Discussion: Curriculum Development in the Foreign Language Department

Task One: What are 5 ways in which a department can integrate literature and other content at the 1st year level?

- First year textbooks now integrate culture with appropriate content. Students are very interested in learning about culture, specifically cities and regions. It was noted that readers are no longer used.
- The use of authentic materials was also recommended.
- Simple poems are a way to integrate culture during the 1st year.
- Departments use Gen Ed courses taught in English (e.g., cinema, literature) to attract students to the major. These courses do not fulfill the language requirement. Departments can track students taking these courses to see how many become majors.
- Social media, what is appropriate? Examples, using the internet to report on weather or sports scores. One needs to be careful that these activities don’t take up too much time.
- Senior faculty at one university center decided to teach lower division courses themselves to assure that students are properly prepared for the upper division.

Task Two: What major and minor tracks do you offer in your departments?

- In some institutions there are four major/minor tracks.
- Languages Across the Curriculum at Binghamton.
- At the community colleges all faculty teach at all levels.
- Late afternoon scheduling to attract teachers working towards a 2nd certification.
- There are opportunities to reach out across the disciplines (e.g. Art History) but logistics need to be worked out.

Task Three: Find 5 ways in which a department can enhance the study abroad experience for students and use study abroad to build enrollment.

- Study Abroad is no longer geared towards a language and many study abroad opportunities are in English or are a hybrid model. Some institutions offer study abroad from the Department focusing on the target language.
- One area for potential growth is in internship opportunities as part of the study abroad experience.
- Short term (one semester, summer, winter intersession) study abroad opportunities are more popular than the full academic year.
- Credits earned by students through Study Abroad can decrease campus credits in a language. This can be a problem in small programs where meeting minimum enrollment numbers can be difficult.