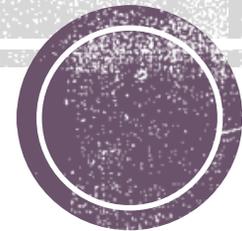


Coordinating Courses with Multiple Sections: SPAN 203/ Intermediate Spanish I

Anastacia Kohl, Faculty Coordinator for SPAN 203

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SPAN 203 Intermediate Spanish I

- Romance Studies has had large coordinated courses for over 25 years.
- Romance Studies has a common teaching philosophy (The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching—conducive to Flipped Classroom Model).
- SPAN 203 is the largest course in the Romance Studies Department.
- 45-52 Sections per semester (approximately 800-1000 students per semester)
- 20-30 Instructors per semester. Roughly half of the instructors are Fixed-term Faculty, and the other half are Graduate Teaching Fellows with full course responsibility.
- Graduation requirement. Often the last (or only) Spanish class students take.
- Common syllabus and course contract, common use of Sakai, common exams, common large course components, common assignments on MySpanishLab



Pros and Cons to the Coordination of SPAN 203

Pros

- Students across sections are presented with the same content and assessment/have a similar experience with the course.
- Provides accountability in teaching and assessment (and more ease in data collection, curriculum revision, etc.).
- Course organization is streamlined and efficient.
- Collegiality and team work.
- Fewer classes are cancelled.

Cons

- The coordinator sometimes feels limited in what can be changed or implemented differently based on the needs/wants/personalities of the instructors.
- (Rarely) Some instructors will disregard common course policies, etc., which the coordinator will need to address.
- The coordinator sometimes will have to help mediate issues between instructors and students.



Pros and Cons to the Teaching of SPAN 203

Pros

- Turnkey Course: Student interactions, delivery of instruction and grading are the instructor's sole concerns.
- Strategic Focus: Instructors have more time and energy to devote to crafting dynamic, well-paced classes, research or professional development.
- Proficiency: Students who choose not to continue complete the course with functional communicative competencies.

Cons

- Implementing Common Policies: The onus of excusing absences is time-consuming and fraught.
- Authority Issues: Disgruntled students will sometimes try to go over an instructor's head to get their way.
- Spontaneity: Following the same syllabus precludes or limits "fun" detours. If we take a field trip to the Ackland, or perform skits, they must revolve around the day's material.



Pros and Cons to the Teaching of SPAN 203

Pros

- Articulation: Students who go on to minor or major in Spanish finish with a uniform skill set.
- Support: When I have a problem, there is a resource person at the ready who will provide an objective point of view.

Cons

- Common Rubrics: One surrenders personal preferences as an equity issue.
- Section Shopping: Instructors who don't bother with adhering to policies may receive better student evaluations than those who are conscientious.



Academic Freedom

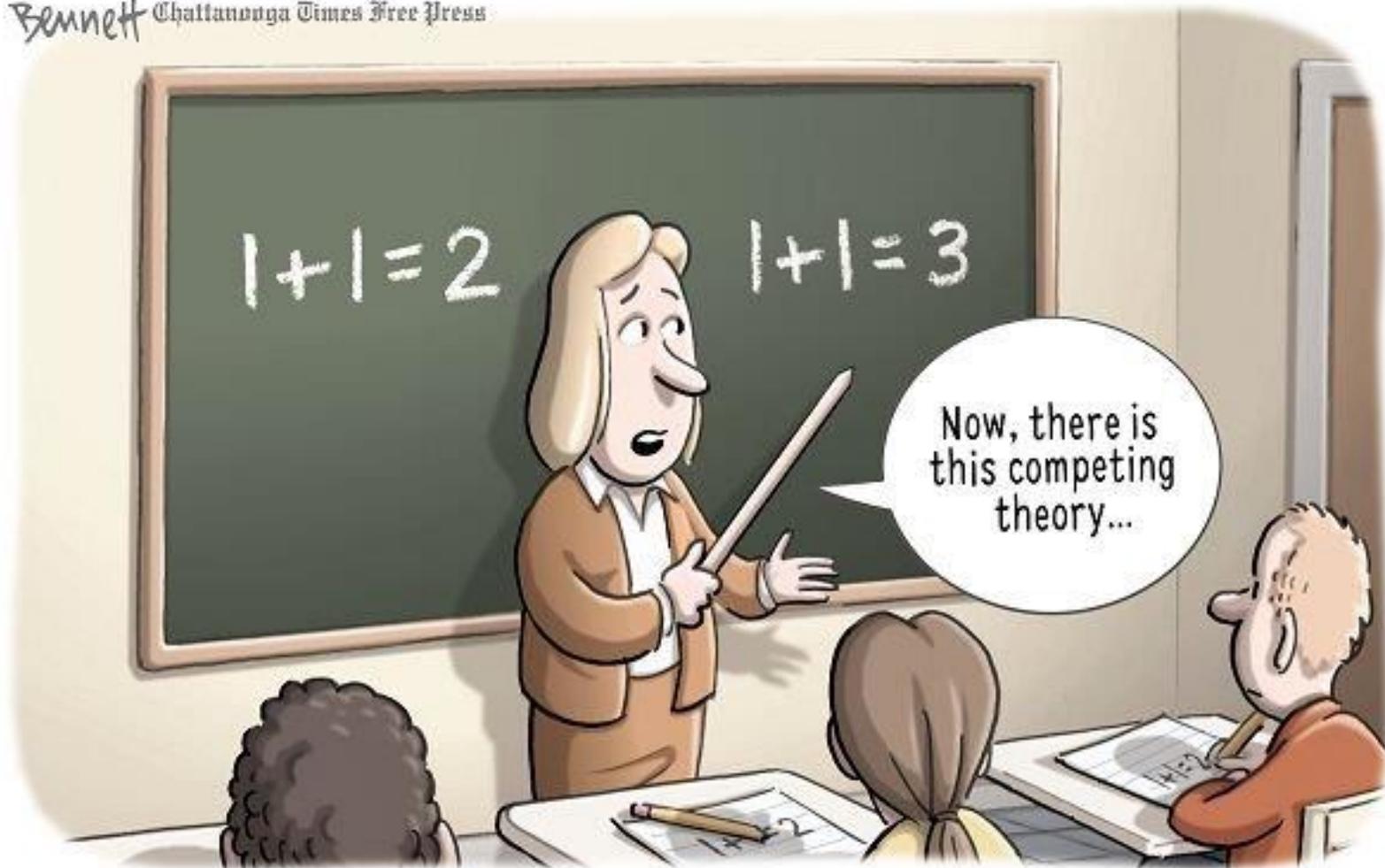
“the right of a faculty member to be responsibly engaged in efforts to discover, speak and teach the truth.

[The University maintains and encourages] full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research, and publication and [protects] any member of the faculty against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict the faculty member in the exercise of these freedoms in his or her area of scholarly interest.”

--Trustee Policies and Regulations Governing Academic Tenure in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<http://www.unc.edu/sacs/Jan2015/Document%20Repository/CS%203.7.4%20Academic%20Freedom/tenure.pdf>





If math was taught like science.

