Changing Course:

Hybrid Opportunities for students in French, Hispanic and Italian Programs

Overview

The Department of French, Hispanic, and Italian Studies (FHIS) is developing and implementing twelve first-and-second year language courses across three language programs (French, Italian, Spanish) as a new model for sustainable hybrid language teaching and accessible, flexible learning. The model leverages the critical feedback and experience from FHIS students and faculty, findings from research and discussions of FHIS's Online Curriculum Committee (2020-2021), and builds on the pedagogical considerations, innovations, structures, and materials developed during remote language teaching.

Objectives

- Create sustainable, consistent course design for hybrid language learning and promote asynchronous student development of listening and reading skills and collaborative activities that prioritize intercultural competencies and conversation in in-class sessions.
- Encourage on-going, cross-program collaboration among the three FHIS languages.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our model to inform further iterations of our 1st-and-2nd year courses.
- Disseminate data and reports within and outside UBC.

Process (Year 1)

1 Defined team structure, guiding principles for course design, use of multimedia, and learning outcomes for first-year language courses in FHIS. (May 2023, with support from CTLT)

2 Designed and implemented evaluation plan (i.e., surveys, focus groups, reflection questions), to assess effectiveness of hybrid model and compare it to in-person learning outcomes and student performance. (May-July 2023)

3 Incorporated diverse hybrid models with and without TA support to test out different structures and patterns of teaching and learning hybrid language courses. (Sep 2023-Jan 2024)

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Acknowledgements

Deliverables

Our project presented a two-year plan to design and implement hybrid courses across Romance language disciplines and levels. The project deliverables focus on training and resources for faculty and students, learning activities and assessments, and tools to meaningfully integrate academic integrity as a fluid concept and practice in all of our language courses.

Materials developed for this project stand to benefit both hybrid and in-person multi-section language courses in French, Italian, and Spanish.
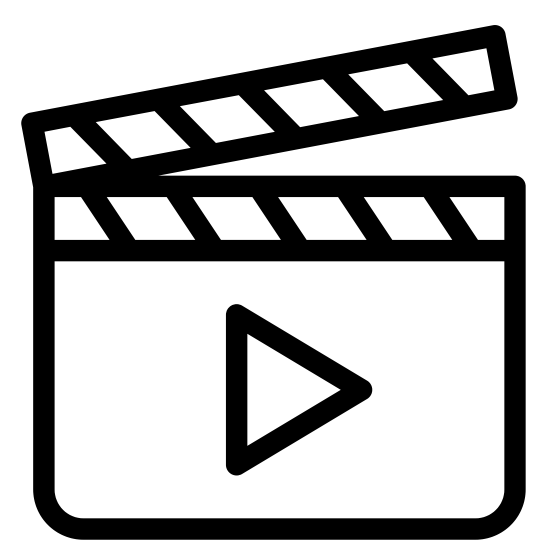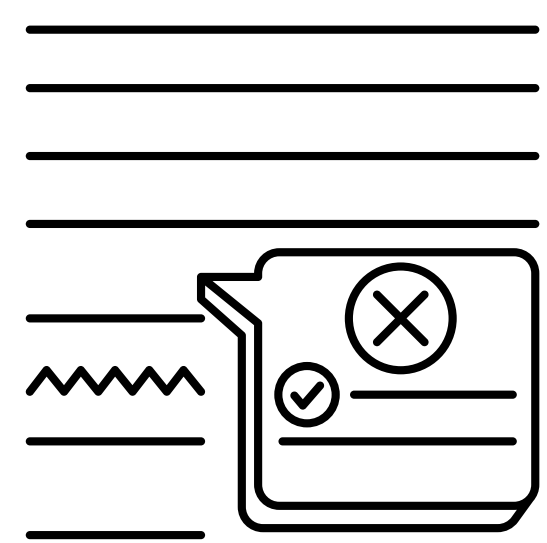
1 Academic Integrity Video

5 Hybrid courses (FREN, SPAN, ITAL)

20 Grammar and Instructional videos

15 Infographics (FREN, SPAN, ITAL)

51 Quizzes (FREN)

5 H5P integrated Canvas-Discussions

Evaluation

Determine motivation and engagement with online resources, and overall satisfaction in the courses

Students: 2 surveys (Week 3 and Week 13) Final grade audit and exit interviews

Instructors/TAs: 1 survey (after the add/drop deadline); 1 focus group (during the exam period)

Determine experiences and challenges of designing courses

GAAs/UAAs: 1 focus group after the developed course has been implemented

Project members: Ongoing reflection documentation; one-time interview after the course has been implemented

Core Findings (Year 1)*

Hybrid course formats:
- benefited students by providing them more flexibility, but also accentuated student difficulties with keeping up with independent work and proper time management. This was observed in student, instructor and TA responses.
- does not lead to a worse language-learning experience. (i..e students' confidence in language capabilities)
- were appreciated by students for their more varied assessment methods, and by TAs for providing more flexibility in their workload.
- created a community for instructors to share resources and experiences.

Hybrid course participants:
- were warmer to the idea of taking additional hybrid courses in the future, compared to those who took it in-person (3.93 vs 3.48). However, in-person courses remain the most desired by 101 language learners.
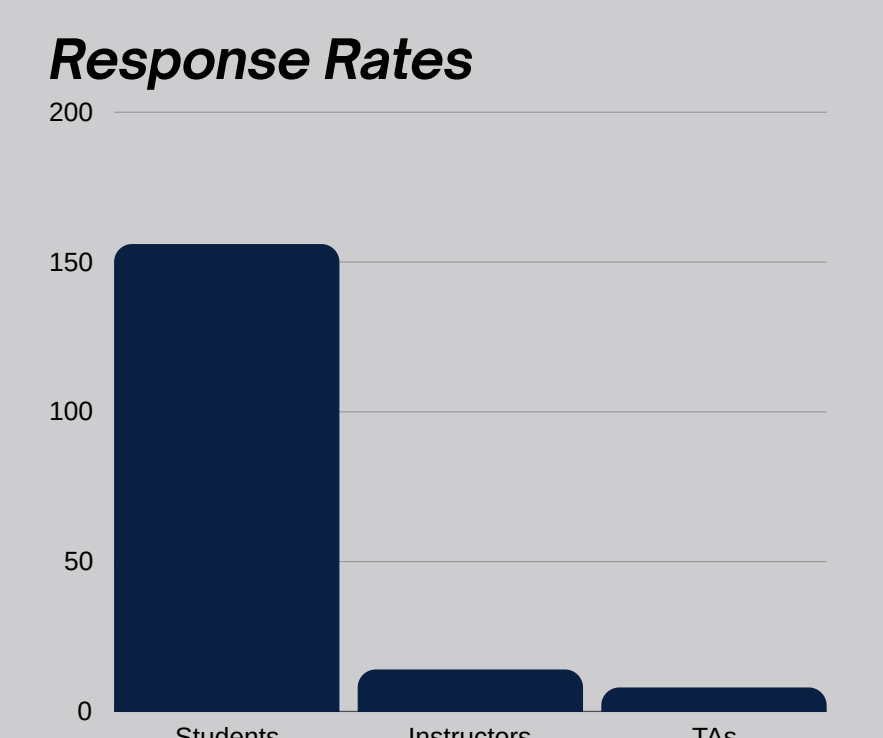
Discussions led to:
- series of recommendations regarding workload, assessments, and online platforms to improve future iterations of the redesigns.

Response Rates

*These are the findings up until the mid-point of Term 2 in Year 1 of the project.

The Lesson Loop

Design and Teach: The best case scenario is for designers to also teach the hybrid courses they put together.

Maximize existing resources: When possible, utilize existing textbook and online resources for autonomous learning and self-correction

TA roles and preparation: Clear roles and preparation guidelines for TAs are needed (including time-management, communication with students, and responsibilities in and outside of the classroom). Ideally assign STA to courses.

Academic Integrity: As Generative A.I. becomes more prevalent, we should be prepared to adapt the hybrid model (particularly assessments) for integrity-driven learning.

Next Steps

- Integrate students' feedback and revise iterations of our hybrid model for courses from year 1.
- Continue to prioritize the ongoing development and evaluation of first- and second-year hybrid course designs, learning activities and assessments, and support materials for instructors, TAs, and students.
- Share feedback and results with our unit, with the Advisory Committee, and through academic gatherings in and outside of UBC.
- Address arising challenges and opportunities with the sustainability and potential dissemination and expansion of our tested model to other language contexts.
- Revise and further develop our student-centered resources on academic integrity in language classrooms.
- Seek out resources and connect with other initiatives on campus to contribute to the culture of integrity at UBC and develop strategies of Gen A.I. and related resources for hybrid language classrooms.