

Global Languages

The core mission of [Global Languages](#) is to educate students in languages, cultures, and intercultural communication, with the broad aim of advancing their academic, career, and personal goals. As MIT students pursue an expanding spectrum of international engagements, Global Languages classes and immersive international experiences help prepare them to live and work in the diverse and multilingual context of a globalizing world.

Major achievements and highlights this year include the following:

- Approval of a Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS) concentration in Korean and appointment of a senior lecturer in Korean
- Approval of Arabic I and Arabic II subjects in preparation for the launch of an Arabic pilot in academic year 2022 (AY2022)
- Creation of Tutmonda, a first-year learning community offered in response to a call for new activities and opportunities engaging first-year students in a remote year
- Launch of a search for a new director of Global Languages (appointment expected to be effective in AY2023)
- Launch of a new Global Languages website

Restructuring of the Academic Unit

Subsequent to the restructuring of the academic unit early in AY2020, Global Languages continues to hone a shared vision and mission focused on delivery of innovative language pedagogy to MIT students. Emma J. Teng, T.T. and Wei Fong Chao Professor of Asian Civilizations, continues to serve as the faculty director of Global Languages and is overseeing the transition. The Global Languages Transition Search Committee (chaired by Melissa Nobles, Kenan Sahin Dean of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences [SHASS]), charged with identifying a new faculty director, concluded an open application period, interviews, virtual campus visits, and stakeholder engagement and expects to make an offer in AY2022.

Professor Teng, in coordination with the SHASS dean's office, continued to evaluate the ongoing role of MIT faculty in Global Languages governance and oversight. Appointment of a faculty committee is expected in AY2022; its charge will include advisory voting on curricular and personnel matters, support of Global Languages outreach and engagement, and counsel to the faculty director on strategic initiatives.

As part of the restructuring, a proposal was made by Jane Dunphy, senior lecturer in English Language Studies (ELS), that ELS academic programming and instructional staff be moved to the Comparative Media Studies/Writing section (CMS/W), citing similarities in the academic mission of ELS and the Writing group of CMS/W. The proposal was supported by John E. Burchard Professor of the Humanities Edward Schiappa of CMS/W

and subsequently approved by Dean Nobles, CMS/W head Eric Klopfer, and Professor Teng. The transition of all ELS academic programming to CMS/W was completed at the conclusion of AY2021, although ELS subjects will remain cross listed with 21G for one academic year.

Initiatives

Global Languages continued to focus on fostering the professional development of its lecturer cohort and strengthening the academic unit's focus on language pedagogy and instructional innovation. With all Global Languages instructional activity conducted remotely in AY2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this included a special focus on adapting language instruction for optimal outcomes in the remote classroom. Below are examples of initiatives over the past year.

- Global Languages colloquia: Held in the fall and in the spring, the Global Languages colloquia focused on pedagogical topics with broad application to language teaching and learning. Speakers were invited from within the instructional staff. Topics included those focusing on innovative implementations in a remote teaching environment, asynchronous methods to enhance communication, the design of professional communication classes, virtual reality in remote learning, and integrated performance assessment.
- Global Languages Pedagogy Lecture Series: Global Languages continued its Pedagogy Lecture Series, initiated in AY2020. James Rankin, senior lecturer and director of the Princeton Center for Language Study at Princeton University, delivered a lecture on second-language vocabulary acquisition and its role in his online textbook project *der:die:das*. Sébastien DuBreil, teaching professor of French and Francophone studies at Carnegie Mellon University, lectured on "Design Thinking and/in L2 Learning," delving into the role of game development and play as a tool for language learning. These lectures were held on Zoom and were open to the public. They were well attended by MIT community members and educators from k–12 and higher education institutions.
- Teaching toolbox: Systems administrator and instructional technologist Joseph Borkowski and senior lecturer in Russian Maria Khotimsky launched 30-minute teaching toolbox sessions featuring academic staff members introducing a tool or implementation they used in the classroom for remote instruction.
- Pedagogy innovation support: In accordance with membership requirements of the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning, Global Languages allocated funds for internal grants to support innovation in language teaching. Lecturer in Chinese Kang Zhou's proposal to develop a diagnostic tool evaluating learners' Chinese tonal proficiency received support. Professor Teng and Senior Associate Dean for Open Learning Shigeru Miyagawa served on the selection committee.
- Proposals for Canvas app integration: Global Languages submitted two proposals for application integration into the Canvas learning management system (LMS), both of which were approved by the Canvas LMS Faculty Advisory Committee.

- Instructional technologist open office hours: Joseph Borkowski offered weekly open office hours to foster casual discussion about the implementation of instructional tools and technologies in the language classroom and to support lecturers in identifying appropriate tools to implement their pedagogical strategies in the remote classroom.
- Discussion on hybrid instruction: Based on successful provision of remote instruction in AY2021, Global Languages initiated internal discussions of how hybrid and remote teaching may remain a relevant or beneficial component in the field of language education.

Finances, Fundraising, and Development

Professor Teng continued internal and external fundraising efforts during AY2021 with a forward-looking focus on supporting class opportunities abroad and pedagogical initiatives among the language groups. Several efforts yielded success. With the support of Professor Elizabeth Wood of the History faculty, the MIT Skoltech Program granted funds in support of Russian language teaching for AY2021. A teaching grant application to the Korea Foundation was successful, with one-year support of a full-time lecturer position to be offered in AY2022. With the support of MIT-Korea managing director Matt Burt, alumni donations were received to promote Korean language instruction. In coordination with Associate Provost Philip Khoury and stakeholder faculty members, Professor Teng secured the allocation of unexpended Kuwait Project funds to support the pilot of Arabic language instruction. In addition, Kochi Prefecture-John Manjiro Professorship endowment funds were made available for application to Japanese language instruction. Annual and other gifts were also received from generous supporters of Global Languages. Senior lecturer in Russian Maria Khotimsky submitted a proposal to the National Security Agency STARTALK grant program to support the development of materials showing the career applications of Russian language.

Personnel

Faculty

There were no faculty changes in AY2021. Professor Teng remains the only faculty member with an affiliation in Global Languages.

Academic Instructional Staff

In AY2021, Global Languages included 37 academic instructional staff, including 14 lecturers with temporary appointments. Due to the relocation of ELS, two academic instructional staff members (Eric Grunwald and AC Kemp) moved to CMS/W at the close of AY2021.

Following a search for a senior lecturer in Korean in AY2020, a case for the appointment of a senior lecturer was conducted in AY2021. The case was successful and Hee-Jeong Jeong, formerly lecturer in Korean, was appointed senior lecturer in Korean effective January 1, 2021.

In preparation for the launch of an Arabic language pilot, a search was initiated in AY2021 for a part-time temporary lecturer. An appointment is expected in AY2022.

Senior lecturer in French Sabine Levet was on leave in fall 2021. She and Jane Dunphy retired at the conclusion of AY2021.

Administrative and Support Staff

Global Languages administrative and support staff included an administrative officer, a systems administrator and instructional technologist, an undergraduate academic administrator, and two support staff members. One support staff member departed MIT during AY2021, and a search for her replacement is underway.

In AY2021, the systems administrator position was expanded in title and duties to include instructional technology, recognizing the increasing importance of this support role for language pedagogy.

Accomplishments and Honors

The director and academic instructional staff in Global Languages were active in their professional fields, publishing books and scholarly articles, presenting research at conferences and other venues, and receiving recognitions and honors during AY2021.

Professor Teng published an article, “Chinese Elites and U.S. Gatekeeping: Racial Discrimination and Class Privilege in Boston’s 1905 King Incident,” in *Modern American History*. Lecturer in Chinese Tong Chen coauthored a new textbook, *China from Different Perspectives* (Phoenix Tree Publishing). Hee-Jeong Jeong was co-author of a new edition of the textbook *Integrated Korean: Advanced I* (University of Hawai’i Press). Lecturer in Portuguese Nilma Dominique co-edited *Microgeopolítica da Língua Portuguesa: Ações, Desafios e Perspectivas* (Microgeopolitics of the Portuguese Language: Actions, Challenges and Perspectives) (Boavista Press). Lecturer in Spanish Ana Yáñez Rodríguez co-edited *Wall to Wall: Law as Culture in Latin America and Spain* (Vernon Press). Academic instructional staff members published articles in a variety of pedagogical journals, including *MarcoELE*, *Revista de Didáctica Español Lengua Extranjera* (*Journal of Spanish Foreign Language Didactics*), *Language Teaching Research*, *Japanese Language and Literature*, and the *French Review*.

Faculty and instructional staff presented research and pedagogical findings at a range of domestic and international conferences, symposia, and invited lectures, all held remotely. Professor Teng delivered several invited interviews and lectures on the topics of Asian American history and anti-Asian prejudice, including to the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the MIT Clubs of San Diego and Southern California, the Lincoln Laboratory Pan Asian Laboratory Staff Group, the Obstetrical Society of Boston, and Salem State University. Senior lecturer in Japanese Takako Aikawa delivered invited talks at the Middlebury Japanese Language Summer Institute, a meeting of the Ohio Association of Teachers of Japanese, and the Illinois Center for East Asian & Pacific Studies at the University of Illinois. Tong Chen presented “Issues in the Compilation of Chinese Textbooks for Intermediate-high and Advanced-low Students” at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Nilma Dominique delivered the keynote lecture at

the Conference on Portuguese as a Foreign Language, hosted by Columbia University, and an invited talk to the Spanish Department of Wellesley College. Senior lecturer in Chinese Haohsiang Liao presented “Chinese Language MOOCs: MITx—Chinese Language in Culture” at the 2021 Workshop on Mandarin Chinese Teaching and Learning in India, hosted by Tsinghua University (Taiwan). Finally, lecturer in Chinese Min-Min Liang delivered “Community Building: Thinking Routines and Differentiated Instruction” to special interest groups of the Chinese Language Teachers Association.

Haohsiang Liao completed the development of two massive open online courses (MOOCs): Chinese Language in Culture, Level 1 and Chinese Language in Culture, Level 2. The development of these courses was supported by sponsored funding from the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Several academic staff members also received awards resulting from competitive internal grant opportunities. In spring 2021, Takako Aikawa completed a rotation as a faculty fellow in the Programs in Digital Humanities, leading a project that incorporated computational linguistics to create a web application for remote language teaching. She also proposed and was selected to collaborate with SHASS MITx digital learning scientist Meghan Perdue on the production of video materials to support students’ independent and asynchronous study of Japanese *kanji* characters. Lecturer in German Dagmar Jaeger was selected as an Alumni Class Funds recipient to develop a remote intensive conversation class for students studying German; the class will be developed and offered in AY2022. Lecturers in Chinese Panpan Gao and Kang Zhou were awarded funds from the MindHandHeart Community Innovation Fund for their video and language website Meditation for Chinese Learners. The website organizes meditation videos in Chinese for language learners at various levels and includes vocabulary lists and scripts. The website and videos can be used in classes or externally and can be easily implemented for remote learning as well.

Maria Khotimsky and lecturer in Spanish Helena Belío Apaolaza were selected as recipients of 2021 Teaching with Digital Technology Awards, presented by MIT Open Learning to selected student-nominated instructors. Also, Khotimsky and lecturer in Japanese Masami Ikeda received SHASS Levitan Teaching Awards. Jane Dunphy was honored with the Irwin Sizer Award, recognizing her long career of contributions to graduate education at MIT.

Service to the Profession

Global Languages members held various leadership and service roles in professional societies and groups.

Professor Teng is a member of the governing board of the Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning. She serves on the International Advisory Board of the International Chinese Language Program of National Taiwan University, the board of advisors of the North American Taiwan Studies Association, and the advisory board of the Chinese Historical Society of New England’s Project 150.

Haohsiang Liao is a member of the advisory boards of the Steering Committee for the Test of Proficiency-Huayu (Taiwan Ministry of Education) and the Chinese Language Center of the National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan.

Tong Chen serves the Chinese Language Teachers Association as a member of its board of directors, fundraising committee, membership committee, and National Collegiate Honors Society committee.

Min-Min Liang is the secretary of the Heritage Language Group, a special interest group of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Nilma Dominique is a member of the board of directors of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association.

Joseph Borkowski commenced a two-year term as president-elect of the New England Regional Association for Language Learning Technology.

Service to the Institute

Professor Teng served on several Institute committees in AY2021: the Karl Taylor Compton Lectures Advisory Committee, the International Advisory Committee, the Working Group on Disclosures in Connection with Complaints of Violations of Conduct Policies, the education group of Task Force 2021 and Beyond, the Social Responsibility Refinement and Implementation Committee of Task Force 2021 and Beyond, the Learning Management System Faculty Advisory Committee, and the Committee to Envision the Schwarzman College of Computing Center for Advanced Studies in Computing.

Lecturer in French Cathy Culot served as co-director of the MIT-Belgium Program.

Intellectual Commons

Global Languages hosted programming in support of intellectual commons throughout the academic year. Due to the remote circumstances of AY2021, activities focused particularly on continuation and provision of opportunities for students to participate in the MIT community.

The Japanese group, led by Takako Aikawa, collaborated with MIT-Japan Program manager Christine Pilcavage to arrange a remote language exchange between MIT students and their peers at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in summer 2020. Students culminated the exchange with video presentations in the target language. Nilma Dominique co-organized the Brasilidade Series with the MIT-Brazil Program, holding remote sessions on Brazilian music, food, and culture. The Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian language groups also held virtual lunch and café sessions open to students looking for further language practice and seeking to interact with their peers and instructors.

Professor Teng and April Julich-Perez, executive director of the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI), co-organized and led Tutmonda, a pilot first-year learning community for students identifying international experiences as integral in their MIT education. Tutmonda offered students global cultural experiences outside

the classroom at a time when travel was not possible and fostered connections and community with MIT and other first-year peers. Selected from 50 applicants, 36 students enrolled across eight languages. In addition to demonstrations, hands-on sessions, cooking tutorials, and games, the weekly sessions included virtual presentations by speakers and panels, with guests including MIT faculty and staff and external scholars. Many members of the Global Languages instructional staff contributed sessions or speaker suggestions. Professor Teng also curated asynchronous materials to share each month, such as the Film of the Month, Virtual Museum of the Month, Puzzle of the Month, Classical Composer of the Month, Food of the Month, and more, representing the nine language groups in Global Languages. At the conclusion of the year, student participants reported continued commitment to international language and culture learning as part of their MIT experience and positive outcomes with respect to the development of community and connection in their mostly remote first year.

Academics

Curriculum

Following confirmation of Korean language as a regular 21G curriculum offering in AY2020, a HASS concentration in Korean was approved.

Two new subjects were offered for the first time: 21G.056/21G.356 The “Making” of Modern Europe: 1789 to the Present and 21G.342 French Pop Music. The 21G.700 course was taught for the first time as a Spanish for heritage learners class. A 13-unit Spanish language option of 21G.084 Introduction to Latin American Studies was also offered for the first time, expanding the subject selection of the Spanish minor and major programs.

Several subjects were piloted under special subject numbers in AY2021: Russian V: Russian for Scientists and Engineers; Korean V; Korean VI; Three Kingdoms: From History to Fiction to Video Games; and Spanish for Medicine and Health. Russian V, Korean V, and Korean VI were approved by the Committee on the Curricula (CoC) and will be offered in future academic years under subject numbers 21G.615, 21G.905, and 21G.906, respectively. CoC approval of other subjects remains pending.

Dean Nobles approved an Arabic language pilot to commence in AY2022. In preparation, Arabic I and Arabic II subject proposals were confirmed by CoC under the subject numbers 21G.951 and 21G.952, respectively.

Due primarily to international travel prohibitions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, Global Languages did not offer any classes or opportunities abroad in AY2021. Resumption of classes in China and Spain during Independent Activities Period (IAP) remains a future goal, pending budget availability and safe travel conditions.

Enrollments

Enrollments in Global Languages (21G) subjects dropped this academic year to 1,904 from an all-time high of 2,323 in AY2020. Loss of enrollment was evident in all class years but was most dramatic among first-year students, with a 34% reduction from AY2020 to AY2021. Among languages, enrollment reductions were most apparent

in Chinese and Spanish, down 28% and 26%, respectively, from AY2020 to AY2021. However, Spanish remained the most enrolled language, followed by Chinese and Japanese. German and Portuguese remained steady from AY2020, while Korean and Russian enrollments increased by 15% and 12%, respectively, in AY2021.

Notably, the number of students enrolled in Global Languages intensive IAP classes increased by 47, representing 36% growth from AY2020. This may have been due to a reduction in other IAP opportunities, such as travel, programs abroad, or internships, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As with subject enrollment, enrollment in Global Languages concentration, minor, and major programs also decreased in AY2021. Declared concentrations dropped to 418 from 489 in AY2020, with a decrease in nearly all concentrations other than Portuguese, which added four. Declared minors went down from 77 in AY2020 to 71 in AY2021. Despite this reduction in concentration and minor enrollment, Global Languages remains a popular selection in the humanities, arts, and social sciences alongside Economics, Political Science, and Music and Theater Arts. This year, 35 students declared a 21G minor. Global Languages graduated one major this year, Joanna Lin, who received her SB in biology and French.

Reasons for the general decline in class and program enrollments are difficult to assess in a year so greatly affecting education, programming, and administrative processes. A lack of on-campus visibility to students who were not already considering Global Languages classes and wariness of remote classes with frequent meetings may have been contributing factors.

Despite the reduction in enrollment, nearly 29% of MIT undergraduates (1,260 of 4,361) enrolled in a 21G subject this academic year.

Remote Instruction

To prepare for fully remote instruction in AY2021, the majority of Global Languages faculty and instructional staff transitioned their classes to the Canvas LMS, with the support of Joseph Borkowski and a student learning technologist. Throughout the academic year, faculty and instructional staff adapted lesson plans to accommodate and leverage the remote environment for achievement of learning goals. In addition to the capabilities of Canvas, instructional staff implemented several instructional tools including Perusall, VoiceThread, Flipgrid, ThingLink, Kahoot, Quizlet, PubPub, and Padlet, among others. Academic staff also used a “wiki” to share information about their experiences with implementation of different tools and teaching strategies in the remote classroom.

Three Global Languages lecturers delivered a panel on digital teaching tools as part of the SHASS Digital Teaching and Research Collaborative Sessions, hosted by SHASS and MIT Libraries. Global Languages academic staff also presented externally on lessons learned from remote instruction, with Maria Khotimsky, Min-Min Liang, and Dagmar Jaeger organizing and presenting the panel Lessons of the Virtual Semesters: Assessing Online Activities for Implementation in the Classroom at the biennial International Association for Language Learning Technology Conference. As noted above, several

instructional staff members were also honored with student-nominated awards for their teaching this year.

Student Engagement and Achievement

Despite Global Languages being fully remote in AY2021, efforts continued to promote its classes and programs, highlight student achievement, and foster community.

In place of the Academic Expo typically hosted by the Office of the First Year, Global Languages held an information session to introduce 21G programs and answer student questions. Global Languages also participated in a virtual Tour de SHASS on September 3, organized by SHASS academic administrators. In September 2020, Global Languages hosted an alumni career panel (sponsored by MIT Career Advising & Professional Development) via Zoom during Career Exploration Week. The panel featured three MIT alumni applying their 21G studies in different contexts. Additionally, Professor of Chemical Engineering Bradley Olsen and Class of '42 Associate Professor of Nuclear Science and Engineering Michael Short, both also MIT alumni, contributed their own experiences and insights on the benefits of language and cultural studies for professional applications.

Undergraduate academic administrator Joyce Roberge offered several opportunities for informal gathering during the academic year, including an internationally themed trivia game for students. As noted above, other instances of student engagement included the Tutmonda first-year learning community and non-classroom opportunities for language practice offered by the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese groups.

In the spring term, Global Languages held a remote student research showcase. Four students, nominated by faculty or instructional staff, delivered presentations on creative and research-based projects conducted in 21G classes. To close the academic year, on June 3 Global Languages hosted its annual Spring Fest. Global Languages honored its graduating major and recipients of the following student awards: the Award for Excellence, Distinguished Scholar Awards, the Miyagawa Prize for Japanese Language, German Studies Excellence Awards, and the Isabelle de Courtivron Writing Prize.

Two MIT students of Russian languages were awarded a prize at the New England Olympiada of Spoken Russian for their recitals of Russian poetry.

Administrative Initiatives

Several changes were made to Global Languages physical space as a result of the transition of ELS to CMS/W and other changes planned by SHASS. Rooms 14N-228, 14N-232, and 14N-236 were released to CMS/W for use by ELS instructional staff. The 14N-217 classroom was ceded to SHASS for use in relocating the Women's and Gender Studies Program; in return, the transition of the 14N-221 suite into a Global Languages classroom is expected in AY2022. In Building 16, the 16-628 classroom and adjacent studios (16-636A–D) were ceded to the Programs in Digital Humanities. In return, Global Languages received rooms 16-635, 16-635A, and 16-635B, which will be equipped as an office and shared multi-use spaces. The shared 16-645 office was equipped with audio and visual display to return to classroom use.

Global Languages adapted its monthly meeting of senior lecturers and the faculty director to be open to all members of Global Languages. This change allowed for more direct communication to and engagement of all academic staff in relevant topics. As needed, meetings of senior lecturers and the faculty director were held separately for voting or other confidential matters.

After an extended period of development delayed in part by the effects of COVID-19, Global Languages launched a [new website](#). In consideration of the changes following the departure of faculty from the academic unit, the website was designed with a focus on the educational mission of Global Languages and incorporates student profiles and testimonials to engage peer messaging to students considering or interested in Global Languages.

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