What’s the standard room configuration?
There’s seating for 28, consisting of 14 tables arranged in 7 clusters in a rough oval. Each cluster has 4 seats in opposite pairs, i.e., two students facing two other students. We call it our “bistro” configuration.

Why have you arranged the rooms this way?
We want the configuration of the classroom to prioritize “active learning” (AL), an approach that emphasizes student-centered learning and engagement with materials in a task-based way. AL puts a premium on cooperation and collaboration.

For the language classroom this also means; mobility, multiple activities per class, extensive pair and small group work, and access to technology for productive language use and practice.

Can the tables be moved? Can students?
Yes, fairly easily. And because of the size of the rooms, students can be regrouped fairly quickly. Our instructors have tried various configurations in order to optimize comfort, confidence, group dynamics and productivity. Where the teacher situates herself seems to matter a lot in Ss’ willingness to relocate.

Where does the teacher stand/sit?
Well, literally anywhere she wants. But if you’re used to standing at the front of the room and staying in a relatively fixed position this room will be frustrating. In the default set-up, students aren’t all facing one way (but they are looking in towards the middle).

What technology is available in the rooms?
Computer with Bluetooth wireless keyboard and mouse (1), large screen display devices (2), good audio, document camera (1), Blu-Ray C/DVD player (1), 2ft x 3ft whiteboard slates (28), Apple TV (for YLC or teacher-owned iTunes content, news broadcasts, AirPlay broadcasting), iPads (on a cart which can be rolled in; each can individually project to screens), and, of course, BYOD. Everything is controlled from a Crestron flat panel display at the front of the room. Very good Internet connectivity.

An FAQ: Teaching from the Center in the Pacific Hall LearnLabs

Why did you pick this technology and organize it this way?
Cooperative/collaborative learning defines the modern language classroom. Our notion, then, is that classroom technology for students should be reliable, plentiful, and focused on the kinds of interactions (and productive language skills) which that approach demands. Key to that is mobile furniture, room for Ts and Ss to move, and easy ways for small and large groups to share their work. The technology for teachers should be easy-to-use, wireless whenever possible, and permit new ways of looking at and using language.

What about testing situations? Isn’t it easy to cheat?
Well, the tables do easily move back to front facing rows and the whiteboards do function as fairly effective partitions, but Ts that embrace a more task-based approach to learning are probably more interested in alternative assessments (portfolios, language samples, role plays, etc.). Thus: 1) regular daily and weekly assessments should reduce the need, or change the stakes for “big tests”; 2) listening/speaking assessments should be based on (or begin with) tasks performed in class; and when summative assessments are required, 3) having one student swivel 180º the other way, or moving some Ss to adjacent rooms, such as PAC 120 with its 24 individualized workstations, allow for even more separation.

Should I bring my laptop or use yours?
It’s up to you —- Our standard setup is MacOS 10.9 with all of the common applications (Office, iWork, etc.), browsers, and multilingual keyboards. These computers run Windows 7, too. The Bluetooth keyboard and mouse in the room can be synched with your device, too, if you like. There’s a USB remote that can be checked out at the PAC 121 front counter.

How do I get help?
There’s always a Yamada staff member in PAC 121 (front desk) and 113 (computer lab) to assist you. Weekly tech help sessions are offered, and, of course, one-one consulting is available on demand.
**Using the Crestron Panel (PAC 119, 115)**

Everything is controlled from the Crestron workstation at the front of the room. It’s here that you plug-in your laptop or select your media source, set audio volume, and select where your video will be displayed, and at what volume.

Getting started:

1. Turn on the iMac or plug in your laptop (optional) -- (an adaptor is needed for most MacBook Pros).
2. Tap once to turn on the Crestron flat panel display.
3. Tap once to turn on one or both of the video displays (flat screen and projector)
4. Tap and drag to specify the source for your computer Mac Mini (YLC’s computer), HDMI or VGA (your laptop), or South Wall (another laptop or iPad).
   - Additional video sources include: a Document Camera, Apple TV, and multiregion BluRay CD/DVD player.
     You can easily send the output of one device (e.g., your laptop) to one screen, and the output of another (e.g., the Document Camera) to another.
5. Start teaching -- you may want to use the wireless keyboard and mouse (stored in the accessory drawer) if you’re teaching from the middle of the room.

**Classroom Configurations**

These rooms can hold up to 28 students quite comfortably. Take advantage of the flexibility the extra space provides. Here are some recommended set-ups for different learning approaches. When your class is finished, please ask Ss to return the room to the default set-up (bistro configuration)

1. **Bistro Configuration** — 7 groups arrayed around an oval middle. Group work of any kind, especially pairs and fours
2. **Conference Configuration** — single tables in a circle. Whole class work: discussion, debate (works for about 20)
3. **Quad Configuration** — single tables in a rectangle. Whole class work, including poster sessions or role plays where tables can represent different interaction opportunities (e.g. at right we see a market scene with vendors)
4. **Hub and Spoke Configuration** — 4+ groups in a cross: bigger discussion or problem-solving scenarios (up to 8)
5. **Summative Configuration** — single tables in rows and columns. Testing, watching a movie, listening to a lecture.

Some websites which provide more information about active learning
- Defined: http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/active/what
- Steelcase’s Classroom Furniture “dramatization”: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnU58hbYN1M