

# Historical Overview of the Center for Global Communication Strategies

Tom Gally

Professor, CGCS/Language and Information Sciences

Managing Director, ALESS Program, 2008–2013

Director, CGCS, 2016–2018

# Curriculum development and implementation in CGCS

- **ALESS/ALESA/FLOW**  
EFL academic writing and speaking for all April-entry undergraduates
- **Trilingual Program**  
Intensive instruction and study-abroad programs in a second foreign language for students who have already shown high foreign-language ability and motivation
- **Japanese Program**  
Beginning to advanced instruction in academic Japanese for international students

# Fundamental issues

- Institutional constraints
- Different views about the purposes of foreign-language education
- Different views about the nature of language

# History of CGCS English programs (1)

**2004**

Publication of *First Moves: An Introduction to Academic Writing in English* by Paul Rossiter and Department of English Language

**2005**

Critical Writing Program established within new Komaba Organization for Educational Development

**2005–2008**

Various academic writing classes piloted with lower-division students

Writing-center model piloted through tutorials by graduate student tutors

# History of CGCS English programs (2)

**2008**

ALESS Program launched to teach science writing and presentation to all first-year science students (1850 students per year, 10 full-time teachers)

ALESS initially funded by central UTokyo's administration and upper-division science faculties, later by central administration only

Komaba Writer's Studio established

**2011**

ALESS Lab established

# History of CGCS English programs (3)

## **2012**

CGCS established as separate unit within College of Arts & Sciences

ALESS faculty moved to CGCS

## **2013**

ALESA Program launched to teach argumentative writing to all first-year humanities students (1200 students per year, 6 full-time teachers)

ALESA funded by College of Arts & Sciences

## **2015**

FLOW Program launched to boost all students' spoken fluency

FLOW funded by university-wide educational reform initiative

Combined ALESS/ALESA/FLOW faculty grows to 29 full-time teachers

# History of Trilingual Program

**2013**

TLP launched with Chinese

Funded by Global Leadership Program

**2016**

German, French, and Russian added

**2018**

Korean added

**2019**

Spanish to be added

# Institutional constraints

- Grading and promotion system
- Variation in students' background and ability
- Language study is only one part of broad liberal arts curriculum
- Strong independence of UTokyo's divisions and campuses
- Class scheduling and classroom availability
- Budget

# Resulting limitations

- Students' freedom to decide and plan their own course of study is limited.
- Teachers' freedom to devise their own courses is limited.
- Students' motivation to study is sometimes limited and can be overly focused on grades.
- Interaction is limited between programs for different languages, between language programs and specialized programs, between the university's lower and upper divisions, and with people and institutions outside the university.

# Views about the purposes of foreign-language education

- For personal and intellectual enrichment
- For use as a practical tool
- As a qualification for educational and employment advancement

# Views about the nature of language

- A cognitive phenomenon that takes place primarily within the individual language user
- A social phenomenon that is closely integrated with other types of human interaction and activity

# Unresolved issues

- Should our language classes focus on
  - language acquisition?
  - context-rich language use?
  - acquiring explicit knowledge about the language?
  - learning specialized content?
  - raising students' scores on language tests?
- Are the most appropriate language teachers
  - native speakers?
  - nonnative speakers who have themselves studied the language?
  - language-education specialists?
  - content-area specialists?

Does the fact that these  
fundamental issues are unresolved  
make our programs stronger?