# Teaching Assistant Handbook

# Department of French & Italian

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**UCDAVIS**
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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# Welcome to the Department!  Goals and Policies

Our primary goal for Teaching Assistants and Associate Instructors is to move you toward mastery of pedagogical techniques and to help you develop autonomy in your role as instructors. We endeavor to form instructors who take responsibility for class structure and content, albeit within the confines of a common syllabus, rather than simply repeating pre-scripted lesson plans and following rigid structures. This is part of our larger Departmental philosophy vis-à-vis graduate student preparation and training as apprentice teachers: we are here to help you "learn the ropes," experience a variety of teaching techniques, become familiar with foreign language pedagogy, and develop your own approach to classroom teaching.  Good teaching requires practice, patience, self-critique, and an openness to new approaches. It is a lifelong goal. We hope to help you make some helpful strides and to set up excellent practices for the future.

Our philosophy with respect to graduate students as instructors engages you as professionals in training for an academic career. We hope that the skills you learn as language instructors will transfer to a tenure-track position in the future, enabling you to design and execute stimulating and thought-provoking courses geared toward specific skills in a variety of fields.

Each new instructor will be given responsibility for a first-year course section.  Over the course of your graduate career, you will eventually progress through the different courses (FRE 1, 2, 3, 21, 22 & 23) according to departmental need and scheduling demands.

Be sure to refer to the **Policy and Procedures Manual** for questions concerning departmental policy, as well as campus-wide policy and procedures for all instructors.

**How to Set Goals**
Through work with supervisors and mentoring sessions (e.g. FRE 390A/B), we will guide you in setting up goals for each day spent in class, for each week, for each instructional unit (chapter) and for an entire course.  This entails thinking about learning objectives and the building blocks that enable students to move toward well-defined outcomes. Lesson plans, which are skeletal in nature, are provided in a UC Davis Box file. You should view these lesson plans as a roadmap, rather than a strict mandate. They include topics that should be addressed during a given day (based on unit objectives), suggested exercises, and pertinent reminders about curricular sequencing (e.g. preparing for oral exams).

**How to Build a Lesson Plan**
In keeping with the above, we will help you build lesson plans around a target activity that entails active, communicative language production and engages students in using the targeted structure(s).  The **Lesson Plan Template** (see appendix) provides a structure for self-evaluation and encourages you to think about outcomes each day: where would you like to see the students after 50 minutes?  How does each segment of the lesson contribute to the overall goals of the day?  You can use the different activities in the book or materials in Box to help plan and guide your movement toward your daily objectives.

We also stress that time in class should be spent in ways that maximize the students' contact with you and with fellow classmates, while promoting maximum language use. In other words, try not to spend class time doing things that students can do at home alone. This "**flipped classroom**" approach encourages active engagement during class, supplemented by serious homework and study outside of class.


**Assessing Strengths and Weaknesses**

All classes are different. A lesson plan that worked perfectly well in one class may not work for another. For this reason, we think that it's important that you learn to assess your students' strengths and weaknesses. You may have a class that does well in small group work but won't engage as a larger cohort. Think about ways to build out from small group work toward other types of engagement that you would like to see.

Learning to assess your own strengths and weaknesses as a teacher is also part of the process. It is important to take a step back and assess your own teaching style periodically. We will require you to complete the Lesson Plan Template (see appendix) and share it with your course supervisor periodically to reinforce self-analysis and critique. Your course supervisor and fellow language instructors are a wonderful resource for deepening your understanding of pedagogy. Please take advantage of all opportunities to engage in constructive conversation about teaching! We are all constantly honing our craft.


**Modeling and Scaffolding**

Many wonderful lesson plans and activities go awry because students do not understand what they are being asked to do. To avoid confusion and wasting precious class time, think about how you are going to ensure that students understand what you expect of them. There are many ways to explain an exercise and **modeling** can be an extremely useful tool. Think about including a **written example** on a PowerPoint slide or on the board or of an **oral example** that you can execute either by yourself or with the aid of a good student. The ideal lesson plan progresses smoothly and seamlessly through increasingly open-ended tasks toward a communicative activity. The only way to achieve this goal is to make sure that students understand what they are supposed to do along the way (the scaffolding).


**Observation and Evaluation**

All new TAs will be observed by the course supervisor at least twice during their first quarter of teaching and periodically during the following quarters. Continuing instructors will be observed by a member of the faculty at least once each academic year. It is important for the faculty (not just the course supervisors) to be aware of what is going on in the first- and second-year curricula and to have first-hand knowledge of your teaching abilities in order to be able to write informed letters of recommendation. With this goal in mind, we have developed an observation report form to guide the process (see appendix). The form reflects departmental philosophy by including criteria concerning how you budget your time in the classroom, how your lesson is structured, how well you manage the classroom, etc. We

hope that this observation policy will help you reflect on and improve your teaching in helping you to take more responsibility for student engagement and outcomes. We strongly encourage you to engage in peer observations, as well. Returning TAs are available not only for observation, but for follow-up discussion. Learning to be a great teacher is an interactive process.

**Error Correction**
Our approach to the classroom includes serious efforts at error correction through varied feedback. While we do not encourage constant interruption or critique, we will provide suggestions for modeling correct grammar, syntax, pronunciation, as well as ways in which to intervene without disrupting classroom energy and flow. Remember that your primary responsibility is to move students to increased proficiency.

**Box, Canvas, and VHL Supersite**
We have established a UC Davis Box file for French 1, 2 & 3 Resources with materials for all levels of lower-division French. We encourage you to take a look at all these and use them in your classes; you are also strongly encouraged to make contributions and share them with your fellow instructors. Throughout the quarter, you will be paired with fellow TAs to collaborate on assessment and activity creation.

As part of both the first- and second-year curricula, students will be using the Vista Higher Learning (VHL) Supersite, the online component for homework. VHL Central is linked through the Canvas shell of your course section and self-graded homework activities are pre-programmed for you. In order to maintain equity across sections of the same course, we ask that you discuss adding or subtracting VHL assignments with the Language Program Supervisor. As you use *Promenades* (first year) and *Imaginez* (second year), however, you will have opportunities to use the VHL testing bank, exercises and other ancillaries to develop assessments, mini-quizzes or in some cases to give additional practice to individual students who need or want it. Supersite is separate from Canvas and administered by VHL.

**Departmental Policy on Participation and Attendance**
Instructors are responsible for noting attendance and participation for each chapter/unit and for following the Departmental Attendance Policy for lower-division courses. This is given below.

"In order to continue making progress in language proficiency, regular attendance and participation in class discussion are expected. Your presence and participation contribute in significant ways to improving your proficiency; at the same time, you cannot expect to gain proficiency if you are not present and do not actively participate. Late arrivals count as absences; therefore, please plan ahead and come to class on time.

Work is expected to be handed in on the due date indicated in the syllabus with some assignments submitted directly through the Canvas portal; online workbook assignments are to be completed on their assigned date before class time. In cases of documented absence, students will be allowed to turn in assignments during the next class period without penalty. Otherwise, the grade will be lowered 5% for each day an assignment is late. Work that is more than one week overdue will receive a zero.

Absences will be excused only for extraordinary circumstances (illness, death in the family, etc.) and should be communicated clearly, and as soon as possible, to your instructor and/or course supervisor. If you encounter a true catastrophe that keeps you out of class for several days, resulting in significant learning loss, speak to or email your instructor as soon as possible; s/he may recommend that you contact OSSJA to arrange special accommodations for late work. In extreme cases, you may be asked to petition the Dean's office to arrange for exceptional withdrawal from the course.

**Cheating and Academic Dishonesty**
Departmental policy requires instructors report all cases of suspected academic dishonesty, as well as behavioral issues, to the Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs. When you encounter such a problem, notify your supervisor immediately and s/he will help you work with OSSJA. It is important to understand that OSSJA provides academic and psychological support to students in need of guidance. Reporting helps them to understand their mistakes and creates an institutional record to track future (or past) infractions."

# A First-Year Class Lesson: An Overview

The following is intended to give you a **very general** organizational structure to follow, especially during your first weeks of teaching in the Department. We do not intend this to be a rigid structure, but a guide to help you better plan and sequence your lessons. Note that not all elements will be involved in every day (e.g. there may be a day with no explicit pronunciation practice or a day given to reading and cultural themes). The Lesson Plan Template (see appendix) provides a more general structure with which to analyze and think about your lesson planning.

All of these activities should be "**student-centered**," i.e. they should require active participation by students and a minimum of teacher-focused instruction. This means avoiding, as much as possible, detailed grammatical explanations or presentation of vocabulary. One excellent rule of thumb for the **flipped classroom** is "if they can learn it at home by themselves, you should not be spending time in class on it." Try to create situations in which they speak, listen, read or write in ways not available to them at home.

**1. Warm-up (about 5 minutes – every class session)**
It is important that students transition into the language learning environment (listening to and speaking French). Ideas for warm-up exercises include recycling previous material or themes that are generally available to all. Keep correction and direct feedback to a minimum – your goal is to get everyone "in French mode." These should be fun exercises and can involve moving around the classroom. The main point is to get everyone involved speaking and listening.

**2a. New vocabulary**
Present new vocabulary in <u>context</u> and in <u>French</u>; the focus is primarily on comprehending and beginning to produce <u>correct forms</u> in an active way.
<div align="center">**AND / OR**</div>

**2b. Review / Recycle – vocabulary**
Vocabulary items from the previous day can be reviewed; little time is spent on presentation and the focus is primarily on <u>conveying meaning</u> with the forms they are now familiar with.

**3a. New grammar**
Present in <u>context</u> and in <u>French</u>; the focus is primarily on comprehending and beginning to produce <u>correct forms</u>. Try to spend a minimum of time on paradigms and structures that they should be able to learn through homework and maximize the use of the new forms.
<div align="center">**AND / OR**</div>

**3b. Review / Recycle – grammar**
Grammar points from the previous day are reviewed; little time is spent on presentation and the focus is primarily on <u>conveying meaning</u> with the forms they are now familiar with.

**4. Skill-building activity**
Moving from focused, controlled forms of language production toward more authentic, open forms of communication requires making sure that you covered all the basic skills and

competencies required in your final activity. You should include in every lesson a means for students to <u>use</u> what has been presented, reviewed and/or elaborated. For instance, if you have presented a new grammar point, you should plan on incorporating an open-ended activity (after more focused exercises geared toward accuracy) that targets more authentic-like use of that structure. Students should be given "real-world" tasks in order to emphasize that the foreign language is not simply an *object of study*, but a *tool for communication* (i.e., communication within a particular context). In the final activity, the goal is more delivering a message and less on the accuracy of the specific elements.

## Drills, Exercises and Activities

Teaching is not a static enterprise: you will need to develop lots of different activities to bring to the classroom and to any particular lesson. Many teachers find it useful to keep a binder full of activities for future use. Below are some descriptions of different drills and exercises, as well as suggested uses; this is by no means a comprehensive list.

You will note that some drills are closed and analytical, focusing on form and accuracy and little on communication, whereas others are more open-ended and holistic, having the communicative use of language as their objective. Consider the following *diagram* as a way of thinking about particular activities along the spectrum of less-to-more communicative language use.

Guided Practice <---------------------------------→ Communicative Task

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher-controlled | Learner-controlled |
| Focused on accuracy | "Authentic" |
| Analytical (one thing at a time) | Synthetic (all at once) |
| Closed | Open |

Repetition > Discrimination > Transformation > Mechanical > Meaningful > Communicative⇒

**Choral > Individual Repetition drill**
*Description*: students as a group repeat items after they are modeled by the instructor, and then individual students are asked to repeat. Problematic aspects of pronunciation are identified and treated more vigorously during individual repetition.
*Typical use*: whenever a focus on the correct form is needed, particularly with vocabulary items and verb conjugations; can also be helpful for pronunciation.
*Benefits:* easily implemented, straightforward, no "wrong answer" possibility
*Downsides*: does not target authentic language use; students only parrot but do not produce; **use sparingly**

**Discrimination drill**
*Description*: students are asked to discriminate between two similar sounds, forms, and/or meanings.
*Typical use*: two verb tenses (e.g., *je pense* vs. *je pensais*), singular versus plural (e.g., *il étudie*

vs. *ils étudient*), masculine versus feminine (e.g., *Dominique est sportif* vs. *sportive*), days of the week (e.g., *mercredi* vs. *vendredi*), countries (*Angleterre* vs. *Allemagne*).
*Benefits*: helpful in activating memorized structures or words, building contrasts and distinctions
*Downsides*: as above, not authentic or meaningful language use; students parrot but do not spontaneously produce

**Transformation (or substitution) drill**
*Description*: students are asked to 'switch out' forms within a single model sentence.
*Typical use*: verb conjugations (e.g., *je fais la vaisselle > nous? nous …*), number and gender agreement (e.g., *il est beau > elle est …*), verb tenses (e.g., *je prends un café > j'ai …*), relative clauses (e.g., *J'ai un ami. Il est sportif > J'ai un ami …*).
*Benefits*: encourages students to activate memorized forms and use them in a lower-pressure context; builds contrasts and distinctions
*Downsides*: still not authentic language use but moving closer on the spectrum. While not characteristic of the open-ended, naturalistic use that is the end goal of language learning, it does engage more actively with several elements of language simultaneously.

**Mechanical exercise**
*Description*: Questions that can have only one correct (logical) answer, which is typically a word or short phrase (e.g., *Le père de mon père est…*). Many textbook exercises are of this type.
*Typical use*: To check that students have comprehended a grammar or vocabulary point and to allow them practice in producing the correct form.
*Benefits:* more authentic language use, easy to integrate forms and structures / recycle past topics; lower-pressure communicative context
*Downsides*: not fully productive; does not require holistic language use and can easily become a "crutch" on which students rely. Nonetheless, an important stepping stone.

**Meaningful exercise**
*Description*: Questions that have a number of (logically) correct answers depending on the students' own situation/opinion, which is typically a short phrase or full sentence. Some textbook exercises are of this type.
*Typical use*: To check that students have comprehended a grammar or vocabulary point and to allow them practice in using the correct form in larger units of meaningful, situation-appropriate speech.
*Benefits*: allows students to form more holistic and complete sentences; integrates vocabulary and structures; allows for mistakes that can be corrected / addressed (mistakes are excellent learning opportunities)
*Downsides*: if students have not mastered basic material or failed to study, meaningful exercises can be overwhelming. **It is essential to prepare students by having them progress through a series of exercises that leads toward more meaningful activities.**

**Communicative exercise—The culminating activity of (almost) every lesson**
*Description*: Situation/topic-specific questions freely generated by the instructor or student and answered by someone else for the purpose of obtaining situation/topic-relevant information (i.e., a true conversation).
*Typical use*: To allow students to integrate a grammar point or vocabulary by communicating real information and interacting with other class members.
*Benefits*: as close to authentic, spontaneous language use as possible in the classroom setting; allows for the integration of vocabulary, grammar, and cultural themes; allows for a more holistic review and revision of topics; allows for instructor feedback
*Downsides*: instructors will have to carefully choose the type of feedback that is offered in these type of exercises (e.g. should every pronunciation error be corrected? Or simply those which impede comprehension?); these exercises take a relatively greater amount of planning, require time for execution and can only be adequately tackled once the basics (vocabulary, structures, cultural themes) are reviewed and their mastery assured.
Communicative exercises should be the culminating activity of many lesson plans. A sequence of short mechanical and/or transformational exercises should provide the skills requisite for these activities. This is the true target of language learning in our program and should always be foremost in your mind as you sketch out chapter lessons. We will work on "backwards build-up" of lesson plans to help you to think critically about how to structure a lesson that culminates in a communicative activity appropriate for the lesson.


# Four-Step Approach to Lesson Activities (see appendix for Lesson Plan Template)


**Preview**:
Build students' expectations about the content of the text (*listening/reading*) or the purpose of the communicative event (*writing/speaking*); increase the knowledge they bring to the activity. Some preview techniques:

      1. Link the text to the lesson content
      2. Introduce the topic via an activity in another mode: listening (cassette, video), reading, speaking, or writing
      3. Use/provide visuals, headlines/titles, charts, or other contextual aids
      4. Have students brainstorm to generate ideas/vocabulary that have a high probability of occurrence

**Pre-Stage—Set up**:
Guide students' reading/listening of a text by indicating what information they should derive from the text and how they are supposed to respond to it (e.g., listen for ... to complete this chart / list / diagram); guide students' speaking/writing in a communicative event by indicating what information they need to convey and suggesting how they could convey it.

Be sure that you **model** the desired activity and provide enough **scaffolding** so that students understand what is expected of them. Sometimes you can model the task yourself orally and/or visually, sometimes you can call on strong students to aid in modeling. Improper scaffolding often results in wasted class time because of miscommunication of expectations and goals.

**During Stage—Task Performance**:
Have students carry out the assignment in class; take care to design a task that is simple (not simplistic!) enough to be performed within the time limit.

**Post-Stage—Follow-up**:
Check comprehension of a reading/listening text and then *adapt* the activity (allowing for cross-cultural comparison and/or personalization) or perhaps *extend* it into another mode; have some students/pairs/groups share what they said or wrote with the rest of the class and then adapt the activity or extend it into another mode.

# Resources

## Online resources

The University of Texas at Austin has an outstanding set of professional development modules for foreign language teachers.  We strongly recommend that you follow some or all of these modules during your first year teaching.  You may want to return to this site periodically for review.  Each module has lessons that introduce you to specific aspects of second language pedagogy—four skills, language and the classroom.  Each module also has sample lessons and scholarly resources.
https://coerll.utexas.edu/methods/

The MoraModules site provides an overview of the different methods and approaches used in second language pedagogy.  This site may be helpful in making the terminology of second language pedagogy more familiar to you.
http://moramodules.com/ALMMethods.htm

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language [ACTFL] sets guidelines for language proficiency that are commonly used to assess learners' mastery. You may need to use these guidelines in future teaching positions or in writing letters of assessment for students.
https://www.actfl.org/educator-resources/actfl-proficiency-guidelines/french

# Doing a Warm-Up

A. Goals
      a. to put students at ease
      b. to get students accustomed to hearing and speaking French
      c. to set the 'theme' for the day's lesson (or at least the following module(s))
      d. (possibly) to *follow-up* on the previous day

B. A typical warm-up includes:
      a. a familiar topic
            *don't present or introduce anything new!*
      b. natural language use
            *meaning-oriented (communicative) exercise rather than drills!*
      c. little if any correction
            *this defeats the goal of putting students at ease!*
      d. an initial model by the instructor
            *this gives students the topic and an idea of how they are expected to respond!*
      e. questions that require progressively more language use
            *you can't expect sentences until you start with words and phrases!*
      f. may incorporate student - student interaction (pair or group work)
            *this allows all students to speak within the short timeframe!*


Some pointers:
- Warm-ups should usually last about 5 minutes
- This is a great time to get students focused, help them recall the day before, and set the tone for the day
- Warm-ups can be more fun, but are still purposeful. Remember that students are immersed in English during the other 23 hours and 10 minutes of their day: a good warm-up transitions them into French (learning, practice, use) gently but effectively.

Note: you may choose to use a quiz as a warm-up.
- In this case, you will (obviously) provide feedback, but it should be very directed and straightforward
- Quizzes should never cover new material; they may cover what was done in a prior class or very discrete information (e.g. vocabulary, verb conjugation) that was part of a homework sequence
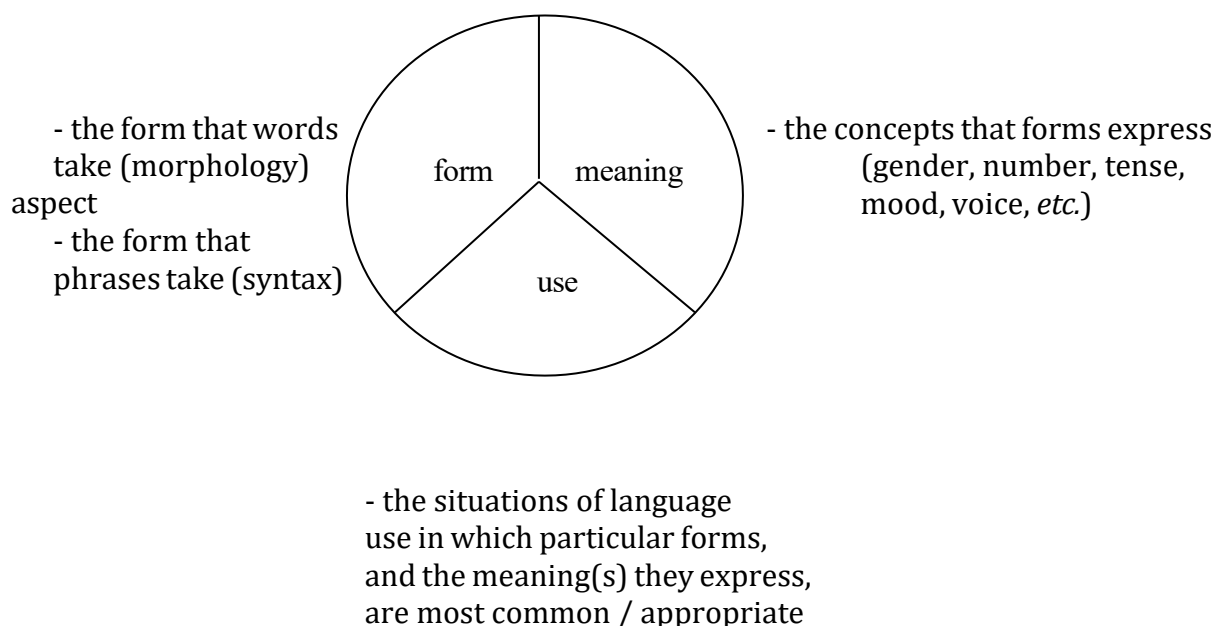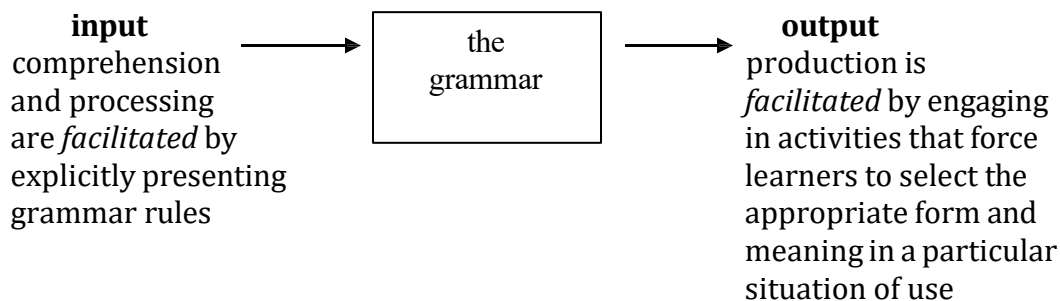
# Grammar

A. Preliminary considerations:

1. Two meanings of 'grammar'
  a. **linguistic**: the mental representation of language in the mind/brain that arises from the comprehension and processing of input, which then serves as a system for generating output.
  b. **pedagogical**: list of statements ('rules') about how a language combines form, meaning, and use

- the form that words
 take (morphology)
aspect
 - the form that
 phrases take (syntax)

form   meaning

use

- the concepts that forms express
 (gender, number, tense,
 mood, voice, *etc.*)

- the situations of language
use in which particular forms,
and the meaning(s) they express,
are most common / appropriate

2. Where do the linguistic and pedagogical notions of 'grammar' meet?

**input**
comprehension
and processing
are *facilitated* by
explicitly presenting
grammar rules

→ the grammar →

**output**
production is
*facilitated* by engaging
in activities that force
learners to select the
appropriate form and
meaning in a particular
situation of use

3. How many rules should be explicitly presented and when?
   *il regarde la télé*      (present tense *-er* verbs)
   *il ne regarde pas la télé*    (placement of negation)
   *il regarde souvent la télé*   (placement of frequency adverbs)
   *il préfère/aime regarder la télé*  (verb+infinitive constructions)
   *il la regarde*        (placement of object pronouns)

*il ne la regarde pas*　　　　　　　(object pronouns and negation)
　　　　*il (n')aime (pas) la regarder*　　　　(object pronouns and infinitives)


B. The treatment of grammatical structures


1. Presentation *within a context*
　　　i. use a logical link (transitions) from the previous module
　　　ii. provide numerous examples of the use of the grammatical structure within some
　　　sort of narration, dialogue, agenda, etc.
　　　iii. divide an overly long grammar point into sub-points, each with their own set of
　　　form-oriented drills
　　　iv. have students interact with you during the presentation and sometimes
　　　summarizing the rule(s) themselves
　　　iv. limit your presentation to a fraction (probably 1/3) of the time devoted to this
　　　module


2. Sequenced practice (may not involve all of i-iv; should always target v and vi)
　　　i. Repetition of relevant forms
　　　ii. Discrimination between forms
　　　iii. Transformational/substitution drills
　　　iv. Mechanical exercise(s)
　　　v. Meaningful exercise(s)
　　　vi. Task-based (communicative) exercise(s)


3. Review and recycling (in subsequent warm-ups, grammar modules, and skill-building [*C en C*] activities)


Some pointers:
- Avoid wasting class time with explanations that could be done (or should have been done) as homework/ reading.
  ☞ Students should be responsible for learning; you are their guide, not their brain
- Avoid spending time on repeating things like verb paradigms: one choral repetition sequence (*je pensais… tu pensais … elle pensait …*) can be useful for pronunciation, but for form they should already be familiar (assuming they have done the homework!)
  ☞ Move as quickly as possible toward meaningful, task-based language use
  ☞ Do not waste class time on work that can only be done by the student him/herself
- Some grammar points are relatively straightforward and students can be quickly moved to communicative use (e.g. learning the *passé compose*; this is similar enough to English that a quick review of form/pronunciation should suffice); others are more tricky and will require a progression through different activity types (e.g. the difference between the *passé compose* and *imparfait*; here, it might be best to do some mechanical work before communicative exercises).
  ☞ Pick your battles and expect that some things will need to be reviewed many times

☞ Be creative! Think about how you can reinforce structure/vocabulary/cultural themes while moving students toward open-ended, authentic language use
- Expect that you will have to reuse and recycle themes/structures; plan ahead to creatively integrate recycling into other topics (e.g. using particular verb tenses in a cultural lesson).

# Pronunciation

A. Types of sounds
    1. <u>consonants</u>
        a. pronounced              *ver<u>t</u>e*           *françai<u>s</u>e*      *blan<u>ch</u>e*
        b. silent                   *ver[t]*           *françai[s]*      *blan[c]*
    2. <u>vowels</u>
        a. oral vowels            *b<u>o</u>nne*          *cop<u>i</u>ne*        *<u>â</u>ne*
        b. nasal vowels         *b<u>on</u>*           *cop<u>ain</u>*       *<u>an</u>*
    3. <u>semivowels</u>                *fami<u>ll</u>e*        *n<u>ui</u>t*       *<u>oi</u>seau*

B. First language transfer ("interference")
    1. <u>sound present in both L1 and L2 but with slight difference</u>
            Eng     *bow*     [o$^w$]
            Fr        *beau*    [o]
            Eng     *bell*     [retracted /l/]
            Fr        *belle*    [non-retracted /l/]

    2. <u>sound lacking in L1 but present in L2</u>
            - nasal vowels       *bl<u>on</u>d*
            - velar r           *<u>r</u>egarder*
            - front vowel [y]    *t<u>u</u>*

C. Sound – spelling correspondence
    1. one sound, many spellings
         [o]     *styl<u>o</u>, h<u>ô</u>tel, <u>au</u> parc, bat<u>eau</u>, journ<u>aux</u>, m<u>ot</u>*
    2. accent marks
         *je préfère, nous préférons*

D. Sound – meaning correspondence
         *tu* versus *toux*            ("you" versus "cough")
         *grand* versus *grande*       (masc. versus fem.)
         *il vient* versus *ils viennent*   (sing. versus pl.)

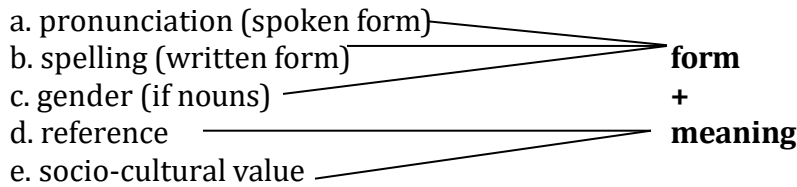E. The treatment of pronunciation may include:
    i. presentation of the relevant sound(s) and their spelling/meaning correspondences
    ii. A discrimination (comprehension) activity before an articulation (production) activity: students must hear a difference before they can attempt to produce it!
    iii. Additional articulation activities should move from individual sounds in words, to short phrases, to whole sentences.

F. When to correct faulty pronunciation?
    1. <u>Always</u> when the focus is on providing correct *forms* (in pronunciation modules, in the repetition of vocabulary words and verb conjugations)
    2. <u>Only</u> when a misunderstanding would result when the focus is on *communicating*.

# Vocabulary

A. Vocabulary words have the following components:

      a. pronunciation (spoken form)
      b. spelling (written form)             **form**
      c. gender (if nouns)               **+**
      d. reference                     **meaning**
      e. socio-cultural value

Example: **une baguette**     a. [ba.gɛt]
                              b. b-a-g-u-e-t-t-e
                              c. *fem*.
                              d. a long, stick-like loaf of bread
                              e. a common form of bread in France; typically placed on table,
                                  with pieces broken off during a meal, etc.

B. The treatment of vocabulary words includes:

      a. presentation of words *within a context*
            i. use a "logical link" from the previous module
            ii. embed words within a 'story' (narration) or some sort of authentic
            language use – do not encourage parroting or go over vocabulary in class!
            iii. divide an overly long list of vocabulary words into sub-themes
            iv. limit your presentation to about 1/4 of the time devoted to this module
      b. use of exercises that require students to _recognize_ the correct form–meaning pairing (spoken and/or written)
      c. use of exercises that require students to _produce_ the correct form–meaning pairing (spoken and/or written)
      d. opportunities for communicative language use: form–meaning pairings freely generated by students in a given situation/for a particular purpose

Some pointers:
- Make vocabulary as real as possible: move students toward real use of new terms
- Integrate vocabulary review into other modules
- Avoid "going over" vocabulary that could be learned outside of class during class time; an exception to this is, of course, pronunciation (which can still be integrated into larger activities or communicative exercises!)
- Remind students of the flash card feature which they can customize to review vocabulary in VHL

# Cultural Themes

Depending upon the text you are using, cultural issues are presented in a number of ways. These include reading activities, video-blogs, and other internet-supported media. Regardless of the particularities, a number of principles should guide you in preparing cultural modules.  This is the best way to incorporate authentic materials.

1.	Remember it is not always about "Capital C Culture".
    - Culture is not simply memorizing facts (e.g. the French kiss each other as greetings, the Algerian War of Independence ended in 1962) or artifacts (e.g. Tahitian paintings, French wine).
    - Culture is a set of shared values and expectations, as well as variability pertaining to that set of values and expectations within a society.
    - Suggestion: avoid blatant stereotyping – "the French" don't really exist, at least not the way texts try to present them.

2.	Encourage students to question their own expectations and values.
    - While cultural modules certainly present facts and artifacts, these should be used to draw out discussion of differences and similarities between students' backgrounds and those of the target culture(s).
    - Students should be encouraged to question not just "things" in their society, but expectations of human interaction.

3.	Cultural modules should combine vocabulary and grammar points.
    - Often this is done through reading and writing; some may be passive.
    - Cultural days are an excellent opportunity to review grammar work, albeit with less emphasis on correct form (this depends – if there is a writing exercise, form is obviously important and should be treated adequately).

4.	Cultural modules may afford a somewhat greater place for the use of English.
    - Recall that English should be used sparingly and only when French cannot be expected.
    - An example of this might be a discussion on the value of and expectations concerning citizenship in France vs. the United States: this is likely too sophisticated a topic to be addressed by students in a second language.
        - That said, if the topic is preferred musical styles, students should be encouraged to use French (even if they make more mistakes).

5.	Cultural modules should be fun and interesting,

# Campus Services and Contact Information

There are many services available to students for a variety of problems that hopefully will not but might occur.  Be sure to communicate with your course supervisor when you would like to refer students to other offices on campus or any time you suspect there might be a problem or particularly difficult situation. Please talk to us as soon as possible: it is crucial that we are kept "in the loop" – it's important that we all share information and back one another up.

The following contacts may be of use to you during your time as instructors.

→ *OSSJA* (Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs)
  o Offers support for struggling students who are experiencing hardships outside of academia that are preventing them from succeeding in their courses
  o Handles cases of suspected dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating…), as well as behavioral concerns (classroom disruptions, drinking, etc.)
  o https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/
  o (530) 752-1128
  o ossja@ucdavis.edu

→ *SHCS* (Student Health and Counseling Services)
  o Free services for students and other community members
  o https://shcs.ucdavis.edu/services/counseling.html
  o UC Davis 24-hour hotline/counseling emergency service: (530) 752-2349
  o UC Davis Crisis text line: text RELATE to 741741
  o National Suicide and Crisis Line: call or text 988

→ *Center for Educational Effectiveness*
  o Services to help you be a better instructor, including seminars (e.g. on technologies) and other classroom resources
  o https://cee.ucdavis.edu/

→ *Davis Language Center* (Olson 53)
  o Runs the language computer labs in Olson; useful resource for lower-division language teaching
  o Responsible for placement tests
  o https://ucdlc.ucdavis.edu/

# Answers to Common Student Questions

### *The First Days*

Q: "I am on the wait list (number *n*) – what are the chances that I will be admitted into the course?"
A: It is my experience that enrollments fluctuate tremendously during the first week. If a student wishes to be enrolled, s/he should attend all classes and complete all work, as if s/he were 'normally registered' for this course and section.

Q: "When do you give out PTA numbers?"
A: PTA will be given out on the tenth day of instruction. Each student who wants a PTA <u>after this date</u> should fill out a PTA form (available on the 2nd floor of Sproul) and bring it to Professor Mayer for her signature [in her absence/unavailability, Professor Russell]. S/he will then return it to Amy Lowery in the program office on the 2nd floor of Sproul, who will issue the PTA number."

Q: "I really really (really) need to enroll in this course in order to {keep academic standing, maintain financial aid status, graduate on time, please the moon goddess, etc.}. Can I get a PTA number right now?"
A: Same as above

Q: "I wish to audit this course. How do I do that?" [NB. Often accompanied by lengthy and compelling reasoning, such as graduate work in France, lifelong interest in French, etc.]
A: The decision to allow for auditors or enrollments above the stated capacity (25 for all lower-division courses) is entirely at the discretion of the section instructor. An instructor may allow for auditors if there are enough seats for all students and the instructor does not feel that additional work would pose a burden to her/himself or be detrimental to normally registered students. No instructor is required to allow auditors or to accept a number of students above the stated capacity."

Q: "I took French in High School. Should I be enrolled in [insert level/section]?" (A variation of this is, "I grew up in a French-speaking environment/have a French-speaking parent, but want to start in this section.")
A: Any student who has taken a language prior to arrival at UCD must take the placement exam offered through the DLC. S/he can only receive P/NP for coursework below the level into which she/he is placed. <u>This is a College of Letters & Sciences Policy and is not the purview of the Department or its faculty</u>.

Q: "How do I take the placement exam?"
A: Placement exams are completed online and are done through the Davis Language Center: the Department and its faculty are not involved in the administration or scoring of placement exams. See https://ucdlc.ucdavis.edu/or go to Olson 53 for more information.

Q: "Do I really need to purchase the 4th edition of *Promenades*? Do I really need to purchase access to the VHL Supersite?"
A: Yes. Note that UC Davis students are eligible for Equitable Access, an affordable flat-rate textbook model that grants access to all textbooks, regardless of major, on the first day of class.

Q: "How do I take this class P/NP (Pass/No-Pass)?"
A: Students who wish to take a class P/NP must petition the College of Letters & Sciences. The Department and its faculty have no say in this matter; in fact, no instructor sees which student is enrolled as P/NP and assigns a 'normal' grade to all enrolled students at the end of the quarter.

Q: "I enrolled in the class late because of [insert reason here] and missed the first *n* assignments / quizzes / etc. Can I make these up?"
A: No, without permission of the course supervisor (who only grants this in exceptional instances). It is the responsibility of all students to complete all work according to the syllabus, even if s/he has enrolled late.


### *Throughout the Quarter*

Q: "I was absent for several days because of [insert reason here] and missed a test / many assignments / several quizzes… Can I make up these grades?"
A: A student who has been absent for an extended period of time (more than four days) should contact the course supervisor and her/his instructor immediately, preferably by email. Depending upon the nature of circumstances, the supervisor may – or may not – allow for make up work to be done or for alternate arrangements to be made.

Q: "I cannot access the VHL Supersite from [a given computer / place]. There is a problem loading some exercises. What can I do?"
A: Contact VHL Support: there is a chat feature in VHL  and the student support hotline is 1.800.248.2813..

Q: "I want to do more exercises from the VHL Supersite or re-do ones that I did earlier (perhaps to review for an exam). Is this okay?"
A: Absolutely! An instructor may not assign a different grade, however, for exercises done after the respective due dates.

*Nearing Finals*

Q: "I will not be able to make the scheduled final exam time. Can I reschedule this?"
A: Students are expected to take the final exam at the time indicated by the University Registrar's office. Exceptions are made only for two reasons:

       1) If a student has another exam at the same time and day, which would necessarily be another lower-division language course.

       2) If a student has more than three exams in any 24-hour period.

Other excuses, such as travel or family obligations, are not acceptable.

If a student believes that s/he may be given an alternate time according to (1) or (2), s/he should email the course supervisor, who has the final say in the matter. TAs are not allowed to grant permission for alternate final exams. If permission for an alternate time is given, s/he should arrange a time with the instructor at the latter's discretion and convenience: this should ideally be within 24 hours (before or after) the originally scheduled time.

Q: "I really need to get an A (or other grade). How do I do this?"
(Invariably asked in the last week of the quarter.)
A (version 1): A 'rolling grade' is made available on Canvas: students are able to chart their progress throughout the quarter. It is entirely the responsibility of the student to determine whether s/he is making sufficient progress to a grade objective prior to the end of the quarter.
A (version 2): A student who wishes to attain an A should perform A-level work from the first to the last day of instruction, as specified in the course syllabus.

Q: "I stopped coming to class for [insert reason here] and want to drop / withdraw / take an incomplete. How do I do this?"
(Usually asked by a student who came to class for a while, then 'disappeared.')
A: There are several questions within this one, the answer to which will vary.

       Dropping & Withdrawal: Students may not drop a course after the last 'drop day' (see the registrar's information site); otherwise, a student must petition for exceptional withdrawal via the College of Letters & Sciences. <u>Exceptional withdrawals are not the purview of the Department or its faculty</u>.

       Incomplete (or "I"): Incompletes are granted in only the most exceptional of circumstances. A student who feels s/he is a candidate for an I grade must contact the French Language Program supervisor: Instructors may not assign an I grade.

**Lesson Plan Template**

Teacher:
Level:
Date:

**Goal:**

**Objectives (SWBAT):**
**S**tudents **W**ill **B**e **A**ble **T**o…
1.
2.
3.
4.

Theme (of chapter): _____

Extensions (to authentic language use): _____

| Aim/Skill/Microskill | Activity/Procedure/Stage | Interaction | Time |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Review or Preview (if applicable)* | *Linking & Transitioning to rest of lesson:* | | |
| *Activity 1:* **Warm Up**<br><br><br>*Transition to #2:* | *1.1 Pre-Stage:*<br><br>*1.2. During Stage:*<br><br>*1.3 Post-Stage:*<br><br>*Tangible Outcome (physical product of lesson) & T. feedback/peer feedback:* | | |
| *Activity 2:* | *2.1 Pre-Stage:*<br><br>*2.2. During Stage:* | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Transition to #3:* | *2.3 Post-Stage:* <br><br> *Tangible Outcome & T. feedback/peer feedback:* | | |
| ***Activity 3:*** <br><br><br> *Transition to #4 or Wrap-up:* | *3.1 Pre-Stage:* <br><br> *3.2. During Stage* <br><br> *3.3 Post-Stage:* <br><br> *Tangible Outcome & T. feedback/peer feedback:* | | |
| ***Activity 4:*** <br><br><br><br> *Transition to Wrap-Up:* | *4.1 Pre-Stage:* <br><br><br> *4.2. During Stage:* <br><br><br> *4.3 Post-Stage:* <br><br> *Tangible Outcome & T. feedback/peer feedback:* | | |
| ***Wrap-up*** | *Lesson Evaluation Procedures:* | | |

Materials:

Anticipated Problems & Suggested Solutions:

Contingency Plans (what you will do if you finish early, etc.):

Post-Lesson Reflections:

**Teaching Assistant Observation: Department of French and Italian**

Instructor:                                        Class:
Quarter:                                          Time/Location:
Numbers of students present:


<u>Narrative</u> (description of observed session, including material covered, timeline, etc.)



<u>Evaluation</u> (observer impression, strengths, areas needing improvement, etc.)

1 = requires immediate action          2 = below expectations/ requires attention
3 = meets expectations          4 = exceeds expectations

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Time management: the class began and ended on time; adequate time was given for all activities. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Curricular management: the class and all activities were adequately thought out and logically sequenced. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Use of equipment: audio/visual materials were effectively used. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Use of materials: textbook, transparencies, slides, handouts, etc. were used effectively. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Activity organization: group / pair / individual class activities were judiciously varied and effective. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Pedagogical organization: warm up and appropriate transition or introduction activities were used. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Contextualization: vocabulary and/or grammar presentations were brief and concise; focus was given to language use. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Modeling: activities were first modeled so that students knew what was expected of them. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Language choice: use of French was encouraged; any use of English was judicious and limited. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Language mastery: TA's use of French (word choice, pronunciation and grammar, register) was correct and effective. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Classroom interaction: TA engaged & encouraged students, did not dominate discourse, spoke clearly & audibly. |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Feedback: TA used varied and effective correction techniques |
| 1 2 3 4 n/a | Problem management: TA effectively dealt with late, disruptive or distracted (e.g. using laptops, reading) students. |

_____          _____
Instructor signature          Date


_____          _____
Faculty supervisor signature          Date