

**LING 6520 Technology for Language Teaching**  
**Thursdays, 4:30–7:00, Main 304**  
**Spring 2017**



### **Course Description & Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Dr. Joshua J. Thoms  
**Office:** Main 202 J  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1:30–2:30  
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**Department Chair:** Dr. Brad Hall, Main 204 A

#### **Required texts**

Arnold, N., & Ducate, L. (Eds.). (2011). *Present and future promises of CALL: From theory and research to new directions in language teaching*. San Marcos, TX: CALICO.

Blake, R. (2013). *Brave new digital classroom: Technology and foreign language learning*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

#### **Goals of the course**

The primary purpose of this course is to introduce students to a variety of issues related to computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Readings will explore both the theoretical and pedagogical/applied aspects of the use of CALL to facilitate second language (L2) learning and teaching. Given that much of the CALL literature references key concepts related to second language acquisition (SLA) theory and research, we will also address pertinent aspects/constructs of SLA theory whenever necessary. Finally, students will gain some knowledge about the research process/methodologies used to investigate a myriad of L2 linguistic concerns related to CALL. We will work to achieve these goals in the following ways:

- acquire knowledge about a number of current issues and research areas in CALL by reading various articles and book chapters;
- practice your presentation skills by leading a class discussion on an article or book chapter and by presenting your final project at the end of the course to the rest of the class;
- develop your skills as a teacher by demonstrating and explaining a particular technology/computer-based resource for language learning to fellow classmates via a mini workshop;
- create an annotated bibliography related to a specific CALL topic in support of a lesson plan that incorporates technology to teach some aspect of your L2 (i.e., the final project).

### **Components of the course**

Each of the components of the course is described below.

**\*Readings.** Readings for the course are comprised of a mix of research articles (i.e., articles that explain and report on the results of a research project about a specific area of L2 learning and CALL), overview articles (i.e., articles that provide a general overview of a research area/issue in CALL), and book chapters (e.g., chapters that highlight an empirical or pedagogical concern in CALL). Many of the readings come from the required texts while others will be available via our course's Canvas page or directly from journals via databases in the library. It is imperative that you do a close reading of each assigned article or book chapter each week. Carefully reading the articles and book chapters will (a) allow you to contribute meaningfully to class discussion which will, in turn, allow you to better understand the issues being investigated or presented in the article/chapter, (b) allow you to think critically about how the research was conducted and thoughtfully question the theoretical framework used, research questions, methods, results, conclusions, etc., and (c) better prepare you for the final project in this course.

**•Responses to articles in class.** It is highly suggested that you take notes while doing the readings outside of class. Given that this class is a graduate course and only meets once each week, it will be necessary for you to remember the details of each article as you will often be asked to share your thoughts about what you have read. To reiterate, doing the readings and taking notes will help you to (a) better understand the chapter or article, and (b) prepare you to contribute to class discussion in a meaningful way. Your reaction/notes could contain any of the following:

- \* Is there a quotation from the reading that you find particularly interesting?;
- \* What ideas discussed in the reading do you agree or disagree with? Why?;
- \* How does the reading relate to language learning theory?;
- \* What are the pedagogical implications of the specific technology (or technologies) addressed in the reading?;
- \* How would you apply what you have learned from this reading to your own language learning or teaching situation?

**\*Leading a critical discussion of an assigned reading.** During the course of the semester, you will be asked to lead the discussion of one of the readings that appears in the syllabus. You

should feel free to be creative when deciding how you want to lead the critical discussion for the given article/book chapter. You should design questions or an activity(ies) that target(s) the main components or concepts of the research article or book chapter in order to engage your fellow class members in discussion. On the day when you lead discussion, part of the class will be yours to address the main point(s) of the article and do your activity(ies). Regardless the type of article that you are assigned, you should provide an overview of the project (i.e., why was the study needed—if an empirical study)?; how was the technological application used?; what were the findings (again, if your article is an empirical study)?; how does this inform L2 teaching and learning?). More information about leading a critical discussion of a reading will be provided during the course of the semester.

**\*Hands-on technology demonstration/mini workshop.** A quality graduate course should focus on the exchange of ideas about the topic of the course. Part of the academic exchange in this course will include a hands-on technology demonstration. Early in the semester, each student will choose a technological application (after consulting with the professor) and will thoroughly research how to use it on their own outside of class. During various class periods throughout the course of the semester, each student will be in charge of presenting his/her technological application to the rest of the class in a mini workshop format. Specifically, you will (a) provide an overview of the technological application (how it can be used by a student or instructor in a specific language learning environment, highlighting the tool's strengths and weaknesses, etc.), and (b) allow fellow classmates to make use of it in a meaningful way such as creating a short, hands-on activity in which everyone in the class has the opportunity to use and become familiar with the tool. Before choosing a specific technology to review, please consult with the professor first (in person or via email) so that he can give you the okay to proceed. More information about this activity will be provided to you early on in the semester.

**\*Late-semester exam.** One cumulative exam will be given during the latter point of the semester. If you have been consistently doing the readings, taking notes, and actively participating in class discussions, you should do well on the exam. More information about the format of the exam will be provided to you in class.

**\*Mini project.** Earlier in the semester, you will be asked to carry out an exploratory, technology-related mini project which will involve you doing a personal internet use analysis. More details about this assignment will be discussed in class.

**\*Final project.** The main purpose of the final project is to allow you to focus on a specific topic related to L2 learning and CALL that results in (a) an in-depth and current annotated bibliography, and (b) a mini lesson plan (with accompanying activities) that articulates how you would use/incorporate a specific kind of technology/tool to teach a lexical, grammatical, or cultural aspect of your L2. The annotated bibliography part of the final project can include 1-2 readings from our course but will primarily involve you locating and reading new articles outside of class related to your topic. All of the articles that you include in your annotated bibliography should be no older than 2007, with the majority of them having been published during the last five years (i.e., 2012-present). In all, the annotated bibliography part of your final project should include the review of at least 5 articles on your chosen CALL topic/area of interest. It is important to note that you will need to turn in a preliminary, one-page overview of your final project that indicates the area of L2 learning/teaching that you will be focusing on and lists 5 readings that you plan to include/review. Please see the due date for this one-page overview assignment in the calendar below.

In addition to the written version of your final project, you will present your final project to the rest of the class during the last class meeting of the semester. More information about the final project and the accompanying oral presentation will be provided to you during the semester.

**\*Participation.** This class is designed to provide a lively and supportive forum for the ongoing discussion of and learning about a number of issues related to CALL. Your participation in the activities of the class is a key component of its usefulness. “Participation” in this class includes your regular, active contributions to the discussions about the readings, your involvement in any oral report/presentation given by your classmates, and regular attendance.

**\*Attendance.** Please note that given the number of students enrolled in this course, attendance is crucial and will affect the nature of our class discussions. Specifically, when you are gone from class, the rest of the class suffers. Therefore, please try to make it to every class meeting. If you, for any reason, will not be in class, please email me beforehand (if possible) to let me know. Note that you will be allowed to miss **one** class session during the course of the semester without penalty (regardless of the nature of the absence). Beginning with the second absence, your overall grade for the course will be lowered by 3 percentage points (3%) per absence. The only way in which the second absence will be excused is if the absence was due to an unexpected/emergency situation (e.g., a medical emergency). Ultimately, the professor reserves the right to excuse an absence.

### Grading

Mini project: Internet use analysis (10 pts.)	5%
Class preparation and active participation (2 @ 15 pts.)	5%
One-page overview of final project (10 pts.)	5%
Oral presentation of final project (20 pts.)	10%
Late-semester exam (25 pts.)	15%
Hands-on technology demonstration/mini workshop (20 pts.)	15%
Leading a critical discussion of an assigned reading (20 pts.)	20%
Final project (50 pts.)	25%

Final letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A	93% and above	C	73 – 76.99%
A-	90 – 92.99%	C-	70 – 72.99%
B+	87 – 89.99%	D+	67 – 69.99%
B	83 – 86.99%	D	63 – 66.99%
B-	80 – 82.99%	D-	60 – 62.99%
C+	77 – 79.99%	F	59.99% or below

Please note that I do not award extra credit in my courses. Requesting extra credit at the end of the semester when you realize that your grade is not where you want it to be will only result in a frustrating experience for you and me. Be responsible for your learning and start earning your grade from the beginning of the semester.

### Academic Honesty/Integrity

It is your responsibility to know the definitions and consequences of plagiarism; please read the Academic Honesty/Integrity section of the USU General Catalog:

<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3140&hl=academic+honesty&returnto=search>

### **Other**

\*If you have any complaints about this course, I ask you first to bring to me directly any concerns you may have. Should we not be able to resolve your concerns to your satisfaction, you would then speak to Dr. Brad Hall, Chair of the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies (Main 204 A).

\*Please let me know during the first week of class (after class or during my office hours) if you have a disability for which special arrangements may be needed, such as modification in seating.

\*Given the nature of this course, we may periodically meet in a computer lab somewhere on campus. However, if you have a laptop or tablet, I encourage you to bring that with you to class given that the hands-on technology workshops will require you to experiment with the tool that your classmates review during those particular activities.

\*One final note regarding your written work in this course: As is customary in the fields of CALL and SLA, formal written work should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style. All in-text citations and works listed in the works cited page of your final project need to follow APA guidelines. For more information about the APA citation style, please consult the following: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). You may also want to reference a useful online guide to citing/writing via APA guidelines (created and maintained by Purdue University): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> (or simply Google “owl” and “purdue”).

### **Canvas**

This course will use a Canvas webpage. Therefore, please be sure that you are checking your USU account or forwarding your USU e-mail to an account you check regularly as announcements/updates about the course will be made via Canvas. In addition, many of the articles will also be made available to you via Canvas. To access this course's Canvas page, please visit the following website and log in to your Canvas account: <https://canvas.usu.edu/>