

Foreign Language
Teaching and
the Environment
Theory, Curricula,
Institutional Structures

Edited by
Charlotte Ann Melin

THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
New York 2019

© 2019 by The Modern Language Association of America
All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America

MLA and the MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION are trademarks owned by the Modern Language Association of America. For information about obtaining permission to reprint material from MLA book publications, send your request by mail (see address below) or e-mail (permissions@mla.org).

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Melin, Charlotte, editor.

Title: Foreign language teaching and the environment : theory, curricula, institutional structures / edited by Charlotte Ann Melin.

Description: New York, NY : The Modern Language Association of America, 2019.

| Series: Teaching languages, literatures, and cultures, ISSN 1092-3225 ; 6

| Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019011179 (print) | LCCN 2019011999 (ebook) | ISBN 9781603293952 (EPUB) | ISBN 9781603293969 (Kindle) | ISBN 9781603293945 (pbk.) | ISBN 9781603294676 (cloth)

Subjects: LCSH: Ecological linguistics—Study and teaching. | Second language acquisition—Study and teaching. | Human ecology—Study and teaching.

Classification: LCC P39.5 (ebook) | LCC P39.5 .F67 2019 (print) | DDC 418.0071—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019011179>

Teaching Languages, Literatures, and Cultures 6
ISSN 1092-3225

Cover illustration of the paperback and electronic editions:

Linda Lomahafewa, *Untitled (Geometric and Wave Designs, 1965–1975)*, H-461, gift of the artist, 2016. Courtesy of the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, NM.

Published by The Modern Language Association of America
85 Broad Street, suite 500, New York, New York 10004-2434
www.mla.org

CONTENTS

Introduction: Environmental Thinking through Language <i>Charlotte Ann Melin</i>	1
PART ONE Theory	
German Is the New Green? Language, Environmentalism, and Cultural Competence <i>Patricia Anne Simpson and Marc James Mueller</i>	17
Sustainability Literacy in French Literature and Film: From Solitary Reveries to Treks across Deserts <i>Annette Sampson-Nicolas</i>	39
Sustainability, Design Thinking, and Spanish: Unleashing Students' Agency, Empathy, and Innovation <i>Maggie A. Broner</i>	57
PART TWO Curricula	
Reflections on Water: Inspiring Environmental Consciousness through Engagement with French Texts <i>Abbey Carrico</i>	81
Can Literature Save the Planet? Lessons from Latin America <i>Odile Cisneros</i>	94

vi	Contents	vii
An Intercultural and Ecocritical Approach to Teaching Turkish <i>Defne Erdem Mete</i>	113	
Stepping Out of the Language Box: College Spanish and Sustainability <i>María J. de la Fuente</i>	130	
Collaborative Teaching of a Japanese Content-Based Course: 3.11 and Nuclear Power Crisis <i>Nobuko Chikamatsu</i>	146	
Sustainability in “Post-communicative” Advanced Chinese Courses: Engaging Learners in Real-World Issues <i>Haidan Wang</i>	161	
Interdepartmental Collaboration and Curriculum Design: Creating a Russian Environmental Sustainability Course for Advanced Students <i>Olesya Kisselev and William Comer</i>	180	
Imbibing Russian Language and Culture in Siberia: Wellesley College’s Lake Baikal Course <i>Thomas P. Hodge</i>	197	
Gikinomaagemin Gichigaming: Teaching Anishinaabemowin and Ecology in the Great Lakes <i>Margaret Ann Noodin</i>	217	
PART THREE Institutional Structures		
Environmental Literacy as a Global Literacy in Modern Languages: Lessons from a Liberal Arts College <i>Laura Barbas-Rhoder, Beate Brunow, and Britton W. Newman</i>	237	
Local, International, and Environmental Community Engagement in West Africa <i>Patricia W. Cummins</i>	254	
When Sustainability Means Understanding: Modern Languages and Emory University’s Piedmont Project <i>Viaila Hartfield-Méndez, Karen Stolley, and Hong Li</i>	272	
		Coda
		<i>Charlotte Ann Melin and Maggie A. Broner</i>
		Key Terms and Concepts
		<i>Kiley M. Kost and Charlotte Ann Melin</i>
		NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS
		INDEX

own right and is part of a larger, award-winning commitment to sustainability at Emory.² As of 2016 the Piedmont Project had completed twelve years of multiday workshops offered annually, with participants numbering 215 faculty members and 197 graduate students. Over three hundred Emory courses—in fifty-seven percent of departments—were identified by faculty members in 2013 to engage sustainability issues, and many of those were developed through the Piedmont Project. Funding for participating faculty members has been provided by different Emory sources, including three teaching innovation awards (from competitive all-university funds), the Program in Science and Society (a grant-funded interdisciplinary effort to promote engagement of science faculty members and students with broader societal challenges), the Office of the Provost, Emory College's former Center for Teaching and Curriculum, the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence, the Office of Sustainability Initiatives, and contributions from the deans' budgets of six professional schools and Oxford College.³ Support to the program, which is led by a faculty liaison, has also come in the form of workshop-space access, donated supplies, and staff time.

Participants in the Piedmont Project explore approaches to teaching sustainability through an introduction to sustainability studies, guest speakers from Emory and the Atlanta area, an Emory database of resources and syllabi (including, for example, resources available through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education), and ongoing conversations among faculty members from across the university. More than a dozen faculty members who teach courses in various modern languages throughout the full range of the curriculum, from beginning language and culture courses to advanced undergraduate and graduate seminars, are Piedmont Project participants. Their involvement expands the interdisciplinary horizons of the Piedmont Project, while the resulting courses are enlivened by the synergy among disciplines that the workshop fosters. This essay traces the development of sustainability-focused curricula in modern languages at Emory as a result of these efforts, with attention to cross-disciplinary idea sharing, innovative course designs, and strategies for infusing courses across the continuum of learning with sustainability-focused content. It highlights courses in a variety of languages that challenge the traditional binary between language and literature through the teaching of sustainability.

Grounded in David Orr's admonition that "It is not education, but education of a certain kind, that will save us" (qtd. in Barlett and Chase 1),

When Sustainability Means Understanding: Modern Languages and Emory University's Piedmont Project

*Violla
Hartfield-Méndez,
Karen Stolley,
and Hong Li*

Sustainability is frequently defined in terms of the common good by leading voices in the area of sustainable development (Day and Cobb; Dannenberg et al.). Yet, as the Emory University professor of French Catherine Dana puts it, "one of the main conundrums [of sustainability studies] appear[s] to be that the planet is common to all but that the countries and the people are not."¹ Understanding local contexts and relations to the environment is critical to the global project of sustainable living and development. The study of modern languages, cultures, and literatures provides access points to our comprehension of human activity and complex, often conflicting notions of what it means to live on Earth. For this reason, faculty members in languages, literature, and culture departments have a great deal to contribute to critical conversations on university campuses about sustainability. One of these critical conversations has taken place in the Piedmont Project at Emory University with significant participation by faculty members from the so-called foreign language departments—that is, from departments that study how the majority of humans on the planet who speak a language other than English conceive of, write and talk about, and live out cultural practices, including those related to the environment.

The Piedmont Project is a multidisciplinary faculty-development and curricular innovation program organized around issues of sustainability. Begun in 2001 and modeled after the Ponderosa Project at Northern Arizona University, the Piedmont Project has become a national model in its

the Piedmont Project encourages innovation in teaching materials, methods, and paradigms. That goes beyond merely addressing sustainability in a token way to weaving it into the fabric of a course and even into a whole curriculum. Place-based learning is a recurring theme, including questions of urban design and built environments and their relationship to social justice. This theme lends itself particularly well to the study of cultures across the globe. As a result, tenure- and lecture-track faculty members (and participating graduate students) in Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, French, German, Italian, and Portuguese have taught a diverse array of classes either wholly devoted to sustainability or enhanced with content-rich modules focused on sustainability.⁴ The highly interdisciplinary nature of the Piedmont Project workshop has from the outset made it attractive to faculty members in many different fields, with the arts and humanities welcomed as valued contributors to the conversation. Peggy F. Barlett and Ann Rappaport note that, in comparison with a similar program at Tufts University, “[t]he goal of the Piedmont Project readings has been less to bring faculty [members] to familiarity with environmental literacy than to stimulate the imagination around possible issues that might connect with each person’s field” (75). Faculty leaders “see their role as facilitating cross-fertilization among the people in the room—all of whom are ‘the experts’” (Barlett and Rappaport 75).

For faculty members in modern languages, this campus conversation has fostered creativity and opened possibilities for new courses, course revisions, and broad rethinking of pedagogical goals. Additionally, faculty members who have not participated in the multiday Piedmont Project itself have been engaged through interactions with Piedmont Project alumni and Piedmont Project-focused events organized by the Emory College Language Center. In this way, the program has had a multiplier effect that reaches beyond the immediate participants. A review of the syllabi of more than a dozen courses in modern languages at Emory reveals thematic threads of the Piedmont Project—place, food cultures, and the relation of humans to nature—that reach across the full range of the curriculum.

Thematic Threads: Place, Food, Nature

The gravitation in language, culture, and literature classes toward subject matter that explores the sites where these cultures and languages have

evolved, combined with the emphasis on place in the Piedmont Project workshop, led to the development of multiple place-based courses. The Piedmont Project responds to research that shows that “rebuilding a sense of place and reweaving connections to ecosystemic awareness are essential components of a more sustainable national (and global) culture” (Barlett and Rappaport 79). Thus, workshop participants go on guided walks (either in wooded areas or on the main campus) and take trips to nearby places significant for their environmental history or for contributions to sustainable living; in addition, local environmental advocates, directors of nonprofit organizations, and representatives of governmental agencies from the Atlanta area are invited to talk about their efforts in the community. Commenting on how this emphasis on place and one’s relation to place transformed his pedagogy, the professor of German Hiram Maxim notes that “I came to see place within the language classroom as analogous to context. . . . [T]he Project’s emphasis on being aware of and sensitive to place renewed my desire to work with my students on understanding how context shapes and is shaped by language use.” He adds:

[A] related point of emphasis . . . was the need for increased awareness of and sensitivity to our relationship to others and how our choices and behaviors affect those relationships. This aspect of sustainable living struck a chord with me because foreign language learners can have the tendency to impose their own world view on the target culture . . . without recognizing slight, yet significant differences.

Consequently, Maxim continues, “sustainable practices, such as recognizing the centrality of context and respecting one’s impact on others, are actually central principles of a successful language user.” This awareness of the pedagogical link between place-based sustainable practices and language and culture learning is an underlying instructional principle in many of the new courses and course modules developed through the Piedmont Project.

With the local environment as the focus, place became a key component of community-engaged learning courses. Two courses at different levels in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese provided opportunities for students to understand local geographies and their transformations through successive waves of human habitation. A senior seminar titled *The Mexico-US frontera* and *Its Stories* (Hartfield-Méndez) conceived of *border spaces* as

multiple in form, ranging from the international border between the two countries to urban areas in the United States that reflect dividing lines, such as parts of the Atlanta area where immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries have settled. In one iteration this course facilitated student work for service organizations located in these border spaces or contact zones along an area of Buford Highway, a multiethnic main travel artery between the northern suburbs and downtown Atlanta, which alternately resembles the street corners of Mexican, Central American, Vietnamese, and Korean cities. Students incorporated interactional experiences, which occurred in Spanish and English, into several reflection papers written in Spanish. Another semester, the experience of border spaces was accomplished through guest speakers and a field trip to a local clinic and a mall that has undergone radical transformation from an abandoned collection of stores to a vibrant hub for Hispanic residents with the look and feel of a traditional Mexican plaza. Students learned about shifting notions of *border* by reading excerpts from Charles C. Mann's *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus* as a frame for discussion of the narrative of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's ten-year journey walking from present-day Florida across the southern United States to the borderlands that would later be contested in the US-Mexican War.

Place-based learning that incorporates the local and the global was also essential to a first-year seminar, *How We Learn*, that compared Italian and American educational systems with the aim of facilitating community engaged learning and inspiring a lifelong commitment to education" (Ristaino). Here, focus on sustainable practices in the Italian pedagogical philosophies of Montessori and Reggio Emilia framed a discussion of the public education system in the United States, and specifically in Atlanta. Taught in English, the seminar engaged Emory first-year students in various local educational partnerships to offer school-aged children activities focused on nutrition, exercise, and sustainable living, among other topics.

Food cultures and food ways also became important thematic foci in the curriculum, allowing for cross-cultural analysis of food practices. Noodle Narratives on the Silk Road: A Cultural Exploration of China and Italy through Noodles, a first-year seminar course that exemplifies the Piedmont Project's aim to "make connections" among faculty members across disciplines (Barlett and Chase 18), considered food studies through a comparative multicultural sustainability lens. Throughout history, the noodle

has sustained livelihoods in China and Italy in different yet intersecting ways. The course introduced students to a theoretical framework that looked at food cultural practices, forms of cooking, and cultural variations of shared ingredients as important and often undervalued vehicles of cultural memory and communal identification. By focusing on a microcosmic view of each culture as reflected in the production and consumption of the noodle, the course considered how food influences and even changes the trajectory of a nation or culture ("Noodle Narratives"). After studying sociological and anthropological perspectives on food studies, students visited an Italian and a Chinese restaurant in Atlanta. Sampling the noodle dishes, they closely observed the cultural symbolisms manifested in the settings and atmospheres of the restaurants and discussed how local environments redefined and reinvented those dishes. In the final weeks, students followed the food practices of Italian and Chinese American families in the Atlanta area by conducting interviews to explore how the noodle holds onto the culture of the mother country and then breaks away into new forms once it is in the United States.

Just as Maxim found the place-based inquiry helpful in guiding students to a more nuanced understanding of culture, Hong Li (professor of Chinese) and Christine Ristaino (professor of Italian) used food as the entry point for engaging students in analyses of how common daily practices shape and transform cultures. Another first-year seminar, *At the Italian Table: Sustainable Food and Culture of Italy*, focused on the slow food movement, which has its roots in Italy but has ramifications worldwide. As first-year seminars, both *At the Italian Table* and *Noodle Narratives* on the Silk Road were taught in English, which raises an important consideration for teaching language and culture. Incorporating cultural and linguistic references critical to the understanding of the topic, both courses were designed to stimulate thinking about how the study of language and culture gives unique access to knowledge not otherwise accessible. Such an approach does not always translate into student enrollment in additional language classes, but it does make clear the value of the study of language and of culture through language. Since first-year seminars—most taught in English—are now a staple of undergraduate programs in the United States, foreign language departments have a role to play in contributing courses; sustainability-focused offerings are one example of where a strategic response to this double imperative can be made.

Beyond first-year seminars, content courses in the target language allow for deeper access to culture through language. Thus, a senior seminar typically similar to *At the Italian Table* but taught in Italian, *L'italiano nel piatto: Italian Food in Literature, Film and Culture*, was developed to include informational readings about the slow food movement and the Mediterranean diet and nutrition, as well as related fiction, poetry, and films, with a community-engaged learning component for which students prepared presentations for local high school students (Muratore). Such articulation with public schools provides an additional opportunity to reflect on the convergence of local and global, expands the sustainability conversation across the K–16 spectrum, and introduces K–12 students to new ways of thinking about the study of language and culture.

As we can see, food provides multiple access points for understanding culture and attitudes toward sustainable practices that lead to diverse forms of place-based inquiry, many of which also lead to the third thematic thread here: the cultural construction of nature. Indeed, researchers and teachers of literature and culture can fully own discussions of how depictions of nature, manipulations of nature (including the built environment), and human response to natural events play out in literature, film, and art. An underlying assumption of the Piedmont Project and similar programs is the conviction that a nuanced understanding of human interactions with nature and the environment forwards the agenda of establishing and maintaining sustainable practices. If we are to embrace the proposal that “higher education has a key role to play in the move toward a more sustainable world” (Barlett and Chase I), heightened awareness of culturally based concepts and the history of ideas regarding the relation of humans to the environment must become central to our teaching. Exemplary courses tap directly into the ability of the humanities to advance the common good for our shared planet.

Two such courses at Emory focus on understanding human responses to disaster. *Life After the Great East Earthquake* is an advanced seminar in Japanese focused on the 2011 earthquake, subsequent tsunami, and Fukushima nuclear disaster and the many ethical, cultural, and public policy responses to the disaster (Takeda). An upper-division comparative literature course, *Literature of Disaster in the Americas*, is organized around representations of disaster in writing from the United States and the Caribbean (and cross-listed in English and French).⁵ Historically grounded in disaster narratives of the Middle Passage and the Haitian Revolution, it also considers

representations of Hurricane Katrina and the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Explicitly interrogating representations of disaster written in English, French, and Creole (these last translated into English), it crosses multiple cultural boundaries to confront questions such as the “problematic distinction between ‘natural’ and ‘human-made’ disaster; the intersection between individual and collective experience; the agency of land and sea; the vulnerability of the planet in the Anthropocene; the status of humanity and human rights in the face of disaster; the position of the witness, the survivor, the reader, and the spectator; and remembering and memorializing” (Loichot). This course was further developed as a University Course, offered through the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from across the entire university.

Other courses have focused on representations of nature in literature, painting, and film through a comparative lens. A first-year seminar, *The Rise and Fall of Nature*, taught by a professor of German, introduced first-year students to environmental issues in North American and German literature and film. “Rather than accept a certain type of landscape as backdrop or metaphor for human emotions and actions,” the course challenged students to observe the “staging of the non-human world as a central element to story and plot.” The course considered literary texts in light of scholarly work on the Anthropocene, “the myth of pastoral nature, the ‘trouble with wilderness,’ environmental damage and catastrophes, animal studies, and food studies” (Schaumann). A third-year survey course in German, *Screening Nature* (cross-listed with film studies), applied a similar approach with a series of films by directors from Germany and the United States. Finally, a senior seminar taught in French, titled *The Caribbean and Its Environment*, led students through examinations of “race, gender, colonialism, and post-colonialism” specifically as they related to the environment and sustainability (Loichot).

As a result of the involvement of language faculty members in the Piedmont Project, boundaries between languages and cultures are blurred, as faculty members and students from different departments work across languages. Linguistic and national boundaries are reified by our institutional and professional structures, with English as the default language for debates about sustainability or ecocriticism. Yet access to local cultures and the ability to do sustainability work on the ground are often possible only through local languages. Since a number of the Piedmont courses were allowed to

count toward the sustainability minor, links between so-called foreign languages and other areas of the curriculum were further strengthened. When faculty members collaborate to bring together different linguistic and cultural traditions around a single theme, or when various iterations of a course are taught in English and another language, the institutional cross-pollination creates its own curricular ecosystem, one that replicates the border crossing inherent in discussions of sustainability.

Each of the many sustainability-focused learning experiences that have resulted from participation in the Piedmont Project or related workshops offers valuable lessons in pedagogical approaches and design, as well as opportunities for engaging in institutional initiatives and increased visibility for languages other than English.⁶ To explore the transformative influence of such work, let us now turn to one example that shows the multiple effects of a single course.

One Course, Multiple Constituencies

The course Chinese Language Internship allowed advanced undergraduate students in Chinese the opportunity to work for one semester with students in a local middle school on a community-engaged learning project focused on traditional Chinese gardens. This is one of several courses with ties to the Piedmont Project that have incorporated engagement with community partners, including an Emory partnership with a nearby cluster of public schools known as Graduation Generation (Li). This particular course involved the Emory University Center for Community Partnerships, a public middle school, and the Edgewood neighborhood in Atlanta (with a Seed to Plate grant from the State of Georgia) to leverage Emory faculty and student resources through service activities. It also built on an existing partnership with the Confucius Institute.⁷

During the semester, under guidance of the professor, the Emory students researched the history and principles of traditional Chinese scholarly gardens and instructed seventh graders on the differences, historical and cultural, between American and Chinese diets and gardens. In traditional China the central goal in building a scholarly garden was to create an abstraction that could help the human soul escape to moods of contemplation in nature.⁸ Thus, Chinese scholars built their houses with gardens to be in harmony with the spiritual and the natural worlds. According to Confu-

cius, “the wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills” (Legge 32). By considering the philosophical beliefs embodied in the scholarly gardens, the Emory student interns understood that learning about and planning the construction of a scholarly garden offered an ideal way for the middle school students and their communities to benefit for at least two reasons: first, although grounded in Daoist principles, the scholarly garden provides essentially nonreligious yet spiritually enlightening and intimate connections to nature; second, such a garden could provide a place of inspiration and withdrawal from the often challenging state of urban life in Atlanta, especially in high poverty areas such as the one surrounding this school. The Emory students created and taught six lessons to seventh grade students at Coan Middle School. These lessons explored Chinese food production and dietary habits and compared vegetable gardens in the United States with scholarly gardens in traditional Chinese culture. The middle school students learned Chinese expressions related to nature and foods and, as a final project, created preliminary designs for a future Chinese garden at the school with traditional elements such as a bridge, a pathway, a lake, flowers, and trees. The academic experience of the Emory students was enhanced by their own research of classical Chinese poems on nature and presentations of their findings to the Emory community. This internship allowed for a consideration of place in a cross-cultural context, providing an experience of local geographies for the Emory students, a heightened awareness of natural spaces around them for the seventh graders, and for both an appreciation of how natural spaces can be transformed by cultural ideas.

Sustainability Woven into One Department’s Curriculum

When multiple members of the same department are Piedmont Project alumni, significant changes in the departmental curriculum result. By 2015 in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese six tenure- and lecture-track faculty members, as well as several graduate students, had participated in the Piedmont Project and incorporated sustainability in courses across the entire learning spectrum. These courses included a first-year seminar on the Amazon Basin offered in Portuguese, a Spanish language and culture course at the advanced intermediate level on the local Atlanta Latino community, a foundational course on academic writing in Spanish, senior seminars on various literary and cultural topics related to the environment, and

a graduate seminar. A departmental conversation about sustainability was continually renewed as colleagues brought back what they learned through various iterations of the Piedmont Project to the evolving curriculum. In that process, the themes discussed earlier in this essay became an integral part of the undergraduate and graduate programs in Spanish. Moreover, as we have seen in previous examples, the sustainability conversation offered opportunities for moving beyond the two-tier curricular structure that divides “language” and literary studies, with its corresponding two-tier teaching hierarchy, by means of interdisciplinary curricula and a commitment to collaborative practice that included members of both the lecture- and tenure-track faculty. Sharing a commitment to a common theme (sustainability) and a common pedagogical conversation through the Piedmont Project created points of contact among both faculty members and students along the continuum from introductory to advanced courses and the doctoral program. This work is a highly generative process that could be mobilized with regard to other issues, such as human rights and social justice, which also can be interpreted within the broad framework of sustainability. Moreover, the theme opened up the language and literature curriculum to innovative restructuring that positioned the teaching of language, literature, and culture at the center of campus conversations.

One approach was to interweave sustainability into the Spanish-language curriculum as part of existing courses students take for general education requirements or as foundational courses for the major. A colleague who participated in the Piedmont Project offered a modified version of the intermediate (fifth-semester) course that serves as one entry point into the major and is most frequently taken by first-year students as they begin their university-level study of Spanish.⁹ The professor used the same grammar workbook as the other sections of the course used but, instead of the standard readings from the textbook, she incorporated selected texts—short stories, scientific or journalistic essays, and film—focused on environmental issues, alternative medicine, agriculture, water rights, and slow food. Experiential learning was also a key aspect of the course. Students walked through their campus environment in order to read the landscape (observe closely and interpret details) and then report on the mix of gardens, woods, buildings, and sidewalks in later discussions and writing assignments. They traveled to the Buford Highway and Plaza Fiesta neighborhood (also called the Capital Latina de Georgia), paying special attention to the built

landscape for cars and pedestrians and exploring the food and commodities offered in local markets (Dillman). As in many urban areas outside city centers in the United States, the Buford Highway corridor grew up around a connector highway with residential developments on either side that were accessed initially by car, with no planning for pedestrian traffic. The immigrants who moved into this area beginning in the 1990s brought cultural habits that included walking and public transportation as a normal part of life. The lack of infrastructure to support these habits, which continued to be necessary for many for economic reasons, resulted in numerous pedestrian deaths.¹⁰ As a result, local and state governments eventually responded with new sidewalks, and the built environment thus slowly began to reflect the presence of immigrant communities whose cultural habits included walking everywhere possible, with an attendant improvement in safety and (as a by-product) encouragement of environmentally friendly practices. By the time they visited this area, students were equipped to interpret the landscape and look for clues related to the environment and culturally based sustainability practices.

Using content-rich sustainability topics to develop writing skills in Spanish is another approach. Critical Writing in Hispanic Topics is one of a cluster of foundational courses for the major offered at the advanced intermediate level. The course aims to develop students’ academic writing competency; each instructor who teaches the course chooses a topic that serves as a prompt for discussion and a range of in-class and out-of-class writing assignments. One version focuses on narratives of health, illness, and well-being in the Hispanic world—a topic that lends itself to the incorporation of sustainability, as students explore the relation between traditional and Western medicine, the importance of botanical remedies, or the role of the shaman (Stolley).

Advanced-level seminars, including the seminar on border spaces between the United States and Mexico, also become opportunities for addressing sustainability. In the advanced course titled Green with Love: Sustainability Discourse in Latin American-US Media, developed in the Piedmont Project, students were challenged to consider sustainability as the convergence of environmental, social, and economic forces and to develop an awareness of sustainability as a cultural story told in both hemispheres as a microcosmic representation of broader global discourse (Reber). Examples were drawn from film, television, advertising, and other forms of cultural

and political discourse, including María Victoria Menis's 2008 film *La cámara oscura* ("The Darkroom"), James Cameron's 2009 blockbuster *Avatar*, and green urban planning projects, such as La Felicidad Ciudad Parque in Bogotá, Colombia. The use of materials in both Spanish and English serves as a reminder of a shared hemispheric concern with issues of sustainability but does not detract from the focus on students' written and oral interventions in Spanish as the target language of the class.

Another undergraduate seminar, Nature in the New World, explored how the geography, flora, and fauna of the New World inspired and challenged the imagination over time (Stolley). Separate units focused on the ways in which nature and natural history figured in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century geographical, commercial, and cultural expansion; the role that enlightened science played in eighteenth-century debates about the alleged inferiority of New World species; nineteenth-century polemics about *civilización y barbarie* ("civilization and barbarism") and the struggle between *ciudad y campo* ("city and countryside"); and contemporary narratives about the commodification of nature, from mining to ecotourism. Students studied representations of nature in texts ranging from Christopher Columbus's 1493 letter to Charles Darwin's *Voyage of the Beagle* and Pablo Neruda's "Alturas de Machu Picchu"; they analyzed the filmic treatment of nature in Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*, Terrence Malik's *The New World*, and Iciar Bollain's *También la lluvia* ("Even the Rain"). They learned about non-Western approaches to nature through visits to the Ancient Americas galleries of Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, where a colleague from the Department of Art History helped students see nature through Amerindian eyes as they studied artifacts such as a two-thousand-year-old bat-shaped ceramic flute from Central America, a Mesoamerican incense burner adorned with a figure of a sun god or jaguar god, and a paccha (ritual watering vessel from the Andes).

Graduate students in Spanish, meanwhile, have found the Piedmont Project extremely beneficial in providing an introduction to sustainability studies and literary ecocriticism, offering opportunities for pedagogical training such as course development, and granting additional professional credentials. One student was able to use her Piedmont syllabus on early modern Spanish representations of the *hortus conclusus* ("enclosed garden") as a point of departure for a course she later developed as an assistant professor, titled Gardens, Justice, and Sustainability in Early Modern Spain (Boyle).

This course explored the relations between early modern Spaniards—Jews, Muslims, and Catholics—and their natural world and was later redesigned to focus on gardens, herbs, and healing, the subject of a second book project.

A graduate version of the Nature in the New World seminar described above provided doctoral students with an overview of the key topics and theoretical issues in ecocriticism, or green cultural studies (Stolley). A joint meeting with faculty and students from another doctoral seminar, on Metropolitan Cultures and the Urban Imaginary, offered by Hazel Gold, was an opportunity to consider the convergence and divergence of ways of viewing the relation between urban and natural spaces in Spanish America and Spain. Final projects for the graduate seminar included syllabi for courses that students would offer at future points in their careers; others led to professional presentations. Continuing the sustainability focus into the graduate curriculum serves to train the trainers; in other words, graduate students are encouraged to develop competency in a topic of relevance and importance for today's students, thus positioning them to compete more successfully on the job market.

Thinking Sustainability in Many Languages

The development of sustainability-infused curricula in modern languages at Emory as a result of faculty involvement in the Piedmont Project has led to cross-disciplinary idea sharing, innovative course designs, and strategies for imbuing courses across the continuum of learning (from language-acquisition classes to advanced undergraduate and graduate seminars in literature and culture) with sustainability-focused content. This initiative has served as an impetus to revise and reenergize the curriculum along the lines advocated by the Modern Language Association (MLA) report, "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," by encouraging faculty to experiment with approaches that are both instrumentalist (in the best sense of the world) and constitutive, by breaking down divisions between the language curriculum and the literature (or upper-level) curriculum, and by encouraging collaboration between tenured- and lecture-track faculty. Translingual and transcultural competency is encouraged by using sustainability as a lens through which to explore "differences in meaning, mentality, and worldview" (MLA Ad Hoc Committee), and this carries over into courses taught in English, including in the social

sciences and sciences. These courses provide expanded visibility for the study of language and culture, and they generate new collaborations and initiatives that strengthen our shared teaching and research mission.

Heidi Bostic, writing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* about the important role the humanities can play in increasing ecocultural awareness, concludes, "The world needs new narratives capable of situating and conveying to a global audience the challenges we share. Such narratives could direct and motivate action, foster solidarity, and help us reimagine who, when, and where we are: earthbound, sharing a fragile planet and an uncertain future." The Piedmont Project has supported us in writing a new narrative about the teaching of languages and cultures at all levels at Emory: undergraduate and graduate education; faculty teaching, research, and service; and community outreach. Although not every institution has the human and material resources to mount such an effort, our experience encourages us to believe that similar initiatives are possible within a wide range of institutional structures. The key elements are collaboration, interdisciplinary, and a willingness to experiment. In the process, existing courses are retooled, pilot courses evolve into regular offerings, and small courses may be scaled up or taught collaboratively between different language programs. New faculty relationships are forged, and community partners bring outside energy and increased visibility to the modern language curriculum and to the campus at large.

"Verde que te quiero verde" ("Green, how I want you green"), wrote the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca. His words capture the energy and passion that the Piedmont Project has brought to Emory's exploration of how local contexts and relationships, lived through cultures and languages, inform our understanding of global sustainability.

NOTES

1. Unless otherwise noted, references to syllabi and reflections on the experience of the Piedmont Project are based on information available at the Emory University Web site for the Piedmont Project (piedmont.emory.edu), augmented through commentary and updated or additional syllabi supplied to the authors by the professors. The syllabi that can be accessed through this Web site are included in the works-cited list ("Participant Statements"), and others are available on request.
2. Among the accolades: the university was most recently recognized in 2015 by *BestColleges.com* as one of the greenest universities in the United States based on its sustainability-related academic offerings and its eighth-place ranking (of

240 schools) by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ("Greenest Universities").

3. Oxford College is a two-year college located on Emory's original campus in Oxford, Georgia. Once students complete their time at Oxford, they continue their studies at Emory's main campus in Atlanta, and faculty at both campuses work closely together to ensure the continuity of students' academic experiences.
4. The graduate student version of the Piedmont Project, funded mainly by the Laney Graduate School, consists of a one-day workshop (and in some years, a follow-up field trip) for ten to seventeen participants who develop a sample syllabus or laboratory exercise, connecting material from their own fields with sustainability issues.
5. French majors and minors have the option to turn in their papers in French (two short response papers and a longer final research paper).
6. Institutions of higher education benefit greatly from faculty development programs such as the Piedmont Project, as evidenced by the study by Condon et al.
7. The Confucius Institute in Atlanta was reconfigured in 2012, and the partnership with Atlanta Public Schools was discontinued.
8. Note that historically these scholarly gardens were accessible to men only, thus creating gendered and exclusionary spaces for this kind of contemplation, whereas modern versions open up the experience to wider participation, a move that is consonant with the project described here of introducing middle school students in Atlanta to these concepts.
9. In some ways, the course functions like a first-year seminar taught in Spanish.
10. A Public Broadcasting System (PBS) report from 2010 highlights the problems of infrastructure on Buford Highway that led to thirty deaths in the previous decade and explores the ongoing efforts to retrofit an area built to accommodate cars. See "*Blueprint*."

WORKS CITED

- Barlett, Peggy F., and Geoffrey W. Chase, editors. *Sustainability in Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Transformation*. MIT P, 2013.
- Barlett, Peggy F., and Ann Rappaport. "Long-Term Impacts of Faculty Development Programs: The Experience of Teli and Piedmont." *College Teaching*, vol. 57, no. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 73–82.
- "*Blueprint America* Special Report: Dangerous Crossing." *Need to Know*, Public Broadcasting System (PBS). *YouTube*, uploaded by PBS, 26 July 2010, youtu.be/rqIVBI-QJek. Accessed 5 May 2016.
- Bostic, Heidi. "The Humanities Must Engage Global Grand Challenges." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 30 Mar. 2016, www.chronicle.com/article/The-Humanities-Must-Engage/235902.
- Boyle, Margaret. "Piedmont Project." E-mail message to Karen Stolley, 17 June 2015.
- Cabeza de Vaca, Alvar Núñez. *Chronicle of the Narváez Expedition: Translation of La Relación*. Edited by Ilan Stavans, translated by David Frye, W. W. Norton, 2013.
- Condon, William, et al. *Faculty Development and Student Learning: Assessing the Connections*. Indiana UP, 2016.
- Dana, Catherine. "Sustainability in France and the French Caribbean." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011–14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2011/Dana_2011.pdf.

- Dannenberg, Andrew, et al. *Making Healthy Places: Designing and Building for Health, Well-being, and Sustainability*. Island Press, 2011.
- Day, Herman E., and John B. Cobb, Jr. *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*. Beacon Press, 1989.
- Dillman, Lisa. "Sustainability and the Environment." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2008/Dillman.pdf.
- García Lorca, Federico. "Romance sonámbulo." *Poets.org*, Academy of American Poets, www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/romance-sonambulo. Accessed 13 Sept. 2018.
- "Greenest Universities." *BestColleges.com*, 2018, www.bestcolleges.com/features/greenest-universities/. Accessed 13 Sept. 2018.
- Hartfield-Méndez, Vialla. "Drawing the Line: The Mexico-U.S. Frontera and Its Stories." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2007/Hartfield-Mendez.pdf.
- Legge, James. *The Teaching of Confucius*. El Paso Norte Press, 2005.
- Li, Hong. "Noodle Narratives on the Silk Road: A Cultural Exploration of China and Italy through Noodles." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2017/Li2017.pdf.
- Loichot, Valérie. "Caribbean Literature and the Environment." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2009/Loichot.pdf.
- Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2005.
- Maxim, Hiram. "Intermediate German I: Coming of Age through the Ages." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/MaximComing-of-age.pdf.
- MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages. "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World." *Profession*, 2007, pp. 234-45. Modern Language Association of America, 2007, www.mla.org/Resources/Research/Surveys-Reports-and-Other-Documents/Teaching-Enrollments-and-Programs/Foreign-Languages-and-Higher-Education-New-Structures-for-a-Changed-World. Accessed 13 Sept. 2018.
- Muratore, Simone. "Italian Food in Literature, Film and Culture." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2010/Muratore.pdf.
- "Noodle Narratives on the Silk Road: A Cultural Exploration of China and Italy through Noodles." *ECLC (Emory College Language Center) Newsletter*, Winter 2014-15, p. 8. *ScholarBlogs*, scholarblogs.emory.edu/noodles. Accessed 13 Sept. 2018.
- "Participant Statements and Syllabi." *Piedmont Project*. Emory University, 2017, piedmont.emory.edu/syllabi.html.
- Reber, Dierdra. "Ecological Imperialism: Nature and Power in Latin America." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2007/Reber.pdf.
- Ristaino, Christine. "How We Learn." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2010/Ristaino.pdf.
- Schaumann, Caroline. "Screening Nature." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2010/Schaumann.pdf.
- Stolley, Karen. "Nature in the New World: Reading Green in Latin America." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2011/Stolley_2011.pdf.
- Takeda, Noriko. "Advanced Language and Cultural Studies II: Life after the Kanto-Tohoku Earthquake in 2011." *Piedmont Project*, Emory University, 2011-14, piedmont.emory.edu/documents/2011/Takeda_2011.pdf.

Charlotte Ann Melin
and Maggie A. Broner

Coda

What does it mean to be a truly global citizen in the twenty-first century, and how does a commitment to the future that term implies challenge us to transform higher education, in particular foreign language programs? As the essays in this collection compellingly explain, one answer to this question begins with the recognition that foreign languages and environmental thinking belong together at every level of the curriculum. Although the aspiration of supporting learners in the development of "translingual and transcultural competency" has contributed broadly to a revisioning of the educational landscape since the Modern Language Association (MLA) Ad Hoc Committee report "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World" (237), the present volume attests that we have seen only the start of this revitalization process. New ways of teaching and learning that are collaborative, digital, experiential, and interdisciplinary are fostering educational initiatives open to the creative experimentation of teachers and the active agency of students. These transformative efforts, in turn, lead to a deeper understanding of the practices and perspectives of other cultures while strengthening the connection between classroom praxis and overarching learning outcomes (see Melin, "Speaking" 108). The emphasis the collection's essays place on literacies (both language and environmental literacy) acknowledges a defining shift in perspective on the part of faculty members in all areas of disciplinary expertise toward multiliteracies frameworks that acknowledge the deep interdependence of