**ROMS Suggestions for Fall 2020 first- and second-year Language Sequence**

Courtesy of ROMS Programs Assessment Committee, Language Program Directors together with Course Coordinators, and with input from Kim Swanson, French Language Program Director at the University of Kansas.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The following is a list of suggestions (not mandates) that will be updated periodically as we discuss and implement modifications to our instruction in ROMS. The suggestions were compiled by the ROMS Assessment Committee and the Language Program Directors with input from course coordinators and instructors of all languages based on 2020 Spring & Summer instruction and on our evolving plans for Fall. The list is intended to be helpful and inclusive. It represents both a report of our instructional modifications across the languages and a potential go-to manual for the coming months. It will also enable the ROMS Programs Assessment Committee to provide its annual feedback to the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment (OIRA) <https://oira.unc.edu/assessment/academic-program-assessment/>.

Potential Class Formats according to <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/>. The two modes ROMS is offering for 100-204 in Fall 2020 are:

* Face-to-Face/Hybrid: A course designed for on-campus, in-person learners only. These courses have remote components in addition to scheduled, in-person sessions, e.g. one class meeting and two synchronous meetings via Zoom per week.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Remote only: An online course taught by faculty synchronously.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**COMMON QUESTIONS WITH SUGGESTIONS**

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| **How do we keep our students prepared and engaged in remote formats?** |
| • “Given the challenges to spontaneous communication and ‘flow’, it is even more important for me than usual that students have a sense of where we will go in our remote lesson each day. I have made better use of lessons plans which I share with students in advance.”• “There are easy-to-use templates in the Lessons tool in Sakai which do not even require attaching ppt slides. From there you can also link to assignments, including forum posts, Voicethread recordings, and peer evaluations.”• “I include a few more English words than usual on my slides to ensure that time is not wasted over-explaining the activities we will carry out in class.”• “I have increased opportunities for multi-modal learning (i.e. creating even more diversity in each lesson and among lesson plans to make time for watching short films, going on virtual tours, creating videos, posting photographs, etc.)”• “I do not feel that watching films in class is a good use of class time anymore, so I have students watch the film on their own and then use the class time to integrate linguistic and cultural elements into a discussion of it.” |
| **TOOLS:** | **Zoom chat;** **Sakai Lessons** and/or **PowerPoint** for organizing lesson plans by unit; **Nearpod.com** for greater ease of posting comments or sharing writing; **padlet.com** as a wall where students can post resources or presentations; **blogger.com** for student blogs and vlogs; **goosechase.com** for scavenger hunts; **Sakai Forums** for asynchronous extensions of class discussion |
| **How do we encourage, count, and assess participation, given the important role it has traditionally played in our language classes, while acknowledging the new challenges to it?** |
| • “Before our group activities (think-pair-share, etc.) and before our class discussions, I give students more time to reflect independently, so that they have the opportunity to look up a word or send me a message via chat, to help them with phrasing and give them more confidence that they are ready to share; this approach lowers the barriers to participation for everyone.”• “I provide a share-board for students as well as a discussion forum question after each class, in order to allow students who say less in class to have another option for participation outside of the synchronous lessons.”• “Having students evaluate their own participation–with a form we provide–is a good way for them to reflect on how they have met the challenges of remote learning with our more novel and flexible opportunities for such.”• “In order to address the equity issue, I allow students to "make up" the participation points if they had to miss a remote lesson due to connectivity problems, or other limiting issues at home due to covid-19.”• “Given in part the limitations of effectively and (fairly and equitably) evaluating participation in the remote learning environment, I have slightly lowered the weight of the participation category in the final grade.”• “I give students points now for mere “presence” in the class – given that some students feel at once more stressed & pressured in the remote environment and quieter & more withdrawn than usual.” |
| **TOOLS:** | **Sakai Discussion Forums** for a “Question of the day”; **Sakai Wiki** for collaborative website or blog; **Polleverywhere** or **Nearpod.com** for asking questions |
| **While maximizing opportunities for in-class participation, remote teaching always involves more transition time and in general I worry that students do not get enough time in class for oral practice. How can I compensate?** |
| • “I use my course platform (MindTap, My Spanish Lab, etc.) in order to replace some F2F interaction and presentations. There are ‘virtual chats’ (a person on video asks students questions that they have to answer), which can be used for weekly participation, and ‘partner chats’ (where they get online at the same time as a partner and have conversations), which can be used to replace oral interviews / presentations.”• “Instructors can incorporate conversation Apps like Boomalang and Talk Abroad into their curriculum, in order to give students opportunities to use their language outside of the classroom. These opportunities can be structured and assessed using clear guidelines and a rubric.”• “I make sure that when students are talking in their breakout groups that they have a clear objective and a clear “deliverable” to bring back to the group….in order to avoid the scenario where students finish the task too quickly just so they can chit-chat in English.” |
| **TOOLS:** | **My Lab**; **Sakai** for virtual chats; **Talk Abroad**, **Conversifi** or **Boomalang** for conversations with native speakers |
| **Our old testing schema seems insufficient–both in terms of equity and in terms of academic integrity. How can we provide more holistic opportunities for assessment?** |
| • “I am including more IPAs (Integrated Performance Assessments) in my syllabus. In these assignments, which involve multiple skills (reading, watching, oral and written production), students have to carry out interpretive, interpersonal and presentational forms of communication, related to a theme that is related to the lexical, cultural, and grammatical topics of their current chapter.”• “I am reducing the number of tests and making sure to include other lower-stake assessments like orals, IPAs, Zoom polls and other such integrated homework assignments that include writing.” |
| **Many instructors felt burdened back in the Spring by all the extra work demanded by remote instruction. How can I design some assessments more purposefully to cut down on grading time for instructors while still meeting pedagogical standards?** |
| • “I make oral assessments more efficient by asking students to do video presentations (in pairs or groups) on a given topic (e.g. ‘What do you do in order to lead a healthy and happy life?’–use of subjunctive) instead of interviewing each of them.”• “I have reduced the time for the instructor-student interview from 10 to 5 minutes.”• “I will modify composition assignments, e.g. have students do two shorter compositions rather than one short one and one long one; or have students do three compositions rather than four per semester. Compositions should still have a revision option, as correcting one’s errors is pedagogically valuable.”• “I am encouraging the instructors in the course I coordinate to use the Assignments tool of Sakai for homework submissions. If you have students submit “inline,” you can enter corrections or comments right into the comment box. By using curly brackets, your comments will show up for them in bold red. This is a much quicker way to grade then via attachment.”• “Using an Apple Pencil is a good option if essay grading through typed comments takes longer.”• “For Voicethread assignments, record corrections as voice comments as you listen.”• “We are taking a hard look at our assignments, to prioritize which will go further to help students meet the course’s learning goals and prepare them for the next level.” |
| **TOOLS:** | **Sakai Assignments** for grading open-ended, instructor-designed homework assignments; **Sakai Voicethread** for posting recordings; **Flipgrid.com** for posting and commenting upon videos |
| **I am concerned about keeping class engaged both for the session we spend face-to-face and beyond. With everyone communicating in masks and with social distancing, how can I recover the “active” classroom from before?** |
| • “I am including some experiential learning projects, like having students work in small groups outside, taking videos, conducting small inquiry projects, etc.”• “I will encourage students to bring their mobile devices to class so that we can play review games (kahoot, etc.) that are easier done in person than via zoom.”• “Sending email encouragement, updates, and reminders is key to keeping students engaged in the course both F2F and remote; this means more than usual communication in order to let students know that they are not anonymous.”• “I would really welcome exchanging ideas on how to create senses of belonging between students themselves in remote situations, beyond the usual discussion boards, sharing thoughts they'd not want to share in front of 20-30 students. I hope I can help students set up networks and communal spaces for themselves but also don't want to over-involve myself. Ideally I would hope to help them let themselves have these experiences of discovery and connection for themselves.” |
| **TOOLS:** | **Flipgrid.com** for posting videos; **Goosechase.com** for scavenger hunts involving different parts of campus; **Kahoot.com** for games; encouraging students to form study and conversation groups; use Zoom break-out groups to form more permanent support groups in larger classes. |
| **In my summer course there was a significant uptick in cheating (using online translators and consulting outside sources during testing). How to mitigate this?** |
| • “I try to avoid sections on tests where students just have to fill in the blanks. Since they are studying from home, it is very easy for them to open their books and find the right verb conjugations. I try to make things a little more complex, (ex: instead of giving them the verb to conjugate, make them read and choose verbs from a list, etc.)”• “I have provided various forms of the exams, making sure to use item scrambling features in my online testing platform.”• “In the fall I will make some assessments timed, as this helps cut down on dishonesty. I will consider allowing students to take the quiz/exam between 8am-midnight on exam day, however with a time limit. By setting a fair but fairly strict time limit, it may cut down on students’ abilities to refer to outside resources while taking the quiz/exam.”• “I give students even more regular reminders about the importance to not use translators, including a pledge to sign on every assessment (homework, quiz, oral, etc.)”• “A lot of colleagues have begun providing new and expanded text in every syllabus defining proper academic conduct. It may be necessary to communicate expectations multiple times and in a variety of ways (in the syllabus, during class, via email, etc.). Providing concrete examples of dos and don'ts are also helpful.”• “When students do not respond to my warnings, I have required them to highlight all words they had to look up when composing an essay, so that they can consider themselves the distinction between translators and dictionaries.”• “I will insist even more in the future that in their writing students demonstrate the lexical and grammatical elements they are currently studying in my class. I will look for this evidence in their writing and adjust their rubrics to reflect this requirement.”• “I am considering giving less weight to exams in the course grades while boosting the weight of components such as oral interviews/presentations and compositions that are more open-ended by nature.” |
| **Students seem to be even more anxious about testing than usual. How can I make this experience less stressful for them?** |
| • “I have experimented moving quizzes to outside of class time and to MySpanishLab, Sakai, or other platforms. Students are familiar with MySpanishLab and the platforms they regularly use for homework, which will make testing more comfortable.”• “I have started providing exam instructions in English, to cut down on time students might spend just trying to figure out instructions.”• “While synchronous proctoring may not be necessary (or even possible for many students), giving them the opportunity to take an exam during class time while the instructor is there with them on Zoom can be reassuring to them. This is not so much proctoring as offering support. (It is hard to see on Zoom if someone is cheating, and the browser lock-down features on Sakai and MSL are either non-existent or very buggy.) Students can easily ask their instructor questions via chat or even email, etc., which lowers their stress level.”• “For students for whom synchronous proctoring is not feasible, I allow them to complete tests at the online testing center.” |
| **Assessing Instructional Technology** |
| • When teaching on Zoom it really helps that instructors have a mouse to grade and a big screen to hold class (to see students, as well as to grade). A *needs-assessment* document related to instructional technology may be useful for the department, especially for our incoming graduate students who no longer receive laptops from the CCI. |
| **Useful Links** |
| • *Short List of Tools & Tips for Virtual Teaching* by World Languages at UVA:<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hz9JaDu8T7PICrVBv6e1TxJelfbLYkO2H5QgUSnbDiA/edit#heading=h.yfoiol1nfvum>• Concise Approach to the *Hiflex Classroom* by Mike Caulfield (video 17:21 min):<https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=67&v=C7VScPdhMvY&feature=emb_logo> • General Suggestions for *Online Teaching in the Humanities* by Lee Skallerup Bessette for MLA:<https://teachingresources.hcommons.org/a-guide-to-online-teaching-in-the-humanities/>• Examples of *Teacher-Developed Standards-Based Integrated Performance Assessments* (IPA) listed by CARLA at University of Minnesota: <https://carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/CreateUnit/unit_examples.html>• Open-ended List of Language Teaching Resources during COVID-19:<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K57zv7ZMmKk8CTXeIHCHyFlavTHqez89PTbiHe6jQ7U/edit> • COVID-19 Resources for UNC Faculty:<https://keepteaching.unc.edu/>  |

1. Professor Swanson was consulted because French & Italian at the University of Kansas decided, due to time and other constraints in Spring 2020, to teach their first and second year language sequence mostly remote and asynchronous, with few exceptions. Among the other LPDs that were and could have been consulted, the Kansas model provided a useful alternative perspective to our choices in ROMS. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. First- and second-year ROMS language classes will be taught synchronously. Any deviation from this decision due to changing circumstances should be language specific; instructors should follow the guidelines of their LPD / Coordinators. Language Program Directors, Coordinators, and the Programs Assessment Committee will be in ongoing conversations about what flexibility to provide for those students and instructors who have trouble meeting synchronously. [Student evaluations have shown that students found it hard to learn mostly on their own. If students have connectivity issues, an asynchronous option should be considered, but as an exception rather than the rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Asynchronous remote teaching or a combination of synchronous / asynchronous courses in ROMS should be language-specific or/and course-specific; e.g. SPAN 100/101/102 are set up that way and have been for years. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)