


2016 First Year Experience (FYE) grants Embedding transition pedagogies in the curriculum

Application form

Project applicant/team leader:	
Name: Dr Susan Oguro	Position: Senior Lecturer Coordinator, Switzerland Major
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Faculty: Arts and Social Sciences	
School: School of International Studies	
Other applicants if team application:	
Name: Dr Beate Müller	Position: Casual Academic, German Language and Culture program
Title of project:	
Making the 'foreign' familiar: supporting transitioning student success in developing reflective and effective learning strategies in introductory foreign language subjects	
Transition subjects involved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 97601 German Language and Culture 1 (Autumn)• 97602 German Language and Culture 2 (Spring)	
Note: These two German language transition subjects will be the focus of this project as a pilot. The materials developed will be relevant for use in 2017 and beyond in all six transition language programs at UTS (Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish)	
Endorsement by Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)	
I, Maryanne Dever, endorse this project application and confirm that embedding of the project outcomes in the subject will be supported by the Faculty.	
Signed:	
Date:	07/12/2015
Have you received one or more FYE Grants previously?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

Project outline (max 1-2 pages) (See guidelines for detail)

A brief description of the aims and rationale for the project

This project aims to develop scaffolded learning to support students who are transitioning to foreign language study at university to develop effective learning strategies. It aims to reduce student frustration and stress and to increase retention into second and third year subjects. The project will draw on research from the field of foreign language learning and also senior student experience to produce online tutorial and workshop materials for the approx. 400 students who enrol in one of UTS' introductory level foreign language subjects each semester.

Students of languages subjects offered in the School of International Studies come from all UTS faculties. The subjects form part of the Diploma in Languages (new from 2015), degrees combined with the BA in International Studies or as a sub-major in the Bachelor of Business. While students may feel comfortable in their various discipline areas, not all are necessarily familiar with how to best approach the very different demands required to become a successful user of a foreign language when they begin their first year subjects. Feedback from students and academics has highlighted that students in introductory language subjects often feel daunted by the multiple aspects of a language including its spoken and written forms, grammar systems, phonological features and lexis. For example, some students may be competent learners of written content but struggle with knowing how to develop their aural skills. Others may be skilled at reproducing the phonemes of their new language but not have experience in understanding its grammatical concepts.

To help prevent transitioning students from becoming frustrated when they are not sure how to use their study time effectively, this project will develop online tutorial materials that students can access individually. It is envisaged that two interactive modules will be developed using *Adobe Captivate*, or a similar program. The modules will present the various components of language and examples strategies for practicing and developing each of area of language. Content for the first module will be drawn from a review of research on language learning strategies, input from academics and video clips of senior students of languages subjects at UTS explaining the strategies they have found useful (and almost as importantly, the strategies which were a waste of time!). These modules will compliment other teaching resources and increase student engagement. Research on language learning strategies (eg: Jiang & Cohen, 2012; Oxford, 2011)¹ has also stressed that successful language learners are those who reflect on their individual needs, employ strategies relevant to these needs and evaluate the effectiveness of their approach and adjust appropriately. Therefore the second planned module will provide scaffolding so students will be able to develop a personal plan for individual study and timeline for evaluation. Again, this module will include suggested models drawn from research and videos of senior students' experiences as a model of successful practice from peers.

In addition to the two online modules developed through in this project, materials will also be developed for use in a workshop offered to students as a follow up to the online component. The workshop will allow students to reflect on and share their progress with each other and with academics. It will also provide an opportunity to raise and discuss language-specific issues. While the online materials proposed are designed to be generic and applicable for students of all languages offered at UTS, the workshop where aspects of a particular language can be explored is essential. This project will develop the materials

¹ Jiang, X. & Cohen, A. D. (2012). A Critical review of research on strategies in learning Chinese as both a second and foreign language. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 2(1), 9-43.
Oxford, R.L. (2011). *Teaching & Researching: Language Learning Strategies (Applied Linguistics in Action)*. Routledge, Abingdon.

with cohorts of one language program (German) with the aim of expanding to other language programs in 2017.

First Year Curriculum principles for Transition Pedagogy addressed by the project

Transition

Diversity

- Engagement
- Assessment
- Design (broader focus)
- Evaluation and Monitoring (broader focus)

Provide detail of how the selected principles are addressed in your project.

Transition

The project addresses the principle of transition by making explicit what is not always apparent to first year students, namely effective language learning strategies and the importance of reflecting on learning needs, designing and evaluating study plans. It encourages the development of independent and lifelong learning and uses senior students talking about their successful learning strategies in the videos, facilitates transitioning students to imagine themselves progressing and succeeding into second and third years and beyond.

Diversity

The project addresses the transition principle of diversity by not assuming students enter the foreign language subjects at university with the requisite knowledge of HOW to approach the learning. It also acknowledges that students have diverse disciplinary strengths which can be drawn on at an individual level and shared with peers in the workshop. By providing students with a variety of strategies including real life examples from senior students in the online tutorials and through sharing with peers in the workshop, the project also helps students become aware of diversity of learning preferences.

Other University/Faculty/Course/Subject priorities addressed (optional)

Increase in retention rates from first year language subjects to the second and third year.

Key project activities and timeline, including appropriate activities that engage the overall teaching team (if applicable)

Feb-Apr: Literature review, drafting resources, consultations (*Oguro and Müller*)
 May: Video production, collation of materials (*Müller + tech. staff*)
 July: Testing (*Müller + tech. staff*)
 Aug-Sep: Online tutorials available to students
 Oct: Workshop (*Oguro and Müller*)
 Nov: Evaluation and dissemination to other language academic staff; report writing (*Oguro and Müller*)

Your evaluation strategy

The project will be evaluated through feedback from:

- The students offered the materials providing feedback through additional questions in SFS on effectiveness of the materials and suggestions for improvement
- Academic peers of other language programs in the School

- Faculty T&L support staff will be consulted for advice and feedback throughout.
- Feedback will be collated in a report to AD T&L and the Head of School

Project Budget (insert table or spreadsheet if appropriate) and budget justification (remember to add on-costs – approximately 17%) Salary rates:

<http://www.hru.uts.edu.au/conditions/pay/rates.html>

Activity	Expense	Rate/ hours / sub-total	On-costs @17%	Total incl. on-costs
Research literature on language learning strategies. Design online and workshop materials. Liaise with technical staff for creation of online tutorial. Attend workshop Set evaluative questions to test the project via SFS. Write report.	Casual Academic Rate: OAA (PhD)	\$51.48 x 50 hours = \$2574.00	\$437.58	\$3011.58
Create videos of students Create online materials	HEW 5/1	\$43.17 x 15 hours = \$647.55	\$110.08	\$757.63
Thank you gifts to senior students appearing in videos	Movie vouchers	8 @ \$14.00	N/A	\$112.00
			TOTAL:	\$3881.21