TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES
MASTER OF ARTS

LALS 515 Language Curriculum Development
TRIMESTER 2 2010
12 July to 13 November 2010

Course Outline

Teaching dates: 12 July 2010 to 15 October 2010
Mid-trimester break: 23 August to 5 September 2010

Withdrawal from course

The date for withdrawal from second trimester courses without a fee penalty is 23 July 2010. Further information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawlsrefunds.aspx

Lecturer

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Class times and locations

For students enrolled in the on-campus course, there will be a weekly seminar-style meeting in 24 Kelburn Parade, Room 202. For students enrolled in the distance programme,

Discussion Boards and the associated materials are available each week on *Blackboard* (see below).

Communication of additional information

Additional information about this course and information about any changes will be announced in classes and posted on the course website in Blackboard.

Course delivery

The course is run in two modes: on campus and by distance. For all students, the readings and notes are available through Blackboard on http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz. Blackboard is Victoria's online teaching and learning system. For distance students, Blackboard is also the medium by which group discussions are held. Further information about Blackboard is available under Frequently Asked Questions, under the Study tab of the School website.

Course content and schedule

The course offers a critical study of the practice and principles of developing curricula for second language learning. It treats curriculum development as a complex problem-solving process in specific educational contexts.

The course will be organised as opportunities for analysis and interpretation through reading, discussion and assignment work. The reading in the course is based on a number of set readings for each topic. These readings are available on-line as pdf files. You are expected to read beyond the set texts using the range of resources available through the University library or elsewhere.

The following topics will be covered.

    1   **Introduction**

         1.1 Curriculum as problem-solving

    2   **Ends and means of learning**

         2.1 Setting learning goals to motivate and guide.
         2.2 Identifying learning opportunities

    3   **The social element of the problem**

         3.1 The role of the teacher and the learner

    4   **Managing learning and teaching**

         4.1 Self-management by learners
         4.2 Evaluating curricula
         4.3 Fostering learner autonomy
         4.4 Reprise – curriculum as problem-solving

The scheduled input and interaction on the course will occur in the first 8 weeks of the trimester. The remaining period will be available for individual consultation in the lead-up to the second assignment.

1	**INTRODUCTION**	
12 July	1.1 Curriculum design as problem-solving	*Case study:* Coleman 1988, 1992 Tajino and Smith 2005
2	**ENDS AND MEANS OF LEARNING**	
19 July	2.1 Setting learning goals to motivate and guide	Locke and Latham 2002 Cumming 1986 *See also:* Dörnyei 1998
26 July	2.2 Identifying learning opportunities	Crabbe 2007 Swain 2000, Skehan 1998 *See also:* Crabbe 2003, Allwright 2005.
3	**THE SOCIAL ELEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**	
2 August	3.1 The role of the learner and the teacher.	Guilloteaux and Dörnyei 2008 Spratt et al 2002 *See also:* Benesch 1996
4	**MANAGING LEARNING AND TEACHING**	
9 August	4.1 Self-management by learners	Rees-Miller 1993 Lam 2009 Huang 2006
16 August	4.2 Evaluating curricula	Beretta 1990 (+Prabhu's reply) Kiely 2002 Elder 2009
6 September ***7 Sept: Task 1 due*** ***10 Sept: Task 2 proposal due***	4.3 Fostering autonomy in language learning	Gremmo and Riley 1995 Littlewood 1999 Chu 2007
13 September ***15 Oct: Task2 due***	4.4 Reprise – curriculum as problem solving	Discussion of problems selected for assignments

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide opportunities for participants to develop the skills and knowledge to manage the complexity and effectiveness of organised language learning in specific contexts. The general University graduate attributes are critical and creative thinking, communication and leadership. These are also the overarching attributes of the

MA programme. The specific learning objectives for this course are listed below. The course will provide standard opportunities including readings, guided discussion, feedback on assignments or on specific questions you raise. You are expected to create and manage further opportunities, such as those outlined below.

Learning objective *What you should be able to do*	Learning opportunities *What you can do to achieve the objective*	Assessment *How you demonstrate you have achieved the objective*
1 Critically assess current and historical claims about language curriculum development in context and indicate types of evidence to support the claims. (All topics)	• Read relevant published material and course notes about formulating research questions. • Read relevant published material and course notes on trends in language teaching. • Become practised at identifying claims in paragraphs from articles and establish whether they are empirical or evaluative in nature. • Relate your own experience to various trends in language teaching. • Explore ways of establishing evidence for the claims. • Clarify information by: making verbal or diagrammatic summaries, raising questions in class or on Blackboard • Seek feedback from peers and tutors on your understanding.	
2 Justify a set of learning goals and linked learning opportunities for specific learners. (Topics 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)	• Read relevant published material and course notes about needs analysis, motivation and goal theory. • Practise describing the learning needs of individual learners and how goals might capture these needs. • Practise analysis of goals including their specificity, relevance and measurement.	Task 1 (40%)
3 Fully represent a curriculum problem in a specific context, identify a potential solution together with a procedure for evaluating the process and outcome of the solution (all topics).	• Read relevant published case studies of curriculum design. • Keep a notebook of reflections on your own curriculum, identifying important variables influencing the curriculum in action • Work with a framework of learning outcomes and opportunities to analyse case studies of curricular problems to identify all the dimensions and suggest possible solutions. • Read relevant case studies of the evaluation of language curricula. • Practise identifying answers to wh- questions in relation to specific instances of curriculum, including ones from your own experience.	Task 2 (60%)

Expected workload

The total workload on this course is assumed to be 150 hours including course meetings and/or time logged on to Blackboard. This equates to an average of 10-11 hours a week over 14 weeks.

Readings

There is no set text for this course but there are books on curriculum development that are a useful reference (see under References at the end of this Outline). There are comprehensive notes for each topic and a list of set readings (see the attached schedule). Both the notes and the readings will be available in pdf format on the Blackboard site under Course Notes and Course Readings. Copies of the notes will also be available in class for those enrolled in the on-campus course.

Language Teaching is an abstracting journal that is an invaluable guide to the literature. You should also become familiar with the ERIC and LLBA databases available on-line through the library (go to http://www.vuw.ac.nz/library/research/databases/index.aspx). There are useful survey articles in each issue of *Language Teaching*. Other journals that have useful articles relating to language learning and teaching include *TESOL Quarterly, Language Teaching Research, Applied Linguistics.*

Assessment requirements

This course is internally assessed; there is no final examination. The assessment tasks for this course are outlined below. If you have a problem with meeting the deadlines, please talk with the course lecturer as early as possible.

In all assignments, the assessment will recognise the core qualities of critical thinking (how would you know a claim was valid?) and communication (how well do you communicate your arguments and supporting information?) and leadership (how would you demonstrate that your ideas will have an impact on the context within which you are or might be working?)

Assessment Task 1 (40% of final grade)

> **Due date**   **7 September 2010**
> **Length**   **2000 words**

This assignment asks you to engage in initial problem-solving by setting language learning goals for your own learning. The outcome of the task is a report which is graded. You should pay particular attention to the quality of your discussion and the support for your arguments from published literature on goals.

The problem solving task:

1. Choose a personal experience of second language learning, preferably a real experience, you have had, or are currently having. If this experience is lacking, it can also be learning that might happen in the future. Think about the context in which you will be learning.

2. Make introspective notes about your language learning covering themes such as: motivation, communicative needs, time available, learning style, past experience, expectations of success, difficulties that you might encounter. You should make these notes over a period of several days in order to give yourself a chance to reflect in depth.

3. Write three learning goals that would be appropriate for your learning task. Justify those goals with reference to the reflective data you have collected about your learning and with reference to the literature on goals. How specific should the goals be. Would they be motivating? Are they at the right level of specificity? Would it be possible to measure your progress towards them?

4. Decide in general terms what learning opportunities are needed in order to achieve each goal.

5. Identify the claims or assumptions that you have made in your decision making and decide what evidence you would look for to evaluate those claims or assumptions.

The report (to be handed in for assessment):

Summarise the outcome of the task above by writing a report organised under the following headings:
1. The context of learning (brief)
2. A summary of the introspective data (clear and comprehensive).
3. The goals (a short list)
4. Discussion of the goals (a clear and well developed justification for the choice of goals with reference to literature on goals).
5. Indicative learning opportunities (a brief statement of which learning opportunities would be appropriate to achieve the goals).
6. A summary of the claims or assumptions you have made and how they would be tested (a critical discussion).

Assessment Task 2   (60% of final grade)

> **Due date   15 October 2010**
> **Length   2500 words**

The topic for this larger assignment will be established by negotiation with individual course members. An informal topic proposal of about 150 words is due on **10 September 2010.** The proposal is not assessed – it is simply a way for you to get feedback and approval for the topic. In choosing a topic, you must avoid replication of previous assignment material from this or other courses. It is useful to focus on an area of language curriculum development that relates to your past or intended experience.

You should think of this assignment as a 'real-world' curriculum problem for which you are seeking a solution. For example, you might decide to take on the problem of how to ensure that the quality of teaching in an institution is uniformly good. This is the sort of problem that a Director of Studies has. You would discuss the context of the problem (facts about the teachers, the students, the time available for learning and teaching….) and then propose an approach to solving the problem. You might, for instance, take the view that a set of opportunity standards would be the preferred solution. You would justify that approach with regard to the specific context and at the same time point out some disadvantages. You would then provide some examples of opportunity standards and describe a procedure for evaluating whether or not your proposed solution was going to solve the problem. Thus your assignment would typically consist of:

- the problem and the context

- the proposed solution with some specific examples

- a plan for evaluating whether or not the solution does in fact solve the problem.

Each section would refer to published literature to support your discussion and decisions, as appropriate.

Submitting Assignments

Whether you are studying at a distance or on-campus, you should submit your assignments through the Blackboard (BB) system. Instructions on how to use the BB assignment tool are on the BB website. As backup only, assignments may be submitted as e-mail attachments to lals-ma@vuw.ac.nz.

Penalties

In line with school policy, assignments handed in after the due date may receive a reduced grade unless accompanied by a medical certificate or other evidence of exceptional circumstances.

Mandatory course requirements

The requirements in this course are to participate in all of the class meetings or blackboard discussions (by making at least one substantive contribution to the discussion) and complete all set work by the due date (unless an extension is given).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source

- The work of other students or staff

- Information from the internet

- Software programs and other electronic material

- Designs and ideas

- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx . Student work may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com.

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx

References

The literature in language curriculum development is very large and diverse and the general education literature on curriculum even larger. The set readings are intended to be representative but hardly comprehensive. They are starting points for further reading and for class discussion. The edited volumes in this list all contain interesting additional reading and further readings will be suggested as the course develops. You are expected to follow up interesting references independently.

There is no set text for the course but the book by Richards (2001) is a useful coverage of some of the issues in course design (an earlier one is White 1988) and the collections of papers by Johnson (1989) and Graves (1996) include useful source material for issues and case studies. Howatt (1984, second edition 2004) provides a very good historical overview of language teaching.

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ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET

COURSE NAME & CODE:

STUDENT'S SURNAME:

STUDENT'S GIVEN NAME:

STUDENT'S ID NUMBER:

LECTURER/TUTOR

ASSIGNMENT NUMBER AND TITLE:

NUMBER OF WORDS:

DUE DATE:

Please complete the following checklist (insert Y if criteria met)

I have checked my work carefully before submitting   __

I have included a list of references, properly formatted   __

I have numbered the pages of this work   __

I have retained a copy of this work   __

There is no plagiarism in this work   __

I value your feedback and will collect my work promptly   __
OR
I do not require any feedback on this work   __

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:
(on-line submissions do not require a signature)

DATE: