



## **HUNTER COLLEGE STARTALK TEACHER PROGRAM: 9-week training**

Hunter College  
teacher-trainees

Curricular Objectives

Category/

The participants must have the following foundation work prior to the program:

Foundation Work

- Standard pronunciation of Mandarin Chinese
- Proficiency in Mandarin Chinese in all skills at intermediate-high level or above
- Proficiency in speaking and writing English

Approaches and  
Methods

Approaches:

- Cultivate teacher trainees to form the habit of rigorously reflecting upon their teaching performance and actively searching for innovative solutions to improve their teaching skills and make students' learning more effective.
- Adopt a whole-teaching approach that will foster language instruction across the curriculum.
- Design a combined instruction and practicum curriculum to strengthen teacher trainees' professional knowledge with hands-on experience.
- Focus on methods for teaching English and heritage speakers in the American education system and help them to overcome learning difficulties.
- Give equal learning opportunities to ALL students and do not underestimate learners' potential to learn regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic backgrounds, or learner characteristics.
- Enforce a data-driven instruction design and use the data collected to make the best decisions for instruction.
- Emphasize maximizing the use of the target language in the classroom and beyond.

### Methods:

- **Lectures:** The instructors will give lectures with demos on Chinese language structures and teaching methodologies.
- **Curriculum Discussion and Rehearsal:** During the weekly curriculum discussion, teacher trainees will share instruction ideas and rehearse teaching activities in front of peer teachers, who will provide feedback.
- **Lesson Planning Help Desk:** The program director, seminar instructors, and lead teachers will help teacher-trainees to design lesson plans via office hours, phone calls, and e-mails.
- **Student Teaching:** Teacher trainees will conduct mini-lessons or full-class lessons, moving from teaching individual students to small groups of 5 students to a large group of 20 students.
- **Observation of Teaching Models:** Teacher trainees will observe lead teachers and learn how they conduct a class.
- **Peer Observations and Feedback:** Teacher trainees will observe classes taught by peers and discuss what worked and what did not work.
- **Play Back of Videotapes:** Teacher trainees will be videotaped when they teach. A group feedback session will be conducted on the same day.
- **Individual Conference:** Once a week, teacher trainees will have a meeting with the Program Director individually to discuss their strength and weaknesses.
- **SLA Projects:** Teacher trainees will learn how to conduct a small-scale case study to understand how English/heritage speakers learn Chinese. They will find patterns for uncovering learning difficulties and come up with solutions for each learner.
- **Term Paper and Presentations:** Teacher trainees will write a paper and present their SLA project. Teacher trainees will be encouraged to submit their findings for presentation at professional conferences or publication in journals.
- **Self-reflections:** Teacher trainees will keep a journal to write down their feedback each day in relation to the learning objectives.

- “I Can” Self-assessment: Teacher trainees will fill out “I Can” assessment forms to rate their growth each week in eight areas.
- Use of the Target Language: Teacher trainees will be evaluated by peers on whether they were able to maximize use of the target language with students.
- Hands-on experience on how to organize learning-related activities, such as art, music, plays, calligraphy, and field trips.
- Hands-on experience on how to organize non-teaching events: Teacher trainees will learn how to organize events such as parent meetings, a talent show, and contests.
- Other Tips: Teacher trainees will learn how to develop supplementary teaching materials and classroom decorations.

## Curriculum and Lesson Design

The major topics for each session are:

### Week 1: Chinese language and pedagogy seminar

- Introduce the concept of backward design
- What are the national standards
- What are the three communication modes
- How to design a lesson plan
- What is a theme-based lesson plan
- How to motivate students
- How to correct students’ mistakes
- How to design lesson plans that allow students to build up their skills in a spiralling fashion
- How to design classroom activities
- How to teach pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar
- How to make learning Chinese fun and rewarding

### Week 2 to Week 4: Teaching practicum and observations

- What are the criteria for a proficient teaching performance
- How to prepare for a lesson, use previous knowledge, and get equipment ready
- How to give students feedback
- How to manage a classroom so as to have all students participate
- How to observe a class

- How to improve teaching skills in a specific area
- How to prioritize or change teaching plans when an unexpected situation happens
- How to assess students—different ways and purposes for doing so

Week 5 to Week 8: SLA error analysis, contrastive analysis and one-on-one instruction

- What are the common mistakes made by students whose native language is English vs. heritage speakers?
- How to find patterns of errors
- How to conduct a contrastive analysis
- How to conduct an error analysis with data collected
- How to help students overcome first-language interference
- How to help students take ownership of their learning

Week 9: Presentations and assessment

- How to present findings in a paper
- How to deliver a presentation and get feedback to refine a study
- How to obtain continuous support for professional development after the summer program

Instructional Planning and Strategies

The strategies for planning include:

- Build a solid foundation of knowledge of Chinese language and pedagogy, one that is both practical and useful in classroom teaching
- Provide opportunities for modeling and supervised hands-on practice
- Encourage ongoing reflections based on criteria for teaching evaluations
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- Ensure success by guiding teacher trainees to make one change at a time
- Play back teaching videotapes, and describe and analyze teaching behavior using non-judgmental terms
- Provide a chance for a one-on-one conference with the program director to discuss weekly performance, with concrete suggestions, and always follow up on possibilities for future improvement
- Be generous in giving positive feedback in front of critics
- Enlist self-assessments with respect to weekly learning objectives, and request that each teacher trainee set personal goals to achieve all of the objectives
- Use humor and personal anecdotes to make instruction fun and easy to understand

Materials Development and

Introduce different kinds of materials with examples showing how they might be used in teaching:

- How to find materials appropriate for students' age and linguistic ability. For example, using

Adaptation	<p>Chinese to make friends, to socialize, and to “show off.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify topics that teenage students find interesting, such as pop culture, games, rap, songs, videos, and so forth.</li> <li>• How to edit materials to suit teaching needs</li> <li>• How to solicit materials from students</li> <li>• How to design supplemental materials</li> <li>• How to search for materials (print, commercial, online, etc.)</li> <li>• How to search for materials using online resources</li> </ul>
Assessment	<p>Assessment of student learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to use the backward design approach to set teaching objectives for each unit</li> <li>• How to measure learning outcomes and establish data-driven instruction</li> <li>• How to help students set reasonable goals and achieve them with success</li> <li>• How to help students who did not succeed to try again and eventually achieve success</li> </ul> <p>Assessment for teacher trainees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the rubrics for evaluations on the first day of the program</li> <li>• Pre-test of the course content in Chinese language, pedagogy, and SLA</li> <li>• Post-test of the course content in Chinese language, pedagogy, and SLA</li> <li>• Daily reflections</li> <li>• Conference with Program Director</li> <li>• Comments from peers and instructors</li> <li>• Weekly self-assessment using the I Can lists</li> <li>• Rating the percentage of the target language used in teaching (evaluated by observers and student teachers)</li> </ul>
Structure of the target language/ pedagogical grammar	<p>The content will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the structure of the target language by comparing it with English</li> <li>• Highlight common mistakes that appear in students’ performance</li> <li>• Provide specific rules for students to learn grammar points</li> <li>• Compare grammar points and arrange their instruction into the most effective learning sequence</li> <li>• Be able to provide examples for each grammar point</li> <li>• Be able to identify a grammatical error and correct it</li> </ul>
Second Language Acquisition	<p>The content includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to language acquisition theories and practice</li> </ul>

- How to conduct a small-scale SLA study to support a new teaching method or examine the use of new teaching materials and their effect on language learning
- Introduction to data collection methodologies
- Affective factors in second language learning
- Error analysis by following up on individual students' language performance (spoken and written) for four weeks and conducting a longitudinal comparison of acquisition patterns among heritage and non-heritage speakers

### US Educational Systems and Classroom Management

The content includes the following:

- Introduction to useful classroom management tips
- How to set class rules and firmly carry them out
- The structure of the U.S. educational system, including the role of teachers
- Work ethics, including do's and don'ts for teachers when dealing with students, colleagues, and parents
- How to deal with supervisors, problematic students, and demanding parents
- How to prevent problems from happening
- How to obtain satisfactory evaluations from principals and supervisors
- How to act professionally to win respect among students and colleagues

### Technology

The introduction to different types of technology, and activities involving technology, that we have planned are:

- Internet searches
- PowerPoint use for presentations and teaching
- Software for typing Chinese characters
- Skype
- Webcams
- E-mail
- Blogs
- Video
- Designing a personal website
- Podcasts

The teacher trainees will learn how to use technology to do the following:

- How to create a PPT exercise, which can be used to teach vocabulary
- How to use a transparency in class
- How to change language settings on a computer so that students can type characters
- How to create an MP3 file so students can listen to Chinese offline

- How to use Skype to carry on a conversation
- How to use a Webcam to chat online
- How to use podcast to teach and learn Chinese
- How to create a webpage using free software
- How to use the free web grading system

#### Reflective Practice and Leadership

The following will be done:

- Teacher-trainees will keep a daily journal
- Teacher trainees will conduct self-assessments based on the professional teacher *I Can* list devised by teacher trainers in the program
- Teacher trainees will show leadership by actively organizing activities and events for students and peers and initiating ways to improve teaching and learning

#### Pathway to Certification

The summer program will help participants obtain certification in the following ways:

- Teacher-trainees will obtain 9 undergraduate credits or 6 graduate credits towards New York State teacher certification. We will also grant in-service teachers professional development credits/certificates issued by the Chinese Program at Hunter College

In addition, we will:

- Establish a database for all participants and follow up on how many receive New York State certification within the next year.
- Disseminate job search information to participants.
- Recommend participants to hiring agencies.
- Provide consultation on obtaining New York State teacher certification.