

## **Cross-Disciplinary Learning and Teaching Initiative**

### **Languages Across the Campus -- workshop conducted Fall semester 2012**

coordinator: Jack Iverson

#### Practical matters:

Participants were, in alphabetical order: Susan Babilon, Janis Breckenridge, Donghui He, Sarah Hurlburt, Julia Ireland, Jack Iverson, Chas McKhann, Jason Pribilsky, and Jon Walters. Lisa Perfetti attended several meetings as her availability dictated. (We have noticed that the Associate Dean of the Faculty is very busy!)

Our workshop on Languages Across the Campus was conducted during the Fall semester 2012, in a series of 1- and 2-hour meetings, either during the lunch hour on Monday or Tuesday or on Friday afternoon. The workshop was supported by a CLEo site that we used for exchanging materials. After an initial introductory meeting, we tried to organize (with mixed success, for reasons I will discuss below) individuals meetings along thematic lines. Near the end of the semester, we met with representatives from several different campus offices to discuss ways in which languages might interface with their activities.

#### Sessions included:

9/3 (M) -- introductions

9/7 (F) -- bilingualism and cognitive development

9/21 (F) -- the reports of the Modern Language Association, "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World" and "Report to the Teagle Foundation on the Undergraduate Major in Language and Literature"

10/2 (T) -- Languages Across the Curriculum, general models

10/19 (F) - Languages Across the Curriculum, application at specific institutions

10/26 (F) -- Off-Campus Study, with guest Susan Brick; discussion of a language requirement on our campus

11/2 (F) -- Admissions, with guest Tony Cabasco

11/13 (T) -- Development, with guest John Bogley

#### Reflections:

This workshop on Languages Across the Campus was conceived with the idea of exploring ways in which the presence of languages at Whitman College might be

enhanced. This question seems vital as one that is pertinent to the mission statement of the College, which affirms that we seek to prepare students "to succeed in a changing technological, multicultural world "; it is perhaps even more urgently suggested by the Trustees' statement on diversity, which proclaims that "We seek to provide a challenging liberal arts experience for our students that prepares them for citizenship in the global community," and by the absence of a reflection on language as a component of the recent Global Studies Initiative. The group members generally shared the conviction that both our students and the institution would be well served if it were possible to integrate languages more fully as a prominent feature of a Whitman College education.

This CDTLI workshop was thus probably quite different from many previous workshops insofar as it had a very practical focus, closely allied with concrete measures, curricular or other, that might be taken to promote a "culture for languages" on our campus. In proposing this topic, I was aware of this fact, as I tried to emphasize in our proposal: "While the workshop will not aim specifically to develop a curricular proposal, we will nevertheless work with a close eye to the benefits of increasing the study of language on our campus and the modalities that might be used to achieve that goal." Indeed, throughout the semester, our group struggled with the question of exactly what it was that we were doing, and at certain points it felt more like we were engaged in committee work rather than exploratory discussions.

An additional challenge we faced was that many of the things we discussed as options for expanding the role of languages at Whitman College also had material and structural implications, involving additional work for anyone involved, thereby leading to chicken-and-egg type speculations about which should come first and how it might be possible to procure the resources needed to make the initiatives possible.

One third observation is that our group was fairly large. At the outset, it was my belief that it would be good to have a relatively broad campus representation in the group. I still think this was beneficial in some respects. At the same time, a large group is more difficult to coordinate and to corral in terms of focused discussion.

Despite these challenges, I believe our discussions were productive. It was difficult to take seriously the discussion of whether an enhanced role for languages was desirable, since all of us shared the conviction that this is an extremely important matter for the campus. But our views on how this might be accomplished did reflect a diversity of perspectives, and the opportunity to meet and confront our thoughts has resulted, I feel, in greater clarity of thinking and has produced a rough potential path for forward movement, if our ideas meet with encouragement elsewhere on campus.

One key issue that arose repeatedly was the question of a language requirement. The group discussed various ways in which a requirement could be structured (ranging from a minimal standard that could be satisfied by previous exposure at the high school level to a requirement that each and every student be required to take a language course on our campus, regardless their previous language background). We also asked ourselves what the desired and likely outcomes of such a requirement would be. This question—in the absence of consensus about a requirement—led to further discussion of whether the same desirable outcomes of a language requirement might be achieved by other means. In other words, if the desired outcome of a language requirement were to have larger numbers of

students studying languages and attaining a certain level of linguistic proficiency, we might do better to provide incentives and to create programs—curricular or extra-curricular—that would help students to pursue an interest in languages without forcing students to enroll in classes in which they might have little interest.

Along these lines, we examined programs on a number of other campuses, in many cases identified as "languages across the curriculum" (LAC) or "culture and language across the curriculum" (CLAC). In many cases, these programs have proven difficult to sustain, often for the very reasons we found it difficult to advance in our discussions, namely questions of work load and compensation. Nevertheless, these models helped us to generate a number of ideas that might find application at Whitman College.

Among the things that could be done with relatively small investments of new funds or energies:

- promote enrollment of first-year students in language classes. This is a very basic step that could have tremendous benefits. Students who have background in a language are most likely to continue if they do so immediately in their first semester in college. Students who choose to learn a new language can maximize their learning by beginning early in their college career. Pre-major advisors will be encouraged to ask specifically about language classes as a part of first-year advising.
- improve recruitment of students with advanced language skills. Although the Admissions office does consider language courses as a component of a prospective student's profile, it might be possible to pay greater attention to this factor, with particular weight given to students who have attended bilingual or immersion schools or to students who have substantive linguistic exposure of other types.
- offer support for existing linguistic groups on campus. Students with advanced or native knowledge of a language could be hired to animate culture and language groups. This might be a good source of employment for some of Whitman's international students.
- offer guidance and support for faculty members who would like to design projects in currently existing courses that would allow students to use their language skills. These might be independent research projects or projects that would pool student input (some using English sources and some using foreign-language sources).
- the creation of an "International Studies" certificate or, even better, of an "international track" option within certain majors. In this scenario, students would work toward a certificate or specialized major by taking a number of prescribed courses.

Measures that would require a larger commitment might include:

- summer grants for students to take intensive language courses. These grants could assist students who are eager to make considerable progress between academic years or who wish to acquire some knowledge of a language not taught on our campus prior to participating in an off-campus study program.

- creation of 1- or 2-credit "trailer" courses that would support language work for students enrolled in courses taught in English. These courses could entail reading, writing and/or discussion components. They might result from collaborative efforts between faculty members or simply be sustained by the instructor of the "primary" course.
- diversification of course formats within the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature. The idea would be to create a number of smaller offerings that would allow students to continue working in a language even during semesters when they do not have room in their schedules for a full 4-credit class. In addition, these courses could allow students enrolled in regular 4-credit courses to intensify their language experience during a given semester. The major question here is whether this option would require the allocation of additional instructional resources to FLL.
- experiential learning involving the use of language. In Spanish, this might involve community involvement of various kinds. In the other languages, it might take the form of instruction in local schools. In other cases, it might entail support for an international organization of some kind.
- addition of more languages to our curriculum. One format that is being used on a number of campus across the country has been labeled an Alternative Language Study Option (ALSO). ALSO programs offer credit-bearing courses in languages not fully supported by the regular instructional staff of the institution. Students study on their own, meet regularly with native speakers for communicative practice, and are tested by an outside (paid) examiner with academic credentials.
- support for faculty members to develop or refresh their language skills, particularly when this instructor has plans to incorporate a linguistic element in a course or to design a "trailer" course. If a small fund were available for this purpose, competitive applications might be made for summer study (or course work during a sabbatical semester).

Such initiatives could, in addition to allowing students to learn new languages and encouraging them to maintain previously acquired language skills, foster a closer integration of language with a variety of disciplines all across our campus. In fact, some of these things are already being done on our campus in sporadic fashion, driven by the energies of individual faculty members. With broader institutional support, they could become an integral part of our campus landscape.

In sum, the idea of nourishing a culture for languages across the campus as Whitman College is an inspiring one that seems to hold much promise even while posing significant organizational hurdles, particularly in the areas of work load, compensation, and sustainability. One step that might be taken would be to develop a grant proposal in the area of faculty development that would be submitted to the Mellon Foundation. This possibility was suggested by John Bogley, and it does seem like a very promising avenue to explore if there is sufficient interest across campus.

Susan Babilon

Participant statement on CDTLI workshop “Languages Across the Campus” (Fall 2012)

a) The workshop on Languages Across the Campus successfully encouraged creative inquiry into the possibilities of cross-disciplinary teaching and learning at Whitman, as participants researched, shared and discussed various models of teaching and learning languages in non-language classes. We discussed models in practice at campuses across the U.S. as well as hypothetical ones designed more specifically to meet our needs and resources at Whitman. The variety of possibilities was encouraging and also addressed the reality that we need different forms of language-across-the-curriculum practices at Whitman to suit the character of various courses and the foreign language abilities and interests of our diverse faculty.

b) German Studies at Whitman has been a pioneer in language-across-the-campus approaches since the major was changed to allow students to include credits from courses taught in English in other disciplines. In these courses students have focused their papers or presentations on topics that would require them to conduct research with German language materials. The extent to which they have done this has varied from course to course and instructor to instructor, and more recently (since fall 2010) these courses have incorporated either German reading or writing requirements, as well as discussions focused on linguistic features of texts and ideas. In addition, courses taught by German faculty in FLL in English have had components requiring students seeking German major or minor credit to complete numerous writing assignments in German, complete class readings in German and attend discussion sessions in German.

This workshop has given me the opportunity to consider more consistent approaches to requirements for German majors and minors taking courses taught by faculty outside of FLL. However, the possibility of such consistency seems very difficult given the resources and other teaching responsibilities of faculty involved.

For example:

1) A weekly discussion session in German is a component missing in most of the courses taught outside of FLL by “affiliated faculty,” and a component that would be extremely beneficial and desirable to German students. This, however, entails either: a) an overload by the non-FLL faculty member or a German faculty member, or b) the utilisation of a Native Speaker/Language Assistant. Compensation to the faculty member would be in order, either via a stipend or credits towards a course reduction. Utilizing the resources of the Native Speaker/Language Assistant seems like the easiest solution; however, the NS/LA are hired for a variety of needs and arrive with a variety of talents, with not everyone being suited to lead a discussion on the intellectual level required. Thanks to the abilities of one former NS/LA I was able to incorporate such a discussion session in a recent course (Nature & Environmentalism in German Culture), and it is something I will hopefully be able to incorporate in any of my future courses taught in English. The ability of the NS/LA to take on this responsibility would also be dependent upon the number of such courses that students would be enrolled in in a given semester.

2) Julia Ireland has done a phenomenal job of developing this component in her philosophy courses. I’m extremely grateful for her commitment to building opportunities for German majors/minors as well as enabling Philosophy students to delve more deeply into the German language component of their work, and attracting them to German studies. This commitment,

however, has required her to devote considerable over-load time to special class hours with students.

3) I've begun to discuss with affiliated faculty members the possibility of offering a stand-alone 1-2 varying credit Languages Across the Curriculum option for students which would partner with a normally-taught 4-credit course. Ideally students would be enrolled in the main course as well as the 1-2 credit LAC course, but we'd like to keep the course open for students not enrolled in the main course as well. This would be a weekly 50-minute discussion of texts related to the main course material, led either by the faculty of the main course or the NS/LA with supervision by the faculty of the main course as well as a German FLL professor. I've already discussed this with Julia Ireland and Dennis Crockett and both have come up with appropriate reading material. This would allow students to practice their language skills, as well as deepen their knowledge of the course material, and for those enrolled in the main course to also bring this knowledge back to the main classroom. Students wanting 2 credits would need to fulfill writing requirements. The grading of the German of these writing assignments would be the responsibility of me with some assistance by the NS/LA, resulting in additional workload for me, but nonetheless an attractive option.

In our workshop we additionally discussed other opportunities to encourage continued language learning by our students. Foreign language study faces a stronger risk than any other disciplines of losing students to the discipline once they've taken even just a semester break from the language, since foreign language skills are so easily weakened by lack of practice, and the perception of an inability to regain these skills is quite high among learners. If we want to encourage students to continue their language study in order to prepare them for citizenship in the global community, we need to offer opportunities for small-scale practice when students' schedules and requirements to other majors prevent them from taking a full four-credit class in FLL.

- I have been offering independent study options for reading and writing about contemporary fiction to several students over the last few years when they've been unable to enroll in the one course that is being offered at their level in a particular semester. They have thereby been able to continue their language skills, and rejoin a 4-credit course in a subsequent semester.

- I've also taught a group independent study on advanced grammar when German studies didn't have enough faculty members to offer a second semester of 3<sup>rd</sup>-year German to enable students to continue to develop this aspect of their language study.

- Sarah Hurlburt's wonderfully successful French Theater Club has inspired me to consider such an option for German students. This would allow more oral/aural practice in contrast to the reading/writing option I have been offering. Two particular students who have been participating in Professor Hurlburt's Theater Club and also study/speak German have agreed to help me run a trial (non-credit) option of a German theater club in the fall of 2013. Sarah has generously offered provide advice as needed. If this is successful, I could offer a version with credit in a subsequent semester.

- Option 3, described above, also fits this category.

While the courses that I'm already offering won't change significantly from my experiences in this cross-disciplinary workshop, I'm committed to providing students more small-credit language experiences, thus enabling them to pursue majors in other disciplines while still

maintaining and expanding their foreign language skills. And I'm committed to continuing working with faculty outside of FLL to develop options for students to practice their language skills in these non-language courses. As faculty of these courses have discussed with me, these students' linguistic abilities as well as their deeper knowledge of particular cultures has enhanced the classroom experience for the other participants. Methods for application of such opportunities will vary from semester to semester depending on course offerings, faculty teaching these courses, students enrolled and their language skills, and native speaker/language assistant abilities.

REPORT: Janis Breckenridge  
CDTLI: Languages Across the Campus (LAC)  
Fall 2012

Jack Iverson coordinated this CDTLI, *Languages across the Campus*, with the intent of investigating the value of foreign language study, current trends in the field in higher education, specific programs in place on other campuses and possible models that might prove beneficial to enhance the study of foreign languages at Whitman. This was a large group, composed of faculty members from numerous departments: Anthropology, Foreign Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, Religion, and Spanish. We met several times over the course of the fall semester. The first few meetings were devoted to the discussion of specific readings including recent MLA reports in addition to examining current programs at other institutions. Other meetings were dedicated to meeting with representatives from across Whitman's campus that would be directly involved and/or impacted if Whitman formally adopted a Languages across the Campus program (specifically OCS, Admissions, and Development).

Given the nature of its focus, this CDTLI, my third, was unlike either of my prior experiences. As noted by other members of the teaching and learning group, it often took on the character of a committee. That said, this collaborative effort met its goals by successfully bringing together faculty, administration and staff. This resulted in an ongoing interdisciplinary conversation regarding the current status of languages at Whitman and the goals and potential impact of future endeavors.



Donghui He

Report on Language Across the Campus workshop

- a. *The workshop's success (or lack thereof) in meeting the goal of encouraging creative inquiry into the possibilities of cross-discipline teaching and learning*

This workshop encouraged us to explore the best ways to deploy our foreign language resources and expertise to meet students' language and career needs. It was very helpful to discuss models of LAC offered by other universities/colleges and review our instructional resources and students' needs with colleagues from the Foreign Languages, Asian Studies, humanities, and social sciences departments. As a forum for this interaction, the workshop proved to be very effective at fostering cross-discipline teaching and learning discussions. I gained a great deal of insight and perspective from our discussions. The workshop responded to my interest in expanding Chinese language offerings beyond the existing curriculum with existing staff.

- b. *How each member anticipates incorporating the results of the workshop into his or her instruction.*

I proposed an English/Chinese translation workshop in response to an on-going demand for Chinese language courses beyond the fourth-year level. This one credit workshop will accommodate students who want to continue after fourth year Chinese or return to campus after completing one or two semesters of off-campus study in China as well as international students who require Chinese-English translation assistance. This course will be taught as an overload after my sabbatical leave.

- c. *Any concerns each member has about how this workshop was designed, organized, and led as well as suggestions about how these concerns might be addressed in future workshops.*

None come to mind at the moment. Some may arise in the near future as we discuss our curriculum experiments with LAC and find a way to apply them to regular courses offerings.

Sarah Hurlburt

Final report for Languages Across the Campus

I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the CDTL workshop "Languages Across Campus" in the Fall of 2012. This workshop differed rather significantly in its structure and evolution from the other workshops I have attended because of the extent to which it combined discussions of scientific research on the cognitive benefits of language with very concrete curricular and resource questions.

The word "resource" had a very dual presence in our discussions over the course of the semester. On the one hand, many of the ideas we discussed would require more "resources" (money) in order to be implemented. On the other hand, and this was I think the most exciting and beneficial aspect of the meetings, the range and role of language skills in the research of faculty members across campus constantly emerged as another kind of resource, a resource that is not currently being fully utilized.

We spent a fair amount of discussion time brainstorming and researching ways to promote synergy around second and third language communities and applications across campus. This was not a group to discuss how to expand the department of Foreign Languages - it was a group to explore how to break out of the rigid mold wherein second-language communities and academic use ONLY takes place in the context of the department of Foreign Languages. Our curricular discussion was ongoing (we came back to it almost every meeting) and active, if not definitive. We focused most frequently on different supplemental models; Whitman is a small college, and it seems unlikely that we could staff/enroll an entire course taught in, say, French, in a department such as, say, history or sociology. These discussions would then sometimes digress into the question of what other topics, skills or areas might use the same model, or whether languages represent a unique case.

The workshop format seemed successful. We struggled to define what an "outcome" for this group would be, whether our individual experience and then reflection was sufficient or whether we should in fact strive for some kind of proposal. I think this dilemma was imposed by the topic itself, which combined scientific, theoretical and very practical questions. My own penchant is for the practical - any time the group appeared to be approaching consensus on some aspect of "best practices" I wanted to move immediately to the "Ok, how can we do this?" This inclination was at one extreme of an entire spectrum of approaches to this type of discussion. While I was frustrated in my inadvertent attempts to turn this into an adhoc committee, I agree with our group's assertion that CDTL is NOT a committee format, and should not attempt to substitute itself for such.

Julia Ireland

a) the workshop's success (or lack thereof) in meeting the goal of encouraging creative inquiry into the possibilities of cross-disciplinary teaching and learning;

The two aspects of the workshop that were most successful for me were the research that we did into other universities' LAC programs and whether or not they'd be feasible for us at Whitman, and the conversations that we had with outside offices (Admissions, Study Abroad), which both helped to address several misconceptions I had and generated some interesting programs that could be immediately implemented (e.g. identifying "native" or "heritage" speakers and facilitating organizing a language [with stipend] for returning Study Abroad Students).

With respect to the former, talking about what other schools did helped me to see what further possibilities were out there while at the same time grounding them in reality by comparing them to what we actually already do and how that both is and is not supported. The two ideas I found most exciting were the "ALSO" language study program, and giving interested and motivated professors stipend style money to support their ideas for creating a culture of foreign language study using current programs on the campus as helpful exemplars. I gave up my initial wish to have something institution big and curricular.

Where I wish discussions would have worked a little differently is in worrying about the outcome phase. I felt like we got stalled in meta-level discussions about what we were doing and how to package it too early.

b) how each member anticipates incorporating the results of the workshop into his or her instruction:

As a direct result of the research and discussions we had about other LAC programs I changed how my German Philosophy course is listed. Rather than having the same course have a separate number in Philosophy and German, German students can now take the philosophy course with an up to 2 credit German language add on. (So the idea is we read Arendt in class and then read a selection of Arendt in the German course.) After further discussion with Susan Babilon, we decided to open this course up to all interested German speakers at the second year level. This gives students increased flexibility in how they want to do the course—it is not required that they take the philosophy course—and makes the philosophy component of the course be cleaner for me. I approached Jack Iverson and Patrick Frierson for suggestions about symbolic compensation; both had good ideas, but this is unresolved.

A further aspect of this set-up is that it will allow me to do several difficult kinds of language activities in my allotted weekly hour—e.g. translation work, grammar

related review, watching a video—whereas previously I limited my German language time to 35 minutes of translation work because it was an extra, outside of class component to the course. This new structure makes so much more sense!

c) any concerns each member has about how this workshop was designed, organized, and led as well as suggestions about how these concerns might be addressed in future workshops.

I work best when things are made concrete for me. I would have loved to have had more formal presentations on what different members were already doing as it pertained to LAC (e.g. Sara's theater course, Chaz' China trips), what didn't/doesn't work about what they already do, and how they would redesign things to meet their own ideal. Similarly, I would have loved to have shared my German Philosophy syllabus, talking about what didn't work, what other's think would be exciting to students, and what's realistic for me (always my downfall). While I clearly benefitted from our outside research, I consistently feel I learn the most from the experiments conducted by people who are my colleagues.

Jack Iverson

Participant report: Cross-disciplinary group, "Languages across the campus"  
Fall 2012

a) the workshop's success (or lack thereof) in meeting the goal of encouraging creative inquiry into the possibilities of cross-disciplinary teaching and learning

My response in this regard is highly ambivalent. In terms of thinking about what could be done to promote a cross-disciplinary approach to languages on our campus and the way language learning could be linked to all sorts of other activities at Whitman College, this workshop was very successful and at some points inspirational. Along these lines, it was empowering to think about the added value that language could potentially bring to a whole range of otherwise single-disciplinary endeavors, with huge benefits not only for students but for faculty as well. Exploring these options seems to be incumbent upon us if we are serious about pursuing the liberal arts mission of the College in the 21st century. Ideally, we would both strengthen our existing language programs and expand student options for language study in other settings.

My ambivalence comes with thinking about actually trying to execute many of these ideas. I have yet to meet a member of the Whitman College faculty who feels underemployed, and much of what we were talking about can only be defined as additional work involving (ideally) a broad base of faculty. Additionally, it seems there might be fears among our colleagues in the languages that we would be making languages subservient to other disciplines if we were to make languages look like a mere tool that allows students to do cool things in other areas. Personally, I don't agree with this line of thinking—I believe that students would probably emerge from the cross-disciplinary use of language with an even greater commitment to the culture of languages. Still, the "political" position of languages within the curriculum of the College is a delicate one, and we did discuss options that might, in one way or another, modify that position substantially. I emerged from the workshop thinking that the ideas we were discussing would ultimately need broad institutional endorsement.

My thoughts on the actual contents of the workshop are contained in the report of the coordinator.

b) how each member anticipates incorporating the results of the workshop into his or her instruction—e.g., by altering the content or pedagogical framework of currently-offered courses or by developing new courses. (In doing so, participants should keep in mind the following recommendation from Building on Excellence, 2010: "Possible ways to do so [i.e., to draw connections between established departmental majors as well as between these major programs and other key elements of the academic program] include the development of courses taught by faculty members in different disciplines and across academic divisions; the promotion of cross-listed courses as well as the creation and/or addition of courses that can count toward more than one set of major

requirements; and the grouping of courses from different disciplines into thematic constellations”); and

By definition, one obvious component of "languages across the curriculum" is the linking of language study with other areas of the curriculum. In various forms, we already do a fair bit of this in FLL, but our efforts could go further, and we could improve upon our ability to articulate to students the ways in which language study enhances their undergraduate experience generally. We have started efforts in this direction in the French program, but more certainly could be done. For me personally, the most obvious thing would be to complement the World Literature course I will be teaching Spring 2014 with a 1-credit reading and discussion section in French. (And this could be done with all World Literature courses offered by members of the French section.) I have yet to decide whether I wish to take this on.

More broadly, the big question is which steps might be taken most economically and most effectively (thinking in terms of the energies of available faculty, as much as anything). At the same time, it seems reasonable and realistic to inquire whether individual faculty members can be expected to sustain an initiative of this sort (anecdotal evidence from other institutions suggests that it is not easy to keep a LAC program going).

My conclusion is that I would like to see an institutional initiative, probably aimed at faculty development, that would seek to enhance broadly the presence of languages to include sites outside the standard 4-credit courses offered by FLL. I would be very excited about working in this direction if it were accompanied by a commitment to instructional implementation.

c) any concerns each member has about how this workshop was designed, organized, and led as well as suggestions about how these concerns might be addressed in future workshops.

I have previously participated in a summer CDTLI workshop, and I must say that I must preferred that experience. I would have benefitted more from this group had I been able to devote more time to it, and that simply was out of the question in the midst of the academic term. I will be very reluctant to sign up for another workshop scheduled during the academic year.

Languages Across the Curriculum  
CDTLI Participant Report

by Chas McKhann

A) I thought the workshop was quite successful, insofar as we discussed a number of models for increasing student exposure to foreign languages that I had not been aware of. There was considerable disagreement over the idea of introducing a language requirement for all students. While all of us agreed that studying foreign languages is an important thing for a global citizen, some felt that 'forcing' students to take a language might sour the classroom experience for others, while others were concerned with the practical question of funding the increased number of language teachers such a move would require.

One of the most useful discussions we had concerned how to increase the use of foreign languages in non-language courses. For me, in anthropology, this might involve doing extra work with Chinese language students in my China-related courses, but there were questions here, too, concerning faculty overload and compensation.

Overall, I think the discussions were good, and it was good the coordinator, Jack Iverson, included a number of people who have a direct interest in foreign languages, but who are not in FLL departments.

B) I am teaching my Chinese Society and Culture class this semester, and I will see if anyone participating has the Chinese language skills to do research in Chinese. I have done this in the past when I have native speakers in the class, but not for folks who are taking beginning level Chinese. One way that I have tried already to bring language into the class is to talk about the nature and structure of Chinese language, how the ideographs work, etc., and to present the ideographs for key concepts. Everybody seems to get a little something out of this, and of course it's quite useful for those who are studying Chinese.

The other bit that is relevant to my case is combining anthropology and Chinese language in the Summer Study in China program. Of course, I've already done a lot of that during the two times I've led that program, and I'll continue to do it in the future.

C) I thought the organization of the workshop was fine. It would have been nice to have one or two people from the natural sciences, as their views on a language requirement, for example, might be quite different from the rest of us.

Languages across the Curriculum  
CDTLI Participant Report

Jason Pribilsky, Associate Professor, Dept. of Anthropology

- A. Overall, I thought the LAC workshop was a successful cross-fertilization of ideas between colleagues of different disciplines and campus constituencies. Professor Iverson chose wisely in selecting this group. Not only were the members from different departments across campus but many of them also represented interdisciplinary programs that have a critical interest in languages (German, Global Studies, and Asian Studies). Fortunately (or unfortunately) the diversity of voices translated at times into heated debates on a topic of campus-wide import. I thought the basic guiding questions of the LAC workshop (even if they were not explicitly phrased) kept us on track and also kept us in debate. In my understanding those questions were: 1) Should Whitman instate a language requirement and, if so, to what benefit?; and 2) If Whitman does not instate a language requirement, can the shared commitment to languages across campus be implemented through different curricular and pedagogical channels? I was personally relieved that we devoted more time to the second question and exploring ways language instruction, use, and critical engagement is already infused into our campus-wide programs outside of standard language instruction. It was illuminating to hear how colleagues outside of the language departments draw upon and use foreign languages in their course instruction. In sum, the most valuable cross-disciplinary perspective I gained from this workshop was to see how my different colleagues valued language as a critical part of a Whitman education.
- B. For me, the most important aspect of the workshop I could glean for my teaching has to do with off-campus study and experiential learning. During the years I co-directed an ethnographic field school in Ecuador, working in Spanish was adjunct to tasks at hand. In other words, students had to *operate* in Spanish, but exploring different dimensions of language use was not a key focus. The LAC workshop afforded a space to consider ways to position language more centrally in the programs. This could be in the form of partnering with a faculty member in Spanish who teach a short (1-credit) class that focuses on language issues in the field. Additionally, the group helped me explore ways I could better incorporate language in my Latin American ethnography courses. One option would be to offer a supplementary 1-credit add-on course where students already proficient in Spanish could do outside readings in Spanish to deepen their experience of what they are learning in class. At present, I am not confident in my abilities to direct students in this way. (I can speak and read Spanish, but am sure I have the chops to teach it.) Still, the exploration allowed me to consider what supplemental



primary language materials could be incorporated into my ethnography courses, even if they were not accompanied by the 1 credit course option. Overall, I learned more about what my colleagues in the languages (and some in the humanities) are already doing to incorporate languages beyond standard language instruction than I did in terms of new ideas for myself.

- C. I found the design of the LAC workshop to be logical and well-suited to our overarching goals (as phrased in the questions above). The workshop's readings were chosen carefully, and although they tended to come at the issue of language largely from a humanities perspective (many documents from the MLA), they were great agitators for discussion.

Cross-Disciplinary Teaching and Learning Initiative  
“Languages Across the Campus”  
Fall, 2012  
Jonathan Walters, Professor of Religion

(a) The CDTLI on “Languages Across the Campus” introduced me to a wide range of issues surrounding and creative approaches to an area in which I occasionally teach (my course on The Sinhala Language) and, in recent years, which quite regularly has surfaced as part of my service (as Division Chair, and now as Director of Global Studies). My own work as a scholar is likewise deeply rooted in the study of languages; like all the participants in the workshop, I came into it with a pre-existing commitment to the study and teaching of languages, and a desire to see Whitman do better in producing bilingual students prepared in that increasingly *sine qua non* way for meaningful participation in a global 21st century.

I’m glad to have had, through the workshop, a taste -- but also glad that it was never much more than a taste -- of various types of scholarly literature *about* teaching languages both inside and outside the traditional boundaries of the foreign languages department, but for me the especially valuable aspects of our discussions were those that telescoped the sometimes sweeping generalizations of that scholarship back onto our small community, the resources at hand, and the individuals who are already innovating across curricular boundaries to expand language-learning opportunities in the College. Additionally, we talked extensively -- and had individual assignments to research -- about multiple colleges and universities across the country which have a reputation for innovation in the area. Though much of this revealed (a) a plethora of grandiose acronyms (LAC, CLAC, etc.) without much (often just one or two enthusiastic faculty members) beneath them and/or (b) inapplicability to our situation (such as programs that presume a steady supply of “native speakers” in a large, urban setting), little bits and pieces jumped out as having real potential for Whitman at this juncture: strengthening our integration and cultivation of heritage-speakers and language-club structures and OCS participants and short-term faculty-led trips abroad (and perhaps moving toward consortial learning and resource sharing, and distance learning possibilities for the range of languages we should, in a perfect world, offer) as legitimate dimensions of a “culture of languages” on campus; beefing up second-language standards among other expectations for the students we admit (which concomitantly affects that “culture” in the previous point; we at least need to move beyond our apparent niche as the top rank liberal arts college from which one can get a degree WITHOUT studying a second language!); developing language opportunities inherent in community service and CBL components of the curriculum, as they emerge; a whole variety of add-on models that exploit potential connections between language-learning and non-language-based courses in the general curriculum (models some of our colleagues have already been trying out at Whitman). Strengthening this “culture” at Whitman will no doubt entail adding FTEs in the languages themselves, securing those we have and expanding to include those we most critically need (Arabic), but it might also involve expanding these other sorts of opportunities too (and, in particular, funding

the additional service required by “add-on” courses, however they may be conceived). Such a “culture” would be broad enough to embrace ESL-related initiatives as well, and it is at least an open question whether it should also include less-traditional “languages” such as computer languages; it would be a good climate in which to build a linguistics program. This vision of a “culture of languages” in which the niches for cultivating bilingualism are sufficiently broad and diverse that more of our students *want to* find them, makes, say, a language requirement look rather different than it does when the latter is conceived merely in terms of increased staff/workload in FLL.

(b) I have taught my Sinhala course twice, both times as something of a lark made possible by an unusual constellation of events and people. If such a constellation occurs again I would happily embrace it by offering the course again, and especially if Whitman does move in the direction of a broadened commitment to the study of second languages I would enhance the actual language-learning component of the course to better meet that particular goal. In this same vein, exploring possible constellations of OCS returnees and heritage speakers, for example, underlined my standing interest in developing a Whitman-led program in South Asia, which could anchor a coherent program of add-ons and distance courses to legitimately fulfill second-language goals in a language of that region. I have moreover considered -- as I had not done previously -- the ways in which I could turn my regular repertoire of courses into standing opportunities for “add-on” study of the languages I know well enough to evaluate (and perhaps supervised study under outside readers of languages in my general area). This workshop also encourages me to redouble my efforts as a premajor advisor to get more students on track in language study as they enter the College, and to stick with it despite the inevitable pull of other interests too. Finally, wearing my administrative hat, the workshop led me and others, especially in Asian Studies, to open new discussions about where certain language programs should be located institutionally.

(c) The management of the workshop was excellent. Jack Iverson was very well organized, kept us informed of upcoming meetings (and occasional changes of time or venue), made scholarship and other relevant documents easily available to us, and did his best to keep us on track in our discussions. But because we all were predisposed from the get-go to favor innovations that expand language learning on campus, this literature mostly was preaching to the choir, and as indicated above, I did not find it particularly substantive, nor oftentimes relevant to our own situation. I’m sure that Jack thought me a pill for being the one who kept trying to push pragmatic agendas....having discussed ideas at length, always considering resources and realities at Whitman, I wanted to make good on the workshop by actually proposing things that would help. That desire met with resistance from others who wanted to keep the proceedings at the level of discussion, rather than action. My frustration in this is perhaps a reflection on the way these workshops are set up more than on this particular iteration. That is, I would like to see a more pragmatic outcome from this sort of investment of time and resources than seems to be assumed for the CDTLI workshops. I suspect some things will be forthcoming from ours -- the biggest of them is that Asian Studies is reconsidering its relationship to the Asian languages, including the future-potential Arabic program -- but again, I would have liked to have seen this group of dedicated

language-teachers come together en bloc behind whatever pragmatic steps might be taken right now, and many of them with little cost, in order to be working at -- rather than just talking about -- improving the culture of languages at Whitman.