



OnLine *focus*

CUOL Newsletter – March 2015

Carleton professors discuss how they used a provincial funding grant to develop a web-based course



Peggy
Hartwick



Iryna
Kozlova



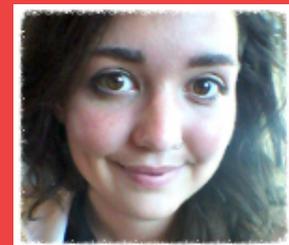
Eva
Kartchava



Jaffer
Sheyholislami

Tales from the Field: [Carmen Borger](#)

A Carleton student shares the story of her experience taking a new online course while living abroad



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The ALDS 1001 Experience: How four Carleton professors designed an interactive, online course

The screenshot displays the Carleton University website's navigation and content structure. At the top, the Carleton University logo and name are visible, along with utility links for A-Z Index, Phonebook, and Campus Map. A search bar is present in the top right corner. Below the navigation bar, the main content area features a banner for the '2014-2015 Undergraduate Calendar'. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current page is '2014-2015 Undergraduate Calendar / Courses / Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies (ALDS)'. The left sidebar contains a menu with 'Undergraduate Calendar' selected, and sub-items for 'Calendar Updates', 'Courses', 'Programs', 'Academic Regulations', 'Admissions Regulations', 'The University', 'About this Calendar', 'The Academic Year', 'Graduate Calendar', and 'Calendar Archives'. The main content area displays the title 'Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies (ALDS)' with a PDF icon. Below this, it lists 'Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies (ALDS) Courses' at the 'School of Linguistics and Language Studies' and 'Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences'. The specific course 'ALDS 1001 [0.5 credit]' is highlighted, with a sub-heading 'Language Matters: Introduction to ALDS'. The description states: 'Core topics in applied linguistics and discourse studies. First and second language acquisition; sign language; language teaching and assessment; language in society; language, identity and power; discourse analysis; written language and literacy. Prerequisites: additional credit for LALS 1000 and LALS 1002 (no longer offered). Lectures three hours a week.'

This upcoming fall, Carleton students will be able to substitute stringent class schedules with the flexibility of online learning by taking a new, online version of the course, ALDS 1001 (Language Matters: Introduction to Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies).

The online version of ALDS 1001 is the brainchild of Carleton University professors Peggy Hartwick, Eva Kartchava, Jaffer Sheyholislami and Iryna Kozlova. In late 2014, the foursome submitted a proposal to Ontario Online, an initiative that aims to help universities and colleges design and support online courses. ALDS 1001 was one of five Carleton courses selected to receive funding from Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hartwick, Kartchava, Sheyholislami and Kozlova spent the past summer developing an online version of the pre-existing ALDS 1001 course. During the Fall 2014 semester, the four professors co-taught the online version for the first time. Each member of the group was responsible for teaching three subject areas – or “modules” – within the course.

The stories that follow offer a glimpse of each professor's experience while designing and teaching ALDS 1001.

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Peggy Hartwick

Modules Taught:

- (1) Written discourse analysis**
- (2) Lexicography**
- (3) Speech and language pathology**

Snapshot:

Peggy Hartwick says she is fascinated by the use of technology to enhance learning,

so when she was offered the opportunity to design an online course, she says she was “very excited.”

“It was just something I became really intrigued about,” she says.

Hartwick says her interest in the role of technology in teaching developed four years ago, while she was piloting a three-dimensional teaching environment. When Hartwick’s director learned that she was interested in online education, Hartwick says he approached her and suggested she develop the ALDS 1001 course in an online context.

She sought the help of three of her colleagues and the team spent their summer working with Carleton’s Educational Development Centre (EDC) to construct a course which students could access through cuLearn.

Though Hartwick says she enjoyed working with her colleagues, she admits that the task of coordinating schedules and ideas was challenging.

“We all have different teaching styles, backgrounds, experience, so it certainly added to the richness of the course, but it demanded a lot more administration,” explains Hartwick.

In spite of the challenges her team faced in coordinating schedules, Hartwick says the experience of designing and teaching ALDS 1001 alongside her peers was rewarding.

Hartwick says she is “particularly excited” about the lessons she designed for the three modules. She incorporated a series of interactive elements, including *YouTube* videos, pre-recorded video lectures, and recorded interviews with guests.

“I also embedded various learning activity tasks into each lesson,” she says, “with the intention of providing students with multiple opportunities to really connect and engage with the topic at an experiential level.”

Hartwick highlights the fact that online learning cannot serve as a substitute for in-class learning. Collaboration between students plays an important role in enhancing the learning experience, she says, adding that she hopes to incorporate more opportunities for collaboration into ALDS 1001 in the future.

“Students should be able to meet at the same time or at least have a task that allows the learners to comment and interact,” she says.

Hartwick says she has been brainstorming ideas for other online classes, and hopes to continue designing online courses.

“I’m really passionate about what I am doing right now,” she says, with a smile.

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Jaffer Sheyholislami

Modules Taught:

(1) What is applied linguistics and discourse studies?

(2) Language variation and language diversity

(3) Language policy and planning

Snapshot:

When Jaffer Sheyholislami began an online version of ALDS 1001, he says he strived to ensure that online learners wouldn't miss out on the educational value offered by face-to-face interactions, highlighting the importance of peer interactions as means of enhancing the learning experience.

“My philosophy is, learning comes when students have lots of interaction,” he explains.

Sheyholislami, who has taught a variety of language courses at Carleton, says that though he was not able to communicate with students face-to-face, he used tools such as email and discussion boards to help his students understand the ALDS 1001 course material.

He says that online communication ultimately helped him better address his students' learning needs, because he was able to carefully word his answers to students' questions.

“In a face-to-face class, profs might say, ‘I’ll get back to you on this,’ ” Sheyholislami says, “but on a discussion board, you can word your questions and answers meticulously.”

Sheyholislami says he also liked having the freedom to edit and perfect the short lecture clips that were posted on the ALDS 1001 course page.

“In a recorded lecture, you can go back and fix anything and frame it the way you want to,” he explains.

Apart from the communication advantages that came with online teaching, Sheyholislami says the experience of designing ALDS 1001 also helped him learn to work in a team.

“For me, it was like taking a teaching workshop all over again,” he says, with a smile.

Looking toward the future, Sheyholislami says he and his colleagues are thinking about discussing the experience of teaching and designing ALDS 1001 at an educational conference.

“This has been a great experience, as far as I’m concerned,” says Sheyholislami. “From my point of view... it was fantastic.”

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Iryna Kozlova

Modules Taught:

- (1) Spoken Discourse Analysis**
- (2) Population**
- (3) Translation**

Snapshot:

For Carleton University professor Iryna Kozlova, online education can be summarized in two words: “luxury” and “learning.”

“It’s more flexible but ... you have to be very well disciplined, because you have to be in control of your learning,” Kozlova explains.

Kozlova was among four professors tasked with designing the online version of ALDS 1001. While developing the course, she says she wanted to ensure that students would be engaged in the learning process, so she tried to design a course that maximized students' desire to master the course material, regardless of the lack of opportunities available for face-to-face interaction.

“Students taking the course are coming from different places,” she says. “They don’t see each other. I think because of that, we had to reconceptualize the concept of this course.”

Kozlova admits that while developing ALDS 1001, she and her colleagues did not always agree on a particular way of teaching the course. However, Kozlova says the task of designing the online course ultimately helped her embrace a variety of perspectives.

“I thought it was exciting that we had to take into consideration all those opinions and perspectives,” says Kozlova. “It’s a learning curve.”

Looking back on the experience of teaching and designing ALDS 1001, Kozlova says she is “very grateful” for the assistance of the colleagues whom she designed the course with. She credits the success of the course to the team that designed it.

“They’re just amazing,” she says, “and I think that it’s just this group experience ... that actually added to the success of the course.”

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Eva Kartchava

Modules Taught:

- (1) Additional language learning**
- (2) Bilingualism and multilingualism**
- (3) Education in the classroom, literacy**

Snapshot:

When reflecting on the experience of designing and teaching ALDS 1001, Carleton Linguistics and Language Studies professor, Eva Kartchava smiles and deems the course a success.

“I think in terms of how it was done, was really good,” says Kartchava. “It’s challenging, but it’s a great learning experience.”

Kartchava helped develop an interactive, three-dimensional learning tool for the modules she taught. She explains that immersing students in an interactive learning environment can help them better understand course material.

According to Kartchava, the environment she developed for ALDS 1001 can also help students recognize how course material is applicable in their everyday lives.

“It’s really important for people to see that what we’re talking about is not some academic subject that exists in the vacuum,” says Kartchava. “It’s something that affects everyone.”

In a society as diverse as Canada, Kartchava highlights the importance of ensuring that all members understand and appreciate the diverse languages spoken. She says the online version of ALDS 1001 can help its students develop this appreciation.

Apart from sharing her thoughts on the content of ALDS 1001, Karchava also recounts challenges she faced in developing and teaching the course. She says, for example, that she had to develop alternatives in case there were problems with the technology.

“You had to think about the course ahead of time, and you had to try to predict every thing that could go wrong, how it could be perceived,” explains Kartchava. “Even a simple thing like using a *YouTube* link; What if it didn’t work? What would be the Plan B?”

Ultimately, Kartchava says that her preparation for ALDS 1001 and her first time teaching the course was a valuable learning experience.

“A course, even a face-to-face one, only becomes better after several trials,” she says. “I hope to contribute to making [this course] better but also hope to learn from each time that the course is delivered.”



**Tales from the Field:
Carmen Borger**

**What she learned while taking ALDS 1001 from the
Netherlands**

From learning to appreciate the diversity of language to enjoying a flexible schedule, Carmen Borger says she made a variety of gains while studying abroad as a distance student.

Borger is a fourth year student in Carleton's Bachelor of Social Work program. She spent her Fall 2014 semester living on Terschelling – an island off the northern coast of the Netherlands.

The new, online version of ALDS 1001 (Language Matters: Introduction to Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies) was among the courses Borger took during her fall semester abroad. She says the course "could not have come at a better time," because its teachings gave her a deeper appreciation of language, which proved useful during her stay abroad.

"Linguistics does not make a judgment call labeling language as "correct" or "incorrect," but rather, [it] recognizes the differences and beauty of diversity," says Borger. "It challenged me to take a look at some of the myths I hold about language and language learning."

Apart from debunking myths about language, Borger says taking ALDS 1001 also helped her understand the cultural and socio-political value of the many dialects of language used in the region where she was living. Borger says that this, in turn, enhanced her understanding of the community in which she was living.

Borger participated in a three-dimensional avatar environment component of the ALDS 1001. Although the introduction of avatars to facilitate learning is a fairly novel concept, Borger says her professors helped her understand the process of

navigating the 3D environment.

“The professors made up a wonderful team of educators,” says Borger. “They all hold a great deal of passion of different areas of linguistics and I think their cooperation is a real strength of the course curriculum.”

Borger says that in her case, taking Carleton University courses online was a valuable learning opportunity. She recommends CUOL courses to other students who are hoping to strike a balance between school, work and other commitments.

“There’s more to life than pure academia,” she says, “and CUOL allows me to explore, participate and enjoy my post-secondary experience.”

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Reporter:
Maha Ansari



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