize an annual four-day workshop to train instructors for Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI). This year’s workshop was organized in two sessions – one for only Russian instructors, and the other for instructors of any other languages. The Russian OPI was funded by the Russian and East European Institute, but CLE coordinated the workshop for the institute. It was solely conducted in Russian for Russian language instructors from across the United States.
CLE collaborated with NALRC to hold a two-day workshop for African language instructors which offered them training on how to develop standards for learning Swahili, Yoruba and Zulu.

CLE assumed responsibility for Indiana University’s annual Fall semester orientation to prepare new and continuing language instructors beginning in the 2015 academic year and will continue this coming Fall 2016. This first week of orientation is crucial for new instructors especially, many of whom have never taught a language and/or have not been trained to teach a language using best practices. Therefore, many of them have the valued opportunity to do microteaching to help them put into practice, the theory of language teaching that they have learned, as well as allowing them to network with other language instructors. The Fall 2015 orientation was supported by many language programs and departments/units on the IU campus.

CLE attended local and state exhibitions. They also met with various departments and centers, to discuss items such as Title VI opportunities, Business in Language course planning, and the promotion of world languages at orientations for new students. Other operational activities include creating promotional language brochures, which are now displayed on the CLE website.
Line Charts 1 and 2 illustrate fiscal year 2015-2016 demographic data collected from workshops.

Languages Represented at Workshops/Presentations (42)

Line Chart 1

Departments Represented at Workshops/Presentations (19)

Line Chart 2
Outreach

The Center for Language Excellence (CLE) participated in many outreach opportunities with language departments on campus. CLE also promoted all IU world language programs at local, state, and national educational forums that included exhibitions and presentations.

CLE currently oversees the “CourseShare” Program activities on the IU Bloomington campus. Formerly known as the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), the newly constituted Big Ten Academic Alliance is now in the capable hands of the CLE.

CLE hosted a resource exhibit table at the Wells Library during the New Student Orientation from June 9 through July 19, 2016. The Center recruited 22 volunteers from ten departments and centers representing 13 languages (Dutch, English/Second Language Studies, Estonian, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swahili, & Yoruba), as well as the Kelley School of Business, Institute for International Business (IIB), the Russian and East European Institute (REEI), the IU Summer Language Workshop (SWSEEL), and the Global Village: Living-Learning Center. Departmental and CLE brochures were shared with students and parents to promote all languages and language learning at IU. The Center also exhibited at the Groups Scholars Resource Fair to promote all IU languages.

CLE was duly represented at the Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association (IFLTA) Conference in November 2015 through the exhibition of CLE programs. Likewise, Dr. Esther Ham, Dr. Xiaojing Kou, and Dr. Antonia Schleicher presented during the sessions of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages (NCOLCTL) Conference in April 2016.

Future Plans

The Center for Language Excellence is planning to continue with:

a) Workshops for:
   - Online Language Course Development
   - Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI)
   - Fall Orientation
   - Best Practices

b) More outreach programs such as:
   - Exhibit at the IFLTA conference - November 3-5, 2016

c) CLE video project for learning foreign/second language at IU

Conclusion

This report has shown that the Center for Language Excellence at Indiana University Bloomington is dedicated to its goals to provide resources in the form of promoting foreign language learning among students and investing in the training of the instructors who will be in charge of these students in the classrooms. The dual dimensional approach that the Center takes, is to ensure that the enthusiasm that the students carry, is met with a state of the art professionalism on the part of the language instructors. This report has demonstrated, through the various activities and achievements of the CLE that the Center has, and will always uphold its integrity by adhering to best teaching and learning practices. Undoubtedly, the commitment of the Center’s faculty, staff, student partnerships through departments and programs offering languages, and volunteers has been an invaluable resource to the attainment of our goals. The Center is equally indebted to the College of Arts and Sciences and all other Indiana University programs and departments that have in any way supported the Center or acted as its advocates.