

Kerisa Baedke



Where did you obtain your degrees and what was your area of focus for each degree?

I obtained my BA from the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). French and Spanish Education. I also obtained my MA from UNI. My MA is in Spanish.

Briefly describe your professional background and experiences with the Concordia Language Villages (if applicable).

I have been a secondary teacher in Iowa for thirty-one years. I was an English assistante for a year in France. I taught French and Spanish in my first district for five years. I taught Spanish only at Valley High School for four years. When the ninth-grade building opened, I transferred there and taught French and Spanish for nine years. I am now in my third district – Waukee and I have been in the same building for thirteen years. In that time it has been an 8/9 building, a ninth grade building, and it is again an 8/9 building. In Waukee I only teach Spanish. I am happy that it is back to being an 8/9 building as those are my favorite grades.

In all of my positions I have always taught ninth graders.

I have worked at the Language Villages for twenty years. I first came to the Villages as a participant in the Teachers Seminars with Donna Clementi. The next summer I worked as a credit teacher and counselor with Diane Tess at El Lago del Bosque. I returned five years later as den of El Lago del Bosque Oak Hills and then Wilder when we opened that site. I was dean for sixteen years until Wilder closed in 2015. For the past three summers I have worked in some capacity with El Lago del Bosque and taught the AMLA 620 course. My years with the Villages have come full circle as I started with Teachers Seminars and am now teaching in the Master's program.

What kind of research or other scholarly work do you do? What kinds of topics interest you most?

I am a frequent presenter at state, regional, and national conferences, having presented 50 sessions and workshops since my first one in 1994 about the Teachers Seminars. I present on cultural topics such as music, dance, and art. I also present on the art of teaching, on how to create a culture for learning in your classroom. I have presented on assessment, on reading in the classroom, on differentiation, and more.

What do you do in the M.Ed. program and what do you like most about working with our graduate students?

I teach AMLA 620 – Assessment in the World Language Classroom. When I am not teaching my 8th and 9th grade students, I love to work with teachers or pre-service teachers. I am passionate about professional development. Working with our graduate students has been a wonderful fit for me. I love working with such dedicated teachers, many who are still in their early years of teaching. It is incredible to work with a small, cohesive group of educators who are dedicated to improving their craft. Assessment is an area for which most teachers feel underprepared. I come at teaching this course after years of analyzing our practices as a district and then making dramatic changes to our assessment policies and practices. It is a pleasure to walk alongside the graduate students as they wrestle with assessment.

Is there anything else that you want students to know about you?

Both my professional and personal lives revolve around languages, and culture. The one thing that I do that is outside of that realm is that I sing with a Sweet Adelines chorus in Des Moines, Iowa. I sing bass. Music is hard for me and I am working on my growth mindset where music is considered. Singing is my challenge activity. I put myself out there in what is far from my wheelhouse. It is a challenge and it is good for me. My husband Bruce is also a teacher. He teaches Chemistry and Physics. He is a very talented singer. He sings barbershop and also sings bass. Music is very important in our lives!