PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT for PROGRAM DIRECTORS
Daily Topics, Session Descriptions, & Facilitators

Monday, July 15th
Orientation and Curriculum Development

Session 1: Orientation & Welcome (Jun Liu, David Nunan, Kathi Bailey, and Ryan Damerow)

Session 2: Overview of Language Program Directors’ Responsibilities (Panel, Moderated by Ryan Damerow)
   David Nunan, Jun Liu, and Kathi Bailey share research findings and their own experiences based on over sixty years of cumulative program administration responsibilities. In addition, seminar participants will share brief descriptions of their own responsibilities and describe their administrative contexts.

Session 3: Curriculum Development & Needs Assessment (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)
   Making appropriate curricular choices and revising curricula as needed are extremely important responsibilities of program directors. But what do we mean by the term “curricula”? What are the components of curricula? How do syllabi differ from curricula? How does assessment interact with curricula? Program directors are typically responsible for curricular decisions, but those decisions are strongly influenced by contextual factors, ideological issues, and clients’ needs.

Session 4: Curriculum Development & Innovation (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)
   In this session, we examine models of innovation from education, business and industry, and research in developing nations. These models have practical applications for program directors who are responsible for establishing and improving upon program curricula. Doing so entails developing a shared vision with the teaching staff and determining the organizational structure (e.g., hierarchies and committees). At the end of this session, participants will have an understanding of the nature and complexity of curricular decision making from the perspective of the program director. They will also gain an appreciation of the complexities and possibilities for different patterns of curricular organization, depending on a range of contexts and situations.

Tuesday, July 16th
Curriculum and Assessment

Session 1: Curriculum & Assessment (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)
   Curricular models and assessment practices are closely related, and program directors must be skilled and knowledgeable in both these domains. Admissions tests, placement tests, and progress and achievement tests all influence teachers’ decision making and students’ progress and attitudes toward learning, especially in multi-level programs. In this introductory session, we will address the following questions: What is assessment and how does it differ from evaluation? What are the purposes for language assessment? How and when do we assess students’ language abilities? By what criteria will students’ abilities be assessed?
Session 2: Assessment (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

In this session, we will focus on additional key questions: Who are your students? What are their ages and proficiency levels? What specifically are they learning? Why are they learning the language? Are particular tests mandated in your program or are locally developed tests used? The answers to these questions will determine, in part, what assessment procedures are appropriate for eliciting and scoring language samples from the learners.

Session 3: Curriculum & Assessment Continued (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

In this session, we will explore various approaches to language assessment which promote successful teaching, students’ motivation and learning, and program improvement. The role of the learners involves both self-assessment, peer assessment, and assessment for learning (as opposed to just assessment of learning). Topics to be addressed will also include test reliability, validity, and positive washback. Others will be identified based on the stated needs and interests of course participants.

Session 4: First Webinar: Presenter(s) & Topic TBA

Wednesday, July 17th
Program Evaluation and Action Research

Session 1: Conducting Program Evaluations (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

The success of language programs depends on many factors, but one of the most important is the ability to assess a program’s strengths and areas for improvement. Key questions to ask are the following: What is the purpose of the evaluation? Is the evaluation motivated externally or internally? Who are the participants and the stakeholders? Who has access to the data and the resulting report? In this session, we will examine the strategies program directors can use to engage their faculty and staff members in a team effort, and to triangulate data from a range of sources to capitalize on the views of various stakeholders.

Session 2: Conducting Program Evaluations (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

In this workshop, course participants will reflect on their own programs and how they can use program evaluations to improve their course offerings, enhance teachers’ professional development, and improve learning conditions for students. At the end of the session, participants will have a clear understanding of the various types of program evaluation, their purposes and motivations, and how to work with evaluations that are externally motivated as well as those that are internally generated.

Session 3: Action Research for Program Development (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

Action research is a participant-driven approach to empirical research which combines strengths of both naturalistic inquiry and experimental study. It has been widely used by classroom teachers to investigate and improve upon their own practice, but has less frequently been applied at the program level. In this session, we will examine what action research actually is and what its justifications are, and then look at the steps in the action research process.

Session 4: Action Research for Program Development (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)

In this session, we explore uses of action research for program improvement and language teacher development. Participants will engage in a simulation in which they engage in designing and evaluating an action research project and critique the approach as a professional development tool.
Thursday, July 18th
Materials Selection, Job Interviews, and Running Effective Meetings

Session 1: Materials Selection & Development (David Nunan)
What do we mean when we talk about “language teaching materials”? Published materials are typically multi-level and usually include a student class book, a student workbook, a teacher’s guide, a website, a CD Rom (for use either in class or as a self-study option), an assessment package, an interactive whiteboard version of the student text, and ancillary materials (e.g., for young learners, there may be flash cards and classroom wall posters). Program directors need to make decisions such as whether to adopt/adapt commercially developed materials or use internally developed materials that are based on the curriculum of the specific program. In this session, we will consider the pros and cons of using published materials versus home-made materials.

Session 2: Interviewing Job Applicants (Kathi Bailey)
Many challenges faced by program directors can be ameliorated by hiring the right teachers and staff members in the first place. In this session, we will share strategies for interviewing prospective teachers, staff members, and advisors. While laws regarding employment practices in general and interviewing specifically vary from one region to another, skillful use of the job interview can be managed through a close examination of the kinds of information we wish to gain and some effective procedures for doing so. In this session, participants will develop a clear understanding of effective and ineffective ways of conducting employment interviews.

Session 3: Running Effective Meetings (David Nunan and Kathi Bailey)
Running meetings is perhaps an unavoidable responsibility of program directors. In order to run effective meetings, we must be aware of the multifaceted purposes for which such meetings are held and the many pitfalls which can cause them to be a huge waste of time. In this session, participants will develop strategies for planning, leading, and evaluating effective meetings.

Session 4: Second Webinar: Presenter(s) & Topic TBA

Friday, July 19th
Teacher Supervision and Professional Development

Session 1: Language Teacher Supervision (Kathi Bailey)
In this session, we will begin by exploring key models of supervision that are useful in language teaching contexts. The main issues we will consider include the purposes of supervision (formative and/or summative), and the relative power of supervisors and autonomy of the teachers being supervised. This workshop will cover classroom observation for supervisory purposes. Participants will gain insights about how to collect meaningful data to share with teachers in post-observation conferences.

Session 2: Language Teacher Supervision (Kathi Bailey)
In this session, we will examine the post-observation conference as a speech event. We will use a discourse analytic framework to identify sources of confusion and face threats in supervisors’ communication with teachers. Participants will derive increased understanding and skill with giving clear and appropriate feedback to teachers.
Session 3: Supervision & Professional Development: A Case Study (David Nunan)
Teacher evaluation is an important part of a program director’s responsibility, but it is one that is often challenging and sometimes even conflictual. In this segment of the program, we will examine teaching portfolios as a mechanism for promoting evaluation discussions. At the end of this session, participants who are interested in implementing a teacher portfolio system will have a clear idea of what a portfolio can contain, what the potential pitfalls are, and how to avoid them.

Session 4: The Week in Review (Kathi Bailey, David Nunan, Jun Liu, and Ryan Damerow)
This final session of the first week will provide an overview of the concepts covered and an opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning to date.

Monday, July 22nd
Strategic Planning for Language Centers

Session 1: Leadership: Vision, Creativity, Innovation, and Execution (Jun Liu)
This session addresses the important issue of how to make a strategic plan for a language center. The participants will discuss how to articulate their visions and missions in the broader contexts within an institute, university, or school. The strategies involved in setting up attainable goals and realistic objectives and how they can be executed and evaluated will also be addressed.

Session 2: Innovation, Creativity, & Implementation (Jun Liu)
This session is a sequel to the first. It focuses on innovation (how can things be done differently to achieve better results), and how the language center can position itself strategically to fulfill its mission as a viable partner of the bigger unit. Discussions will also center on the synergies in creating new ideas, new plans, and new activities to make the strategic plan feasible and attainable. Discussions will end by looking at a few strategic plans in existence and focusing on their implementation, feasibility, and challenges in order to learn from previous practices.

Session 3: Workshop: English Language Center in a Large Research University in the USA (Jun Liu)
This session will use as a case an ESL Program in the United States. Participants will generate critiques and possible revisions of its strategic plan.

Session 4: Workshop: English Language Center in a Comprehensive University in China (Jun Liu)
This session will use as a case an English language center in a provincial university in China. Participants will generate comments, suggestions, and revisions of its strategic plan.

Tuesday, July 23rd
Team Building and Creating a Positive Culture

Session 1: Team Building & Creating a Positive Culture (Jun Liu and Ryan Damerow)
The success of any unit or language center relies on its culture, which is not a given. The leader or the director should be able to create a positive culture that gets all the team members on board, whether they are faculty or staff. A positive culture is contagious and needs to be led by someone who has tremendous understanding of the university, the school, the college, and the center. It requires leadership skills and
sensitivity to work and to tap into everyone’s strengths and yet it must be transparent and inclusive in decision-making. In this session, participants will discuss all these aspects in order to foster a positive culture in their home contexts.

Session 2: Mentoring and Mentorship (Jun Liu)
Successful mentoring is the key to nurture those lacking experience while allowing different people’s talents to emerge and function effectively. Setting up a mentoring system and incentives will maximize the team members’ high productivity and job satisfaction. How to engage people in the mentoring process, who should mentor whom, and how to rotate the role of mentorship while making it a rewarding experience are techniques and skills a leader must have. In this session, various kinds of mentoring models will be explained and how to make mentoring a team-building strategy will be discussed.

Session 3: Working with Difficult People (Jun Liu and Ryan Damerow)
There is no such a thing as “difficult people,” because everyone can be difficult from time to time. It all depends on who appears to be difficult in interaction under certain circumstances. For instance, the workload distribution, the assigned teaching schedule, the size of the classes, and the proficiency level of students, the convenience of the classroom location, or the incompatibility of the materials, might all be factors that will cause people concern or dissatisfaction, which will eventually lead to complaints against the program director. In this session, we will identify the factors that could change people’s attitudes that result in reluctance, indifference, or argument. We will role play a number of scenarios and come up with strategies for discussion.

Session 4: Third Webinar: Presenter(s) & Topic TBA

Wednesday, July 24th
HR Issues and Teacher Evaluation

Session 1: Issues with the Hiring Process (Jun Liu)
The success of a language center relies heavily on its people. As a language center director, it is a common thing to deal with hiring and firing people. When it comes to hiring, what is the process? What needs to be attended to? How can program directors effectively solicit references and read in between the lines of recommendation letters and application materials? What are the factors that will influence the decision-making in the hiring process? How can a director determine whether an applicant is the right person for the language center? What are you looking for when you have so many applicants? How can a director be inclusive and transparent in decision-making? These issues are ones we will discuss in this session in order to build awareness of the complexities of the hiring process.

Session 2: Setting up Realistic Expectations and Holding Employees Accountable (Jun Liu)
Evaluating teacher performance by semester or by year is routine for every language center. How to hold teachers accountable and make evaluation a positive experience to focus on changes in the following semester or year is a technique a language center director needs to grasp. What goes into teacher performance review (e.g., student evaluations, student performance, peer evaluation, self-evaluation, teaching portfolios)? This session will address teacher performance reviews and what follows such reviews.
**Session 3: Collaboration, Team-teaching, & Committee Work (Jun Liu)**

In addition to teaching, a critical part of making a language center thrive is to encourage all instructors to work collaboratively, to form cross-unit committees, and to empower instructors to lead projects or activities in the role of supervisor, team leader, or committee chair. In this session, we will discuss what kinds of committees are needed for a viable language center, and what qualities and abilities are needed for committee leaders. Also addressed are the relationships among committee work and teacher development, action research, conference presentations, and research reporting.

**Session 4: Dismissing People When Necessary (Jun Liu)**

It is sometimes unavoidable for the language center director to let people go and make executive HR decisions. What are the grounds for dismissing people? What is the process of firing someone in the unit? How can program directors effectively communicate about a case with university and legal advisors? What are some of the legal ramifications that a language center director should know about and how must a director prepare documents protected by the larger institution? These are tough issues and we will discuss a few cases and address questions and concerns in this regard.

**Thursday, July 25th**

**Recruitment, Budget Management, and Fundraising**

**Session 1: Recruitment & Enrollment (Jun Liu)**

In many language centers, recruiting students is part of the responsibility of the language center director in collaboration with other units in a university, such as the admissions office. In many intensive English Programs in the United States, for instance, successful recruiting of students is crucial for the survival of the program. In this session, we will discuss the market of ESL students, and conditionally admitted students as well as ESL programs in the United States. We will also discuss various issues in EFL contexts where all students admitted to colleges and universities are required to take English courses. Effective recruitment strategies and issues concerning recruitment will be discussed.

**Session 2: Handling Budgetary Issues of the Language Center (Jun Liu and Floyd Hayes)**

It is understood that the proper management of the budget is the responsibility of the language center director. This responsibility includes three components: (1) how to raise funds through enrollment; (2) how to manage the budget for the operations; and (3) how to negotiate funding with one’s supervisor and the university. In this session, we will discuss all these issues and a financial manager from Stony Brook University’s Office of Global Affairs will join us for the discussion.

**Session 3: Fundraising Opportunities (Jun Liu and Ryan Damerow)**

Although not all language center directors are required to do fundraising for their centers, the skills involved in fundraising will greatly strengthen the portfolio of the directors, especially for language center directors in the private sector. In this session, we will use a workshop format to discuss fundraising opportunities through events, conferences, and donors in various contexts, in order to raise awareness of the possibilities and hone the skills of the participants.

**Session 4: Guest Speaker on Fundraising**
Friday, July 26th
Lessons Learned and Journey Ahead

**Sessions 1 & 2: Panel Discussion on Program Management (Jun Liu and Ryan Demarow)**

In this session, we will invite several program directors at Stony Brook University to share their best practices through their cases.

**Sessions 3 & 4: Reflections: The Success of a Language Center Director (Jun Liu and Ryan Demarow)**

In this session, all the participants will share their perspectives, ideas, and suggestions about how to become a successful language program director, the challenges they anticipate, and the strategies they are confident in applying in their own scenarios. The session will conclude with the evaluation of the two-week program, as well as a certificate ceremony, group photo, and reception.