

Abstract Submitted
for the FWS15 Meeting of
The American Physical Society

Interdisciplinary learning: Teaching science in a French language class CHRISTIANE ORCEL, California Institute of Technology — Since the spring term of 2011 a French conversation course has been taught at Caltech to improve students proficiency with a special focus on technical language that prepares them for their classes in math and science in the International and Exchange Program. The course targets undergraduates planning to attend the Ecole Polytechnique in the fall term of their senior year. It is also helpful for Graduate Students enrolled in the GALCIT Dual Masters Program with Ecole Polytechnique and for undergraduate and graduate students who go to CERN under the SURF program, or under the NSF REU program run by Michigan. The French-speaking JPL and Caltech guest speakers, who assist the main language instructor, are chosen to match the students majors (astronomy, physics, biology, chemistry, computer science, engineering, math, etc.). This presentation describes the general structure of the course with a specific focus on the physics topics discussed in the last five years. It also reports its interdisciplinary benefits, its organizational challenges and its participants evaluations. The class was initially an experimental project funded by the Office of the Provost but in 2015 the Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences added the course to the regular French curriculum.

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Date submitted: 06 Oct 2015

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