

Applied Linguistics - Strategic Plan –2013-2018

Goals. Capitalizing on our pedagogical and research expertise in advanced language proficiency, the Department of Applied Linguistics will target three broad goals for the next five years. First, the Department aims to become an internationally recognized site for research on advanced language proficiency and language socialization for academic and professional purposes. Second, the Department aims to translate this research on academic and professional proficiency into practical initiatives at Penn State designed to foster advanced multilingual competencies in strategic languages among the university's students, faculty, and visiting scholars. Third, the department aims to develop its on-line and summer offerings in language teacher training at both degree and non-degree levels.

Rationale. Penn State is becoming an international university. In the 2012-2013 academic year the university welcomed a record 6,693 international students to the University Park campus, placing it 10th in the United States. Ten years ago, the College of the Liberal Arts had 85 international students, twice that number five years ago (164), and a remarkable 706 this past year. Data from the fall 2011 semester showed that 30% of all undergraduates, and 40% of all STEM majors, had an International Teaching Assistant in class. Further, it is a major goal of the College to expand study abroad experiences for all students, who will require more sophisticated multilingual skills to maximize the benefit of those experiences, and to integrate those experiences into a competitive intercultural portfolio upon graduation.

Applied Linguistics is the discipline uniquely concerned with language learning, language teacher training, and language-in-use. Research and practice are intimately linked in the discipline, and *research is successful insofar as it leads to practice*. As a department, we have developed a deep research base in the areas of advanced language proficiency and language for professional purposes, and administer highly successful pedagogical programs that implement this research in both our own language programs and in disciplines and departments across the university. Indeed, where other university departments focus largely on the traditional issues of second language acquisition (e.g. Georgetown, Hawaii, Michigan) we stand apart precisely because of our interdisciplinary involvement outside the traditional boundaries of the discipline. As one piece of evidence: our productivity data (Appendix B) shows that department faculty publish twice as much as our nearest competitor in "Journals with high impact value from emerging interdisciplinary domains in which applied linguists regularly publish." In short, Penn State's Department of Applied Linguistics is on the cutting edge of **applied** linguistics, and in the next five years we aim to solidify this research reputation. Fortuitously for Global Penn State, the very means of doing so involves our developing programs that address sophisticated, advanced-level, professional language proficiency among undergraduate and graduate students, teaching assistants, and faculty. These activities, while serving the university, expand the empirical database on which our research-to-practice reputation critically depends. *Our strategic goals are based on this synergy of research and practice.*

Goal 1: To become an international leader in research on socialization for academic and professional purposes and advanced language proficiency in global strategic languages.

Background: The department builds on an extensive research portfolio in advanced language proficiency with funded projects in the Center for Advanced Language Proficiency, Education and Research (now in its 3rd cycle of funding by the Department of Education); the Center for Language Acquisition (with recent funding from the Department of Education; Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute; Sociological Initiatives Foundation); the Migration Studies Project (with recent funding from the Worldwide Universities Network); the New Professional Initiative (funding from the Schreyer Institute) and the Center for Research on English Language Learning and Teaching (internally funded by the IECP). These projects and programs form the foundation for the following initiatives.

Initiative 1a. Research on English in Higher Education. *To advance understandings of effective teaching and mentoring practices that foster academic and professional language socialization and teacher-student interactional competence in American higher education.*

- a. Conduct and disseminate research on **teacher-student interactional competence** across the disciplines and educational settings. *Timeline:* Both the ITA-oriented, *New Professional Initiative* (NPI) and the Center for Research on English Language Learning and Teaching (CRELLT) will seek external funding sources for this research (e.g. Spencer, NSF, NEH). A searchable video corpus database (see next) constitutes the proof-of-concept on which grantseeking depends, and first applications will be made in SP 2015.
- b. Develop a **corpus of video-recorded instructor-student interaction** in classroom, recitation, lab, and office hour settings: **The Corpus of English for Academic and Professional Purposes** (CEAPP). This is a joint project of the NPI and CRELLT. Data sources include STEM undergraduate classrooms and labs, and IECF and ESL classrooms. This searchable database (akin to Databrary, TalkBank, MICASE) will link multimedia recordings of authentic university-level classrooms to carefully produced transcripts, and it will make the data more accessible to a wider community of faculty and graduate students interested in pursuing research on teaching and learning in university settings. An early version of the video corpus is currently being used by CRELLT affiliated faculty and PhD students to advance their research on L2 teaching and learning. Several research projects have already led to conference presentations (e.g., LANSI 2012, AAAL 2012, AAAL 2014) and publications. *Timeline:* Data collection and construction of the interface began in 2012-2013.
- c. Continue analysis and dissemination of findings from the **Migration Studies Project** on the ways international professionals negotiate English for professional communication, adopt language socialization to develop advanced proficiency, and use their multilingual resources as an asset. *Timeline:* Data gathered from 2010-2014 with international collaborators (faculty and students) has already generated conference presentations and publications. Major funding from Russell Sage will be sought in 2014/2015.
- d. Develop **video-based and other pedagogical materials** for the Department's ITA and MA TESL programs. The searchable database will be linked to web-based supplemental for use in the ITA and MA TESL programs to help improve graduate students' reflective capacity for dealing effectively with contingencies of teaching/learning. *Timeline:* local availability of materials in AY 2014-2015.

Initiative 1b. Research on Strategic Languages for Professional Purposes. *Develop a series of funding applications through the Center for Language Acquisition that target innovative, research-based models and programmatic implementations for acquiring advanced, professional-level proficiency in strategic languages other-than-English.*

- a. Seek funding in the next cycle for the **Center for Advanced Language Proficiency, Education, and Research** (CALPER) grant from the Department of Education. Current projects in this grant include: advanced proficiency in Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish; Chinese study abroad; computer mediated communication; and corpus and metaphor research. *Timeline:* 4th cycle submission due in Spring/Summer 2014.
- b. Develop research on classroom **acquisition of Chinese**, made available through an application with the Department of Asian Studies for a **Language Flagship in Chinese** (Mandarin), a major initiative of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office. The mission of The Language Flagship is to create programs at institutions of higher education that can function as models of language learning that produce college-graduates with professional-level proficiency in a critical language. *Timeline:* In collaboration with Asian Studies, our goal is to have the instructional infrastructure in place within the next two years to meet the next RFP.
- c. Conduct **research on study abroad programs to assess** effectiveness of interventions designed to upgrade students' awareness of the social and cultural dimensions of language learning and use, and to help students develop discipline-specific intercultural communicative competence. Data for this research comes in part from the College's enhancement of study abroad for undergraduate students (see EPPIC, below).

- d. **Center for Language Acquisition Transition.** Transition the *leadership of the Center for Language Acquisition* via search in AY 2014-2015 for a tenured, associate or full professor who would begin as a co-director in AY 2015-2016, alongside Jim Lantolf who will be stepping down as director.

Initiative 1c. PhD Placement and Faculty Mentorship. *To accelerate the pattern of placement of our PhD students in research-intensive universities. (The majority of students have dissertation projects on the acquisition, teaching, and nature of advanced proficiency; see Appendix B.)*

- a. Provide **hands-on research assistantship opportunities**, guided and supervised by faculty on major research grants (e.g., CALPER, Migration Studies Project, CRELLT, and other grants).
- b. Provide **close faculty mentorship** and guidance in turning pre-dissertation research project results into conference presentations and publications in top-tier academic presses.
- c. Strategizing more **student-faculty publication** efforts out of the faculty led, ad hoc data analysis groups (currently: Conversation Analysis [Hall], Multilingual Writing [Canagarajah], Sociocultural Theory [Lantolf]).
- d. Provide doctoral students multiple opportunities throughout the academic year to **meet, interact with, and share ideas with top scholars** in the field at other universities in one-on-one and small group meetings. (Our speaker series currently provides such opportunities).
- e. Prepare students individually for **job talk and interview** through practice sessions tailored to their positions and organized by the department.
- f. Investigate the possibility of initiating a **professional, PSU Applied Linguistics student-run interdisciplinary scholarly journal**—housed here at Penn State and supervised by designated faculty members, similar in nature and scope as UCLA's *Issues in Applied Linguistics* or
- g. **Increase doctoral student visibility and professionalism** by encouraging active participation in national and international conferences, increasing departmental funding for such travel, and helping students network with scholars in their fields who may be at such conferences.

Goal 2: Leverage the department's pedagogical expertise in language socialization and acquisition of advanced proficiency for academic and professional purposes as key resources for the Global Liberal Arts at Penn State.

Background. In recent years we have grown the pedagogical programs that form the foundation of our efforts: establishing a writing tutorial program for ESL undergraduates, developing the New Professional Initiative around the ITA program; incorporating the IECF into the department; creating an online graduate certificate in TESOL; creating the hybrid (online + residence) MA/TESL; and creating the TESL minor. CALPER has developed pedagogical materials, conducted workshops, webinars, and courses for language instructors, and designed and offered online programs in Korean, Chinese, and Russian. Further, the department is contacted on a regular basis by units across the university requesting English language support for international students, post-docs and visiting scholars in their programs (including to date: the Division of Undergraduate Studies, The College of Health and Human Development, The Smeal College of Business, The Hershey Medical Center, and The Dickinson School of Law). Speaking again to the **synergy** between research and practice, doctoral students have used their involvements in programs outside APLNG as the basis for dissertations on these topics (e.g. clinical medicine; international law). In this context, we propose the following.

Initiative 2a. English for Professional Purposes Intercultural Center. *To create the English for Professional Purposes Intercultural Center (EPPIC) as the leading edge of APLNG's visibility and general outreach, and to build productive diversity by providing critical, co-curricular resources for the development of advanced proficiency in English for effective academic and professional communication by multilingual students and faculty.*

- a. Develop a coherent, coordinated menu of **consultative and instructional services** to meet the existing needs of units across the university for advanced level multilingual communication of international undergraduate

and graduate students, postdocs, visiting scholars, and faculty, including but not limited to those in STEM departments, Health and Human Development, Hospitality, Smeal, the Dickinson School of Law, and the Hershey Medical Center. The development of these and future offerings is undergirded by the department's robust research agenda in the areas of second language writing (Canagarajah, Verity), academic socialization (Canagarajah, Strauss), classroom discourse analysis and teacher education (Hall, Johnson, Looney), advanced proficiency language learning (Lantolf, Strauss, Yu), language assessment (Schrauf), intercultural pragmatics (Kinging, Lantolf), and healthcare communications (Makoni, Schrauf).

- b. Design and offer **language assessments, orientation sessions, workshops, on-site departmental short courses, clinics, and one-on-one tutoring** focusing on English for Academic and Professional Purposes across a variety of language-shaped genres: writing papers, technical reports, cover letters, grants; giving oral presentations, interviews, colloquia; conducting office hours, labs, workshops; leading group discussions; communicating via email and social media, and so on. Summer revenue opportunities include two- to eight-week intensive professional communication preparation courses for entering international graduate students in Smeal and Dickinson, as well as for ESL teachers from abroad. Needs analysis, design, and implementation of the proposed instructional activities would serve as sites for faculty and graduate student research, including but not limited to the research foci of CRELLT, CALPER, the CLA, and the NPI.
- c. Develop an **Intercultural Language Partners** program in which multilingual Paterno Fellows would serve as language and culture partners paired with multilingual international students, providing hands-on coaching for: oral presentations, micro-teaching sessions, and general communication skills in English. Fellows will receive training in intercultural communication strategies, awareness of World Englishes, and effective tutoring methods. Undergraduate fellows could use the language partner experience as the basis for thesis projects (e.g., service learning, ESL, intercultural communication, pragmatics, language socialization).
- d. In collaboration with the college's Career Development Network, and the new International Experiences Coordinator, to implement a multi-phase program helping students to maximize the educational and career development value of **study abroad** experiences through support of discipline-specific language and culture learning.
 1. Develop and offer a series of **pre-departure sessions** tailored to students' goals for learning. For students prioritizing language learning, these sessions would foster awareness of communicative competence and its development, and would involve language partners and short stays with local international families prior to departure. For all students, these sessions would include exploration of intercultural communication and possible research projects while abroad.
 2. Work with **returning students** to integrate their experiences into their professional goals and to disseminate results of their research to the wider PSU community via e-portfolios, class presentations, and participation in international activities on campus. (APLNG faculty and grad student research would focus on student's intercultural communicative competence and cross-cultural experience).
- e. To create inter-departmental and inter-institutional collaborations that position **EPPIC as the hub** for programs, conferences, and shared grant seeking around themes such as: creating global citizens through intercultural communication (CAS), maximizing multicultural exchange for a global university experience (Global Programs), the ethics of inclusionary communication (Rock Ethics), working effectively with multilingual, international partners (Smeal), etc. With external funding, semester- and year-long research project grants related to such topics as intercultural communication, academic multiliteracies, healthcare communication, social networking in academic life, and so forth, will be offered to graduate students and faculty from diverse academic units to attract interdisciplinary participation, on the model of individual faculty grants and graduate fellowships offered by the Institute for the Arts and Humanities, and faculty collaboration on initiatives at the Rock Ethics Institute. Fellows would also be encouraged to contribute their disciplinary knowledge to existing research projects in EPPIC.
- f. To organize **summer workshops for PSU faculty** on how to work with language problems presented by international students in their courses (from both the instructor's and the student's side of things).

- g. Work with the **Development Office to seek major funding** for EPPIC. (In fact, we have already presented a concept paper to Development). Our goal is an endowed resource center with an endowed, tenured professor as the executive director. Since proof-of-concept and clear vision are key to attracting donor interest, we propose the following timetable.
1. Conduct a search for a **fixed-term administrative director** who will map the terrain of requests and opportunities from units across the university; work with faculty and APLNG research units to leverage existing areas of research strength to apply to EPPIC's offerings; expand and reframe our services into a coherent and marketable program; develop a revenue plan (based on fee-for-service); and work with Development in growing a donor or donors. The administrative director would be a four year (2015-2018), multi-year hire, for whom we are requesting cost sharing from the College.
 2. Conduct a search for a **fixed-term curriculum materials developer** who would be responsible for creating the customized language support offerings for different units in the university based on their needs and disciplinary genres, and who would work directly with several of the graduate assistants (see next) in developing and implementing the offerings.
 3. Devote four **Graduate Assistantships** to the activities of the nascent EPPIC from AY2015-2016 through AY 2017-2018, until donor funding would assume these costs, after which time an additional two graduate assistantships would be associated with the Center (*six GA's total*). Graduate Assistants working with the Director will engage in supervised research on *in situ* language needs assessment across units and help develop evidence-based approaches to the effective teaching of advanced professional English in academic contexts. GA's working with the curriculum developer will design materials for workshops, short-term seminars, and orientation sessions for international students and faculty, and workshop sessions for English-speaking faculty, staff and language partners to promote effective cross-cultural communication with international students.
 4. Search for a **tenured, senior scholar** to serve as Executive Director of EPPIC as soon as donor commitments make that possible. The Director will be responsible for ensuring the research-to-practice dimension of EPPIC, by working with CRELLT, the CLA, CALPER, and the NPI to engage in joint research, and by providing leadership for the program coordinator in the creation of research-informed program offerings and outreach to a variety of units. The Director will work with the Development office to seek donor funding, and develop interdepartmental grant proposals in areas such as multilingual healthcare communication (CAS, Hershey), Global Business English (Smeal), language and the law (Dickinson).

Initiative 2b. Curriculum-based Support in ESL. *To increase instructional support for the increasing numbers of international undergraduates in both the College of the Liberal Arts and other colleges at University Park.*

- a. Create alternative **ESL/Content based curricular options** in regular and summer sessions,
- b. Create **STEM-oriented sections of ESL015**, our existing first year writing class,
- c. Optimize the availability of **tutoring** through the ESL Writing Center,
- d. Create more **synergy** between certificate and MA/TESL students, ESL and IECIP instructors, and tutoring programs.

Goal 3: Develop departmental on-line and summer offerings in language teacher training at both degree and non-degree levels.

Initiative 3a. Increase enrollments in the on-line Graduate Certificate and hybrid MA/TESL. (The expected population for the hybrid program is probably quite similar to that of the Certificate: Americans (US and abroad), who cannot afford to spend two years away from their jobs; midcareer and post-retirement individuals who are changing careers; and international students prefer to spend only one year away from home.

- a. Publicize our programs in **professional websites** and associated digital publications (e.g. TESOL Bulletin).
- b. Work with the **College's Web and Creative Services Office** to improve information about the online programs on the Department website.

- c. Publicize the Certificate and MA TESL in *Chinese-language media*, and perhaps through the network of the Confucius Institutes and the Chinese Students and Scholars Association of Penn State.
- d. Tap *departmental alumni* in China, and other countries via webinars and information sessions.
- e. Establish advertising, presentations, and information booths at the major international conferences (TESOL; IATEFL; JALT; KoTESOL, for example).
- f. Tap the extensive network of *commonwealth campuses* via information seminars, a free online module (excerpted from our existing online classes), and possibly a teleconferenced version of at least one of our residential courses.

Initiative 3b. Expand summer offerings in the MA/TESL residential and hybrid programs.

- a. Increase the number of *summer 400- and 500-level* offerings to accommodate and attract hybrid MA/TESL students who could then complete the residency portion of their degrees in one-year.
- b. Develop *distance forms of the capstone project*, and the field experience requirement (e.g. APLNG 500).
- c. Explore the *modularization of the residential MA/TESL* so that students finish the entire degree in three semesters rather than the current four.

Initiative 3c. Apply for a STARTALK grant in collaboration with the Department of Asian Studies to conduct professional development for K-16 teachers of Chinese during the summer. STARTALK is a presidential initiative created in 2006 as part of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI). While a STARTALK teacher program does not currently exist in the state of Pennsylvania, there are 15 altogether in some neighboring states and the District of Columbia (DE, IN, NJ, NY, OH, VA), all of which have a unique orientation and are of high-quality.

Timeline: submission in AY 2014-2015.

Revenue Strategies. Prior to the incorporation of the IECP into the Department, the department relied on a number of small revenue generating sources (grants, income from our courses at commonwealth campuses, the on-line Graduate Certificate in TESOL, fees for the AEOCPT testing, summer school revenue). Income from the IECP has both increased and stabilized our revenue situation, but reliance on many streams will continue to be a reality. Over the next five years, we will attend to the following.

- a. **IECP income.** The IECP is working to maintain current and establishing new enrollment sources.
- b. **Grant activity.** We project the following grants activity on the part of centers and programs: Center for Language Acquisition (pending submissions to NSF and collaborative project with the College of Education for an Institute of Educational Services grant), CRELLT and NPI (NSF or Spencer for NPI), Migration Studies (Russell Sage). A continuing application for another cycle of CALPER will have been submitted in Spring-Summer 2014. The Head will continue to work with individual faculty.
- c. **Development.** We will be working with the Development Office to identify donors for EPPIC.
- d. **Fee-for-Service.** In addition to our current services (e.g. the AEOCPT), ramping up the activities of EPPIC will require a new menu of items, and the development of structured ways of charging other departments and units in the university. (On the model of similar programs at peer institutions (the University of Michigan and IUPUI's program).
- e. **On-line programs.** The Graduate Certificate in TESOL brings in a reasonable amount each year (for our size). The hybrid (online + residence) MA/TESL should increase on-line enrollments as well.
- f. **Summer courses.** We continue working with Global Programs and Chris Long to craft summer intensive ESL courses for entering undergraduates and graduate (especially in conjunction with EPPIC). Again, as the hybrid MA/TESL matures into a degree with a 12 month residency component, the number of our 400- and 500- level summer offerings will increase.
- g. **University funding.** Given that APLNG's strategic plan revolves around the synergy between research and pedagogy, with major contributions to the university's goals of globalization and internationalization, it seems reasonable to ask that the University both continue and increase its investment in the unit.