Consider the following dialogue:

*Teacher 1:* What about the balance between *life skills* and *language skills*? What’s the difference between life skills and language skills anyway? I thought a skill was a skill.

*Teacher 2:* I think the main column should be *life skills*.

*Teacher 3:* No, I think the main column should be *language skills*. Who wants to go get lunch today? It’s already 11:30.

*Teacher 2:* Let’s not have Chinese food. It bothers my stomach to have it four days in a row.

*Teacher 1:* Yeah, but it’s the only place close by. *Reading* is not equal to *culture*. Maybe we shouldn’t have columns.

*Teacher 3:* What about the passive voice?

*Teacher 4:* Yeah, what about grammar? And shouldn’t we have a *teaching suggestions* column that deals with learning strategies? Where should we put *culture* and *study skills*?

*Teacher 2:* Can you imagine doing this without computers?

*Teacher 1:* Yeah, sure, my first teaching job was B.X. and B.C.—before Xerox and before computers.
Teacher 3: I’ve got to leave in a few minutes to pick up my daughter at school.

Teacher 4: You can’t have a writing component that big. It doesn’t fit the column.

Teacher 1: Didn’t we do this last summer?¹

Just as these teachers from Rancho Santiago College in Santa Ana, California, grappled with a myriad of issues in designing a new curriculum, so in this volume teachers from around the globe share their experiences with designing a new course. They too dealt with the difficult act of balancing the various components of language that need to be taught, the challenge of somehow committing a multidimensional process to paper, and the tremendous demands on teachers’ time that the curriculum development process requires—and many other issues. As you, the reader, explore this volume, you will no doubt recognize other shared experiences and imagine similar dialogues among the teachers and course designers represented in the chapters that follow.

All of the chapters have in common the development of a new course for adult learners, though they vary widely in terms of instructional goals and objectives, learner profiles, settings, resources, and support systems. These chapters have a second commonality—namely, that each course developer faced a multitude of challenges, some that were unique to his or her setting, others that cut across all the curriculum development projects. A third commonality is that all the course developers represented in this volume covered similar territory during course development. In other words, they undertook a process that has been codified in the recent literature on curriculum development. In this introductory chapter, we first trace these paths by starting with a brief history of approaches to second language curriculum development and then describe the challenges that the authors of the twelve chapters faced and the creative solutions they devised in the face of these challenges. A number of threads unify these chapters; this introduction serves as a preview.

**Frameworks for Curriculum Development: A Brief Overview**

Taba (1962) described a seven-step process in her approach to general curriculum design in education:

¹This dialogue was adapted from a handout from a 1993 CATESOL conference presentation given by Sherry Allen and Kay Ferrell.
1. Diagnosis of needs
2. Formulation of objectives
3. Selection of content
4. Organization of content
5. Selection of learning experiences
6. Organization of learning experiences
7. Determination of what to evaluate and the means to evaluate

Thus, curriculum begins with diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, and selection and organization of content. These steps are followed by the selection and organization of learning experiences, which would nowadays be referred to as activities or practice types. When these steps are completed, curriculum planners must make decisions about how to evaluate and which instruments or methods to use to evaluate the curriculum’s effectiveness. This linear approach to curriculum development was typical of its time period.

Dubin and Ohlstain (1986) took a global view of curriculum design. A glimpse of their model immediately reveals a broader perspective on curriculum design and the many facets to be considered in the process. They consider four contextual variables: the language setting, patterns of language use in society, the political and national context, and group and individual attitudes. Dubin and Ohlstain, for example, ask us to consider whether curriculum design takes place in an ESL or EFL setting. Within the EFL setting, what is the role of the target language? Does it have the status of a foreign language, or is it considered a language of wider communication? Does the choice of language for the curriculum have an effect on educational pathways? What status is attached to the target language? What role does it play in modernization? Religion? Technology? Answers to these types of questions provide a starting point for delineating the multitude of contextual variables involved in curriculum design.

Thirty years after Taba, Stern’s (1992) conceptualization of curriculum design reflects a more cyclic process. His four components may be represented graphically in a flowchart (see figure 1). This chart captures the sense that curriculum design is an ongoing process—a continuous process of research and development, implementation, evaluation, and more research and development. Stern’s approach to curriculum design has
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no beginning and end per se; it is rather a continuous cycle of design and experimentation.

Brown (1995, 19), drawing on general models used to describe systems approaches to curriculum design and the extant literature in language teaching, proposes a systematic approach to curriculum design that provides “both a set of stages for logical program development and a set of components for the improvement and maintenance of an already existing language program.” Brown’s approach includes the now familiar components of needs analysis, objectives, testing, materials, and teaching, with evaluation occurring as a continuous process at every stage. The model provides for the curriculum development and maintenance process while allowing for interactions among various components of the curriculum design.

Elaborating on her 1996a course development framework, Graves (2000) lists similar processes involved in course development. These include assessing needs, formulating goals and objectives, developing materials, designing an assessment plan, organizing the course, and conceptualizing content. Graves places defining the context and articulating beliefs at the base of her framework, where they serve as the foundation for the other processes. Graves notes that the processes have no hierarchy and no sequence. In other words, her framework is not a linear list but a flowchart with the processes described as verbs, not nouns. As a result, course developers can begin anywhere in the framework, depending on how they problematize their situation.

Richards (2001) also refers to a range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum. These processes, in his model, include analyzing needs and situations, planning learning outcomes, organizing the course, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching, and evaluating. He notes that “these elements are viewed as forming a network of interacting systems. The notion of system suggests that change in one part of the system has effects on other parts of the system” (p. 41).

This brief description of some of the key frameworks in the second language curriculum development literature illustrates the shift from linear, product-oriented approaches to ways of thinking that reflect cyclical, process approaches. While the terminology and emphases may vary somewhat, all of the more recent approaches reflect a dynamic process—or as Graves (2000, 9) notes, “designing a language course is a work in progress in its whole, in its parts, and in its implementation.” All of the authors in this volume adopted, with varying degrees of emphasis, aspects of these dynamic approaches in their design of new courses for adults. As you read the chapters, you will see the variety of ways in which the authors conducted needs analyses, determined goals and objectives, selected (or created) appropriate
materials, adopted relevant teaching methods, and evaluated how much their students had learned and how effective their new course was within the varied contexts of their settings. You will also get a more vivid sense of the cyclical, process approach to course design as the authors describe their experiences.

**Professional Knowledge Instantiation**

Teacher development as defined by Lange is “a term used in the literature to describe a process of continual intellectual, experimental, and attitudinal growth of teachers” (quoted in Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan 2001, 4). This definition seems an apt one to describe the teacher development processes illustrated in these chapters. While the volume focuses on designing new courses, the process of course design also reveals how the teachers instantiated their professional knowledge as they developed their new courses. Each chapter testifies to their professional growth as a result of the course development experience.

Underpinning all course design is the teacher’s beliefs about language learning. In delineating method, Richards and Rodgers (2001) cite the role of teachers’ beliefs or accounts about how language is learned and how successful language learning is defined. In Dubin and Ohlstain’s (1986) model of course design, curriculum design begins with a philosophy or a theoretical underpinning that provides the foundation for teaching and learning. Dubin and Ohlstain call this foundation a viewpoint. In their model, they describe three viewpoints: (1) on the nature of language, (2) on the nature of language learning, and (3) on an orientation toward education and culture (e.g., behaviorist, rational-cognitive, humanistic). From this foundation comes the curriculum—a broad description of a philosophy or educational viewpoint. The course syllabus then is a detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements that translates the philosophy of the curriculum into a series of planned steps leading toward the achievement of objectives. Graves (2000), as noted, suggests that articulating beliefs serves as the foundation for all the other processes (described in the various frameworks) of course design. A curriculum, thus, necessarily reflects the course developers’ viewpoints. In other words, the process of curriculum design in a practical way sorts out and reveals teachers’ underlying beliefs, as the opening dialogue illustrates.

At the heart of the new courses described in this volume are the course designers’ beliefs about the instructional approaches that would best serve their students. Two beliefs run most prominently through the chapters: the value of learner-centered classrooms and the benefits of learning by doing. These beliefs were instantiated in the new courses in a variety of ways, such
as designing content-based courses around topics or themes that reflect the interests or needs of students and using experiential or task-based learning activities such as project work. Another theme is the integration of technology. Several authors, expressing a belief in the power of technology both to inform teachers and empower students, devised creative ways to incorporate technology. These chapters show the rich variety of ways in which teachers make the case for their beliefs as they rationalize the design of their new courses.

**Challenges and Solutions**

In this section, we present the challenges that the various chapters have in common. As we read the chapters, we observed that, regardless of the setting in which the course developers worked, they faced a variety of challenges and identified creative solutions that allowed them to transform those challenges.

**CHALLENGE 1. TRANSLATING POLICY INTO ACTION**

Language policies can be categorized as “explicit or official policies and those which are implicit or even tacit, embedded in institutional practices” (Wiley 1996, 113). The chapters in this volume reflect how course developers translate official or implicit policies at the national, state, and institutional level into action. The chapters also show how the same national, state, or institutional policies affect decisions about what to teach and, in some cases, how to teach, and how the course designers’ work becomes more complex when their own values and beliefs conflict with those that the policies express—explicitly or implicitly. In this section, we discuss how language policies interacted with or affected course development in a variety of settings.

The course development projects described in the volume fall roughly into two categories (although these two categories are not meant to be comprehensive or exclusive): large-scale course development projects led by teams of TESOL professionals and completed in response to national, state, or institutional mandates (e.g., Agosti, Boshier, McPherson and Murray, Woodrow,) and small-scale course development projects led by, and often-times initiated by, individual teachers (e.g., Bueno Alastuey, Evans, Hardy, Kirkgöz, Rosenkjar). Central to the large-scale course development projects is the fact that interested agencies or institutions make a large, concerted investment, both in monetary and human resources, to ensure that the courses are successfully developed and implemented. However, this is not to say that the course developers did not face significant challenges.
McPherson and Murray provide an excellent example of a large-scale project. The goal was to develop a course designed to enhance immigrants’ and refugees’ understanding of Australian values and culture and help them to become integrated into Australian society, “especially by encouraging them to become Australian citizens” (this volume, 286). The course, commissioned by the Australian government, relied on the expertise of two governmental agencies and a national research center and required that they collaborate. The scale of the project and the fact that government policy “can touch on the deep-seated beliefs of those who come in close contact with it” (this volume, 301) generated a variety of challenges and necessitated that course developers find solutions, which ultimately strengthened the course. For example, in response to the course developers’ concern that content needed to be accessible to second language (L2) speakers, selected materials were translated to help L2 learners understand the privileges of citizenship.

Another challenge faced by the course developers was that some felt “compromised by authoring material on certain policy areas” (this volume, 301), others “quietly inserted their own perspectives into characters’ dialogues and actions, only to have them rejected in the review process” (this volume, 301), and still others acted on their beliefs and values by emphasizing and de-emphasizing certain topics of instruction. Ultimately, McPherson and Murray resolved these conflicts by advising that “we needed to explain current policy truthfully and dispassionately but could allow fictitious and real characters to comment, disagree, and present different perspectives” (this volume, 302). A third source of conflict for the course developers was legislated policy in relation to assessment issues. Specifically, legislated policy in Australia only allows “trained officers” of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) “to assess knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship” (this volume, 302). After extensive debate and negotiation, a compromise was reached: teachers would assess language skills, and learners would achieve course completion by “a combination of attendance, participation, and completion of certain language activities” (this volume, 302).

The chapters by Bosher, Agosti, and Woodrow describe the development of university courses. The universities in which the courses are offered had expressed a clear, unequivocal commitment to equitable education for L2 learners. Bosher’s chapter provides an example of how her institution supported the development and implementation of an English-for-nursing course. The course was, at least in part, developed in response to a position statement of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to address concerns about the language proficiency of nonnative-English-speaking
nurses by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. Even though the number of students enrolled in the course has, historically, been small, the administration’s support for the course has remained intact and reflects the school’s priorities about the role that language plays in professional preparation programs.

Woodrow’s and Agosti’s courses, both offered at Australian universities, were, like Bosher’s, developed to address the academic language needs of non-English-speaking students. For Woodrow, the mandate to design the course—titled English in Academic Settings—came from the Faculty of Education and Social Work. Agosti’s course, titled the Business Preparation Program, was designed to enable students to enter the Division of Economics and Financial Studies. Both courses, developed in response to institutional and student needs, required a great deal of consultation and collaboration to maximize the academic preparation of L2 students.

The second kind of course development project described in this volume reflects the work of individual teachers charged with the task of developing a course. These teachers were invited or selected to develop and teach the courses implementing official or implicit policy because of their expertise or interest in a particular area (e.g., testing, English for academic purposes [EAP], computers and language learning, content-based instruction) or topic (e.g., animal issues, American English as cultural expression).

Rosenkjar, Evans, and Kırkgöz show how official policy is implemented at the institutional level. Rosenkjar and Evans describe how courses were developed for English-medium universities in Japan, and Kırkgöz describes a course developed for an English-medium university in Turkey. Bueno Alastuey describes a course developed at the Public University of Navarre in Spain in response to official policy of the European Community (EC), specifically, the EC’s statement that “knowledge of at least one foreign language was a necessity” (this volume, 40). Administrators at the Public University of Navarre designated English as a compulsory subject, and Bueno Alastuey designed a course to teach English for specific purposes (ESP) to students enrolled in two technical degree programs. In this chapter, Bueno Alastuey provides an excellent account of challenges faced by ESP instructors whose institutions mandate that English be taught but do not provide sufficient support to implement English instruction. This lack of support typically becomes apparent when large numbers of students are allowed to enroll in ESP courses with limited computer resources and few technical resources (e.g., video and audio equipment). Bueno Alastuey provides a realistic account of how, in developing and teaching the course, an individual teacher considered and integrated these limitations into her course design.

In contrast to Rosenkjar, Evans, and Kırkgöz, Pizzorno describes a course designed in response to implicit policies, and in this case, the indi-
individual teacher carries the burden of the course development process. In designing the course, Pizzorno was responding to current expectations in colleges and universities that students need to acquire information literacy skills. Akyil provides another example of an individual teacher’s initiative, although in her case, the course had to integrate state assessment requirements to help her adult students perform successfully on a standardized posttest. Although Donley, much like Pizzorno and Akyil, was solely responsible for developing the course that she describes, at least one important feature distinguishes her course from the ones they developed. In Donley’s case, it was her intensive English program administration that charged her with developing the course. Therefore, as Donley developed, implemented, and revised her course, she paid special attention to developing curriculum guides that other program teachers could use.

A different type of challenge is described by Hardy, who developed a course designed to prepare EFL learners for the STANAG test, a high-stakes proficiency test used to assess the language abilities of military employers working in a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or Partnership for Peace environment. In particular, Hardy was faced with a potential conflict of interest because she was hired to develop and teach the course and to develop the Slovenian version of the test. However, the conflicts were not as problematic as she originally expected because she took a variety of measures to avoid them.

**CHALLENGE 2. IDENTIFYING AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

One of the challenges that many course developers face involves identifying an organizational structure for their courses. This is not a simple or a clean task because it requires synthesizing the massive amounts of information gathered through needs assessments, meetings with program administrators and colleagues, review of policy documents, and other activities. At the same time, in identifying the organizational structure of the course, course developers have to take into account logistical constraints, the expectations of the educational system in which the course will be offered, explicit and implicit language policies, the course developers’ own beliefs about teaching and learning, and their degree of professional experience. These are examples of Dubin and Ohlstain’s (1986) *contextual variables*.

Several of the chapters show how these variables affected the teachers’ process in identifying their courses’ organizational structure. More importantly, these chapters reflect how, in some cases, the teachers engaged in an internal struggle to find an organizational structure that would satisfy not only their own expectations about the course but also what they perceived to be the expectations of their students, colleagues, and administrators. For
example, Donley’s notion of *touchstones*, around which she designed her course, evolved over time; she ultimately defined them as “important events or movements in recent U.S. history”; in the course, they were investigated using “a variety of media, such as fiction, Internet research, and popular movies” (this volume, 235). Akyil designed a course titled ESL Students Bring You the World, which evolved into a content-based and project-driven course that resulted in the publication of a class book containing the students’ biographies. Both Donley and Akyil provide excellent accounts of the tensions involved in the process of identifying the organizational structure for their courses. They also show that, to identify such structure, courses go through a dynamic revision process that, in turn, enhances the course and ultimately results in greater student and course developer satisfaction.

A common feature across the courses described in this volume is that they draw on best practices in the TESOL field. Kirkgöz provides one such example of innovative practices. Her chapter describes an academic reading course developed around concordance-based tasks, which allow students to “make direct discoveries about language” (this volume, 149) dealing with economics and business administration. Bosher’s organizational structure centers on language through content and engages students in communicative activities using content that is authentic, meaningful, and appropriate for students preparing to go into a baccalaureate-degree nursing program. Like Bosher’s course, Pizzorno’s course also centers on content, specifically new cultures and experiences in California and the United States, and applies a complementary language learning focus on information literacy instruction. In this way, students are taught the skills necessary to manage the overwhelming amount of information on the Web.

**CHALLENGE 3. INTEGRATING WEB-BASED AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY**

Over the last few years, Web-based and computer-based technology has been increasingly used in L2 classrooms. Recent publications provide accounts of such growth (Egbert 2005; Fotos and Browne 2004). Therefore, it should not be surprising to find that several of the curriculum projects described in this volume reflect this trend. The courses that integrate Web-based technology do so for different purposes: to promote self-paced learning, to design classroom materials, and to teach EAP students information literacy skills. In the current academic environment, it is critical that students be information literate; that is, they should be able to access information effectively via the Web, evaluate the information, and use it to complete relevant tasks (O’Sullivan and Scott 2000). Though publications and books dealing with general education and reading have, for quite some time, focused on information literacy, the field of TESOL has yet to provide
accounts of how teachers integrate information literacy instruction into their classroom practices. To some extent, this volume fills that gap because it describes two EAP courses in which information literacy plays a central role.

In the first course, developed by Bosher, information literacy instruction is an important component because activities such as locating articles using nursing databases and summarizing and critiquing articles are intended to teach students the skills needed to succeed both in the English-for-nursing course and in the nursing program in general. In Pizzorno’s course, information literacy plays a central role because the course’s goal is to teach college and university students information literacy skills through sustained content, in this case, new cultures and experiences in California and the United States.

In other courses, Web-based technology is integrated to promote self-paced learning as a means to supplement face-to-face instruction. For example, Woodrow’s and Bueno Alastuey’s courses use Web pages to engage students in independent learning tasks. McPherson and Murray’s project also integrates technology for the purposes of independent learning, though in their case, they describe a multimedia CD-ROM (rather than a Web page) designed to allow students to complete a variety of tasks (matching, drag-and-drop, and sequencing) centered on an office environment, with characteristics similar to those in the offices in the Department of Immigration, an environment with which immigrant students are familiar.

Web-based technology is integrated into some courses as a source of information and content in the materials design process, though to different extents. For example, Evans describes how she used the Web as the main resource for designing materials. Donley’s course used the Web to identify selected course materials.

Rather than focusing on the Web, Kirkgöz describes the use of computer-based technology. Using computers, she compiled a specialized corpus of economics and business texts, located occurrences of content-specific words, and created concordances. She then developed concordance-based tasks that involved four steps: (1) noticing key lexical items, (2) familiarizing of the lexical items, (3) searching for further information on the lexical items by using “extended concordance displays” (this volume, 155), and (4) reading sample texts from the corpus highlighting the lexical items.

In these courses, it is the course developers rather than so-called technology experts who make instructional decisions, and in making these decisions they implement technology in a manageable way. However, as the course developers note, integrating Web-based technology in the classroom often creates logistical challenges. For example, course developers identified such challenges as the amount of time required to identify Web resources,
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develop materials that rely on the Web, and access some of the Web sites to be used for instructional purposes as well as limited institutional resources that restrict access to computer labs. However, even in those cases in which Web-based technology threatens to impede rather than enhance instruction—for example, because of limited access to computer labs or information overload—the course developers found solutions that ultimately reinforced their belief that Web-based technology has a place in the L2 classroom.

CHALLENGE 4. DEVELOPING MATERIALS WHILE THE NEW COURSE IS IN PROGRESS
As Graves explains, “materials development is the planning process by which a teacher creates units and lessons within those units to carry out the goals and objectives of the course” (2000, 149). Teachers typically use a variety of techniques to develop materials. Some choose to develop materials from scratch because they cannot find published resources that meet their students’ needs or because they are developing courses based on innovative ideas. Other teachers implement what could be called a hybrid approach to materials development, in which they design materials from scratch and, at the same time, rely on a variety of published sources. Teachers who implement a hybrid approach are generally able to find published resources that, to some extent, meet their expectations. By supplementing published resources with teacher-developed materials, they are able to better meet their students’ needs.

The materials development process, regardless of whether the teachers designed materials from scratch or implemented a hybrid approach, created a variety of challenges for the course developers. For example, Donley and Hardy, who found themselves developing materials while they were teaching their courses for the first time, experienced frustration because of the heavy workload associated with developing materials while teaching. We should note that though all teachers described the materials design process as being time consuming and challenging, teachers who did not have substantial course development experience felt especially frustrated. Akyil, Bueno Alastuey, and Donley, for example, candidly describe the pressures of being novices at the course design process. Akyil discusses the stress she felt during the daunting experience of designing a course that would increase retention and target competencies that students are required to exhibit on standardized tests and, at the same time, address the students’ nonlinguistic needs. However, the materials design process did not result in negative experiences for the novice course developers. In fact, the chapters clearly show that the course developers’ fresh or innovative perspectives on materials design
contributed to their courses’ overall success and to their feelings of accomplishment and professional satisfaction.

One would have expected that, had the teachers made most curricular decisions prior to teaching the course for the first time, they would have felt more in control of their courses. However, this was not the case of Bueno Alastuey, who concluded that making a number of curriculum decisions prior to teaching her course was a mistake because the course development process was affected by the realities of the classroom, including the number of students enrolled in the class, the students’ real needs, the extent to which the students were motivated by the materials designed, and other factors. Bueno Alastuey’s case supports the notion that the course design process is dynamic; it is not final until the course design has been implemented and subsequently revised. This realization by Bueno Alastuey, a self-described novice at course design, is surely consistent with the cyclic process of course design discussed earlier.

A further challenge in the materials design process arose when course developers relied on new technologies. For example, Kirkgöz discusses how laborious and time consuming the task of designing a corpus is for “an individual course designer” (this volume, 159). To solve this problem, she suggests using an existing corpus. Evans’s chapter discusses the frustration involved in designing materials that rely on the Internet. Though the Web provides a wealth of materials, sifting through Web sites and locating the information relevant to the course at hand is time consuming, and often-times, notably frustrating.

The course developers’ experience with materials design teaches us that although “creativity and resourcefulness” (this volume, 175) are central to the process, teachers also need to keep the task manageable so that the task itself does not become unwieldy and overwhelming, particularly when teachers are developing materials as they teach the course.

**CHALLENGE 5. DEVISING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN**

Assessment plans can be designed both to evaluate student learning and to evaluate courses. The course developers whose work is described in this volume considered both forms of assessment. In developing and implementing the courses, they devised assessment plans to evaluate students and the courses themselves. To assess student learning, rather than designing isolated assessment tasks, course developers implemented formative and summative measures of assessment that would provide information on student learning from many perspectives. To evaluate the courses, course developers used a variety of tools that allowed them both to assess the effectiveness of the courses and to identify course features that required modification.
Agosti’s course provides an example of an assessment plan designed to provide students with feedback on their progress toward course objectives. To this end, formative assessment measures included in-class and homework writing tasks; readings tasks; tasks involving listening to, taking notes on, and summarizing the content of taped lectures; participation in class discussions; and group and individual presentations and projects. Summative assessment measures included examinations on reading and writing, listening and note taking, and discussion and presentations. Bosher’s course also integrated a variety of assessments, including but not limited to keeping journals in response to video segments and lectures and completing a variety of projects, including writing papers and doing oral presentations.

Besides assessing student progress toward course goals, several of the course developers integrated an innovative form of student assessment that had a positive impact on students’ attitudes toward their learning in the course. Specifically, several courses engaged students in tasks that allowed them to assess their own learning and progress. For example, in Woodrow’s course, students were required to submit a portfolio containing selected writing tasks—an essay; entries from a learning journal; evidence of peer assessment; and a research project, in which students acted as “ethnographers of communication” (Canagarajah 2002, 207) in that “they conduct research into writing from an insider’s perspective” (this volume, 215). Evans’s course also assessed students using a variety of measures, including homework, quizzes, projects, and discussion and participation. Projects (a minipresentation, a zoo visit, and a poster presentation) were evaluated from multiple perspectives, including the student, classmates, and the instructor. Students in both Evans’s and Woodrow’s course engaged in a process of self-reflection. Donley’s course also included a measure of self-reflection. For her course, she identified twelve grammar, pronunciation, and communication areas for class activities and had students work on a different class topic each week. Her assessment measures were designed to raise the students’ awareness of their language production and their progress in relation to course goals at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the term. Other forms of assessment in her course included quizzes and the institutional TOEFL as well as a coursewide rubric.

In their course design, McPherson and Murray did not build in an assessment of student learning because only trained officers of the DIMIA are allowed to assess content knowledge related to civics instruction, so the DIMIA was reluctant to allow classroom teachers to assess student learning. However, the designers included formative assessment tasks throughout the course to help learners and teachers monitor their progress. Akyil’s assessment system was also constrained by federal law concerning ESL learners enrolled in adult education programs. Specifically, she assessed her students’
performance using the reading and listening portions of the CASAS test (see http://www.casas.org/) as pre- and postmeasures.

Part of the assessment system implemented by the course developers evaluated the courses. In general, as with student assessment, course developers used a variety of tools to assess the effectiveness of their courses. These tools included generic course evaluations, customized evaluation forms, students’ scores on standardized tests, colleagues’ feedback on the courses, and teachers’ self-reflections. More important than the input and feedback is what was done with it; the course developers used it to make decisions about different aspects of the course; more specifically, they used it to help them decide what aspects of the course needed to be retained or modified.

**Conclusion**

With this overview in mind, we now invite you to delve into the twelve chapters contained in this volume. You can see for yourselves how the authors were guided by the key processes of course design as they planned and directed their new courses to fruition. In their accounts, you can examine in-depth the challenges that they faced and the practical and innovative solutions they formulated. It is our hope, and certainly that of the authors, that these accounts will inspire you to create new courses for adults—and that the authors’ experiences will assist you in your endeavors in course design.