

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2017-2018 MLCS 650 X01

Teaching Strategies for Postsecondary Language Instructors
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Dr. Xavier Gutiérrez
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Time: M 5:00 – 8:00pm
Place: HC 1-3
Office Hours: M 11:00am-12:00pm
or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: Consent of department

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce students to a variety of issues in post-secondary teaching and learning. Based on theoretical and methodological underpinnings of instruction in higher education, we will apply these concepts in the design and completion of a variety of projects. We will develop teaching practices based on current pedagogical approaches and theories for courses on literature, film, media, etc., as well as foreign languages.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- Analyze and critique principles of communicative and task-based language teaching
- Discuss and assess techniques and strategies for teaching language skills and other aspects such as grammar and vocabulary
- Discuss and assess techniques and strategies for content courses in higher education
- Design activities and lessons for language and content courses in higher education
- Critically analyze and evaluate teaching practices
- Develop a syllabus for a university course
- Compose their teaching philosophy and develop their teaching portfolio

Required Text:

- None. All materials are available either online or in pdf format on eClass

GRADE DISTRIBUTION (SEE “EXPLANATORY NOTES”):

Participation and attendance	15%
Classroom Observations (2 x 10%)	20% (due Oct. 2 and Oct. 30)
Teaching philosophy	10% (due Oct. 16)
Course outline	15% (due Nov. 20)
Leading class session and reflective paper	20% (see dates below)
Language lesson plan	20% (due Dec. 7)

EXPLANATORY NOTES ON ASSIGNMENTS:

Participation and attendance (15%):

Regular attendance and participation are essential for optimal performance in a graduate course and **are considered a prerequisite for obtaining a B or higher in this course**. More than one unexcused absence will result in a final mark no higher than a B, no matter how successful students are with regards to other grade components. If you miss a class for an acceptable reason (see below) no marks will be deducted.

Since class discussions focus on the assigned readings, you should prepare them carefully at home, and engage in the material in a thoughtful and informed manner so that you can contribute to a productive class discussion. For every topic for which there are assigned readings, you are asked to prepare one question or one comment that generates discussion (not a simple comprehension question). An example of an acceptable question is: “What are the pros and cons of implicit/inductive vs. deductive grammar instruction?” An example of an unacceptable question is: “Is it important to learn grammar?”. The question can be based on one of the readings only or it can involve several of the readings. You will be asked to submit your question to the course eClass site **at least 24 hours before the class**. If you do not have a question prepared, or the question clearly shows that you have not done the readings, 1% per occurrence will be deducted from the participation mark.

Classroom Observations (20%):

Twice during the semester, students will observe an undergraduate class taught by a different instructor. These classes must be one content class and one language class. Students will be asked to observe a particular aspect of the class (e.g. teacher’s language use, the learning environment...), reflect critically on what they saw and prepare a written report (ca. three pages, double-spaced, typed; including a description of the lesson and a critical reflection). Further details to be discussed in class.

The assignments will be evaluated on the completeness of the observations, the depth and breadth of the analysis and reflections, and clarity of expression. The instructor to be visited should be asked several days in advance whether s/he agrees to an observation and when the observer can come in. Students should be punctual and courteous when visiting someone else’s class, and thank the instructor afterwards for allowing them to observe their class.

Teaching philosophy (10%):

As part of learning to develop a teaching portfolio, students will compose their own teaching philosophy. Further details to be discussed in class.

Course outline (15%):

Students will develop a syllabus for their dream course. This has to be a content course (culture, literature, linguistics...) at the 300- or 400-level that could be offered by MLCS or a similar department. In addition to developing the syllabus, students will have to justify their decisions regarding several aspects such as learning outcomes, assignments, etc. Further details to be discussed in class.

Leading class session and reflective paper (20%):

Students will be responsible for preparing and leading a class session on one of the techniques or strategies for content courses in higher education. At the beginning of the semester, students will sign up for one of the following techniques or strategies: Leading discussions (Oct. 16); group work and collaborative learning (Oct. 23); debates (Oct. 30); role play (Nov. 6); problem-based learning (Nov. 20); concept maps (Nov. 27); and online learning (Nov. 27). Please, note that these topics and dates are based on the class schedule (see below), which may be subject to minor changes. Students will present a brief description of the technique or strategy, lead the class discussion about it, and develop and present an activity that shows the technique or strategy. A week after leading the class session, students will hand in a written reflective paper about that session. Leading the class session is worth 10% and the reflective paper is worth another 10%. Further details to be discussed in class.

Language lesson plan (20%):

Students will design an 80-minute language lesson in which they will have to integrate several skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and language aspects (vocabulary, grammar...). They will submit the lesson plan along with a critical discussion of their pedagogical decisions. Further details to be discussed in class.

REQUIRED NOTES:

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy has been or is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that directs discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general. If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative**

help in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result

In this course, participation is an essential component; therefore, it is **very important to attend class every day**.

a. Excused absences are not automatic; therefore, in cases of potentially excusable absences (emergency conditions, incapacitating illness, religious convictions or legitimate University-related business), students may apply for an excused absence for missed classes, term work, or exams. Please note:

- For an absence to be considered excused, I will request adequate documentation to substantiate the reason for the absence (i.e. in the form of a “Medical Declaration Form for Students” <https://uofa.ualberta.ca/arts/-/media/arts/student-services/documents/medicaldeclarationformforstudents.pdf>). Please, note that a “Statutory Declaration” submitted at the end of term covering multiple absences during the term will not be accepted.
- A student must inform the instructor within two working days following the class which was missed, or as soon as the student is able, having regard to the circumstances underlying the absence.
- For missed term work, **no extension will be given after this deadline has elapsed and a grade of ZERO will be assigned.**
- For an excused absence where the cause is religious belief, a student must contact the instructor(s) within two weeks of the start of Fall or Winter classes; and within three days of the start of Spring or Summer classes.
- **No request for make-up for missed work will be considered without proper documentation.**
- Providing any kind of document(s) does not imply an automatic approval; it will be at the discretion of the instructor to accept or decline a document and/or grant the student’s request for an excused absence.
- For further explanation regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult section 23. 3 of the University Calendar.

b. Unexcused absences are not allowed in this course. Three points out of the fifteen total points will be deducted from the student’s participation and attendance grade for each unexcused absence. In addition, a **grade of ZERO** will be given for any assignments that are not handed in or completed as a result of an unexcused absence. As noted above, more than one unexcused absence will result in a final mark no higher

than a B, no matter how successful students are with regards to other grade components.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult **in advance** with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. . Formal **written** documentation may be required to consider granting an extension. In cases of medical emergencies or severe domestic affliction, the instructor must be given a written message (email) within two working days of the due date explaining why the assignment was not handed in on time. If the explanation is not deemed reasonable, a grade of zero will be recorded. Otherwise, all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed-in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks. Late excuses will **not** be accepted for any reason.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

GRADING:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

MLCS Graduate Grading Scale

A+	97-100	Excellent
A	93-96	Excellent
A-	90-92	Excellent
B+	87-89	Good
B	79-86	Good
B-	74-78	Satisfactory
C+	68-73	Satisfactory
C	63-67	Failure
C-	58-62	Failure
D+	54-57	Failure
D	50-53	Failure
F	00-49	Failure

Class Schedule (subject to minor, announced changes):

Date	Topics (assigned readings have to be read for this date)	Assignments due
Sept. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to course and materials • Do's and don'ts in higher education • Building a course outline 	
Sept. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes & Bloom's taxonomy • Post-methods era in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) 	
Sept. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) • The teaching dossier 	
Oct. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson planning • Lecturing • Asking questions 	Observation 1 due
Oct. 9	Thanksgiving – no class	
Oct. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading discussions • Teaching vocabulary 	Teaching philosophy due
Oct. 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative work • Teaching grammar 	
Oct. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debates • Teaching reading & listening 	Observation 2 due
Nov. 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play • Teaching speaking 	
Nov 13	Reading week – no class	
Nov. 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-based learning • Teaching writing 	Course outline due
Nov. 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept maps • Online learning 	
Dec. 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment 	