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UNC CHARLOTTE
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department of Languages & Culture Studies



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR – 2020

Dr. Michèle Bissière

2020 has been a year like no other. As I write this, our department has been operating remotely since March amid a global pandemic. The transition was abrupt and unexpected, but we rose to the challenge and have now settled into a new normal. I want to thank all of our faculty, staff, and students for their hard work and resilience in the past nine months. Our department was lucky to receive the steady guidance of our Language Resource Center Director, Dr. Bobby Hobgood, who has offered countless workshops and instructional technology coffee hours to ease the shift to remote teaching. Many of our activities were upended by COVID-19 this year, but we can be proud of our accomplishments.

The spring semester started with a bang. We had over 500 majors and 500 minors, 142 business language certificate and 236 translation certificate students, and over 50 students in our Honors Program across the languages. At the graduate level, there were 35 students enrolled in our Spanish MA and graduate certificates in Translation, Translating and Interpreting (in its first semester), and Business Language (in its first year).

Building on our recent Memorandum of Understanding with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, we offered 30 language internships in several local schools, our highest number so far. The department hosted several conferences in the spring: the inaugural meeting of the Southeastern Association of Cultural Studies, with presentations by 25 LACS faculty members; a two-day webinar conference of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters; and the 5th International Symposium on Language for Specific Purposes and Centers for International Business Education and Research Business Language Conference. We also offered several events this spring, including a workshop on Spanish for Heritage and Native Speakers, and the third annual (virtual) UNC Charlotte Cinema Showcase, a student-juried screening of short films created by current UNC Charlotte students.

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR (Continued)

The area most affected by the pandemic was study abroad. We were able to offer our Spring Break programs in France and Germany, but our programs in Italy and Japan were cancelled, and the trip to China was replaced by a Chinese-themed experience in Washington, DC thanks to Dr. Yongling Gorke's last-minute efforts. Our summer programs were also cancelled. In addition, every UNC Charlotte student studying worldwide was recalled. This created a lot of anxiety and additional work for everyone involved. I want to express my gratitude to the program directors who worked so hard to develop these international educational experiences, and to the many faculty members who offered alternative coursework for the students who had planned to study abroad.

The end of the spring semester and the summer also brought a number of challenges. On April 30, we commemorated the first anniversary of the UNC Charlotte shooting virtually. Then graduation ceremonies were cancelled, and we could not celebrate our students' accomplishments in person. But thanks to the creativity and technical skills of our administrative assistant, Julia Geaney-Moore, we were able to recognize them with a beautiful video. Then came the death of George Floyd and the social unrest that ensued. Like many departments and our College, we drafted a Statement of Solidarity and

pledged to find concrete ways to promote racial justice and equity. This summer we also had to make multiple changes to our Fall schedule and prepare our reopening plan, a task that would not have been possible without the tireless dedication of our Associate Chair, Dr. Anabel Aliaga-Buchenau and our Business Services Coordinator Carol Hartley. Many thanks to both, and also to Julia Geaney-Moore and Bridget Stipicevic for proctoring over 200 placement tests via WebEx in the summer when students could no longer take the test in the Language Resource Center.

We are in a better place this fall thanks to everyone's hard work since last Spring. Many faculty members took advantage of all the online training opportunities available in the summer or served as consultants for their colleagues. Our advisors and our beginning language coordinators redoubled their efforts to prepare students and instructors for the new semester. This fall we welcomed a new cohort of MA Fellows teaching Chinese, French, and Spanish, and a couple of new instructors in German and Japanese. Dr. Mónica Rodríguez-Castro took over as Graduate Director from Dr. Concepción Godev, who expanded our graduate programs steadily in the past three years.

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR (Continued)

Several colleagues were promoted for their outstanding work: Dr. Anabel Aliaga-Buchenau to Full Professor of German, Dr. Jeff Killman to Associate Professor of Spanish, Dr. Paloma Fernández Sánchez, Dr. Noha Ghali, Dr. Susanne Gomoluch, and Professor Yukiko Yokono to Senior Lecturers of Spanish, Arabic, German, and Japanese. Our faculty have continued to publish books and articles; give keynote addresses and interviews; serve as journal editors and as board members in national professional organizations; and successfully apply for Diversity Challenge and other grants. Several were honored for their teaching this year: Dr. Bobby Hobgood received the 2020 Laura Thomas Award from the NC Chapter of the Association of Higher Education and Disability for exemplary support of disability services in a post-secondary academic setting; Professor Angela Jakeway was awarded the College's Excellence in Teaching Award for a full-time lecturer; and Professor Susana Cisneros was a finalist for the UNC Charlotte Teaching Excellence Award. Our students have also received many accolades. They have won scholarships, prizes, and contests; been accepted into prestigious programs and honor societies; participated in internships; and landed their dream jobs. There is not enough space to give adequate mention to everyone, but please read about some of these remarkable accomplishments in the newsletter.

As the fall semester draws to a close, it is time to say goodbye and thank you to several colleagues. Austin McComas was

promoted within OneIT and reassigned to the Instructional Technology team at Atkins Library; Dr. Shirley Wright will be leaving for a new position at the University of North Florida after teaching Spanish at UNC Charlotte for many years. We are also losing the Confucius Institute, its co-director Monica Ji, and teachers Li Cao, Haiyan Tian, and Ji'e Zheng. We will miss the support they provided to our Chinese students and the wonderful cultural events organized by the CI, such as their annual Chinese New Year celebration. We will continue working with Dr. Yongling Gorke as she transitions to a new role at the university. Last but not least, we will say bye to Dr. Ann González, who is retiring after thirty and a half years in the department, including four and a half years as Chair. Ann and I started together at UNC Charlotte, so I will be sad to see her go. She has been a great colleague and a wise and generous mentor in my first year as Chair. We are lucky that she is interested in teaching part time next year after a well-deserved break in the spring.

I want to thank each of you for your hard work, your support, and your tremendous flexibility as we navigated through uncharted waters this year. I never anticipated that I would spend most of my first year as Chair working from home! As much as I have come to enjoy Zoom, I would much rather speak to you in person and teach my classes face to face. But it will be a few months before we can resume our normal lives. Until then, I wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season and look forward to a successful virtual spring semester.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Chinese Event



Photo Credits: Professor Tianran Liu



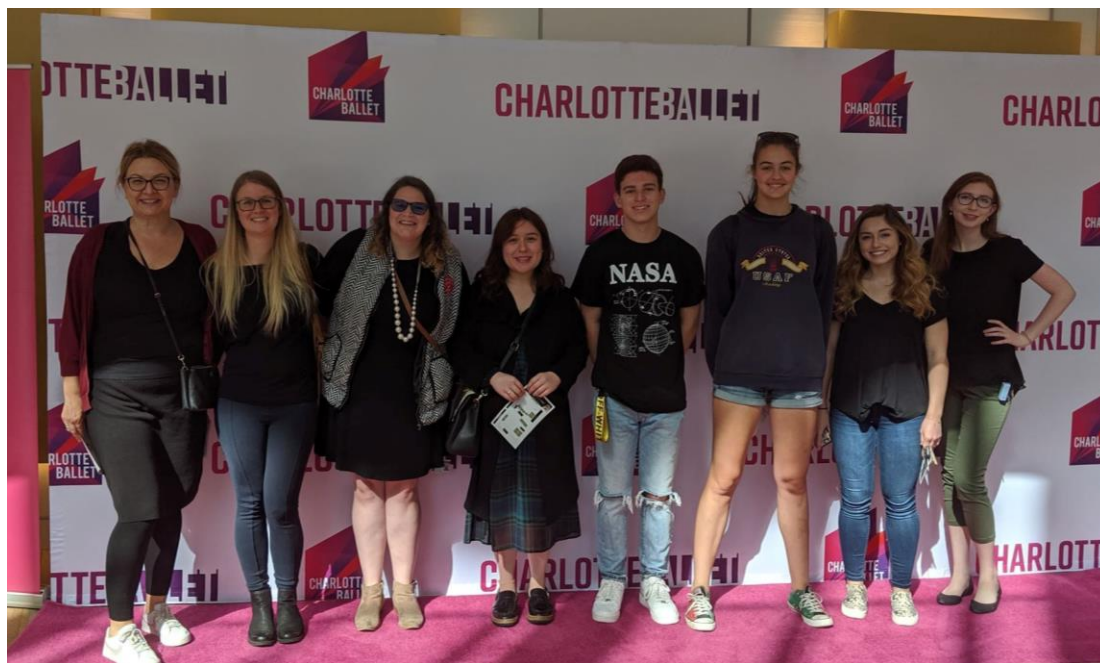
The Chinese program, in collaboration with the Chinese Club and the Confucius Institute, hosted an event which featured a cooking competition, Chinese painting, and eating Dim Sum. They also took a trip to the New Asia Market.



SPECIAL EVENTS

German Club at the Charlotte Ballet

The German Club collaborated with the Charlotte Ballet in early November 2019. The Charlotte Ballet performed "Leonce and Lena," based on a 19th-century German play. They invited the German Club to organize the pre-event for the children's matinee. There were well over 150 children in attendance with their parents. German students organized a scavenger hunt, photo box, and a pink carpet event.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Shodo Demonstration (Japanese Traditional Calligraphy) at Highland Mill Montessori Elementary School



Many K-12 schools are interested in opportunities to expose their students to different cultures in academic settings. Students in Languages and Culture Studies at UNC Charlotte run student organizations related to their target language culture. Shodo (Japanese Calligraphy) Club, advised by Professor Enika Banerjee, is one of those organizations. This club was launched late in Fall 2020 and since then it has been very active.

Shodo Club members at UNC Charlotte (Marina Klimova, Vice President, Ryan Pil, Secretary, Kim Bucoy, Social Media Chair) introduced Shodo to Ms. Kate's lower elementary class (1st and 2nd combined) at Highland Mill Montessori on March 10. This cultural presentation showed those students real Shodo tools and gave them an opportunity to write some Japanese Kanji on a special paper with a calligraphy brush and ink.



21 students in Ms. Kate's class wrote three words, "Sun," "Moon," and "Heart," in Kanji. Through this experience, those students learned how to hold a Shodo brush and how to move it, as well as the stroke order for the Kanji words.

They also smelled the inks, saw the darkness of inks, and wrote characters on very thin Shodo papers. The students were very focused and wrote beautiful characters.



We hope those students will remember this experience and stay curious about other cultures.

Photo credit Ms. Kate and Professor Chikako Mori

SPECIAL EVENTS

2019 Onigiri Action



Students who are learning Japanese at UNC Charlotte have been craving more cultural exposure, and this is why Professor Chikako Mori learned about Onigiri Action through Dr. Keiko Ueda, from North Carolina State University. Onigiri Action 2019 provided five school meals to children in need for each onigiri-related photo posted on their site (<https://onigiri-action.com/en/>). Onigiri is a Japanese traditional cuisine composed of rice wrapped in seaweed.

Student volunteers and Staff in the Japanese Studies Program participated in this event during International Education Week (November 18-22, 2019) thanks to a mini-grant from the Office of International Programs.

On the day of the event, the booth filled quickly with people who were interested in onigiri making. Participants made about 60 onigiri in two hours. The key of the event's success was the students' involvement. Student volunteers (Language Assistants in Japanese classes) made a poster with an introduction of onigiri, favorite onigiri

rankings, and memories related to onigiri. At the site, they demonstrated and taught participants how to make onigiri, as well as encouraged the participants to take photos of their creations and then post the photos on the Onigiri Action 2019 website. Assuming everyone who came posted photos, this event provided 300 to 600 school meals to the world.

Not only did this event provide hands-on activities and introduce Japanese food culture to the UNC Charlotte students and faculty members, but it also deepened the friendship among the language assistants and Japanese language learners.

Special thanks to Mr. Kazuyoshi Maekawa, Ms. Mami Myojo, Ms. Mary Pham, Ms. Rei Yamamura, Mr. Yoshiki Takano, Professor Enika Banerjee, Professor Chie Drake, and Professor Yukiko Yokono.

Article by Professor Chikako Mori

SPECIAL EVENTS - Spring Break

UNC Charlotte Students Travel to Washington, DC to Learn about Chinese Culture

对于从事国际教育的人来说

Nine UNC Charlotte students traveled to Washington, DC to participate in a three-day excursion from March 1 to March 4, 2020. These students were taking CHNS 3225/FINN 3000, a course focused on Chinese culture and business. The trip consisted of visits to museums, organizations with a focus on US-China relations, and the Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC.

The trip started with the National Gallery of Asian Art, which dates back to 1906 when Detroit businessman Charles Lang Freer gave the nation his holdings of Asian and American art. Students toured the sections with Chinese art, including Buddhist sculptures, jade, bronze bell, and Chinese painting. Students also visited the Peacock room, the iconic aesthetic decoration that once belonged to Freer in his residence in Detroit, filled with Chinese ceramics. Another museum that the group visited was the Chinese American Museum in Washington, DC, a bold undertaking in the nation's capital to capture and create the history of over 235 years of Chinese presence in America. The museum is slated to open in phases, and the staff were very generous to open the museum to the group outside the public hours. Mr. David Yao, advisor for outreach and community relations, and Ms. Jenny Liu, the museum's vice president, provided the students with a personalized tour. In March, the museum housed three temporary exhibitions: Jewish Refugees in Shanghai during World War II, Chinese American Women, and Chinese Worker for

the Transcontinental Railway. Students were impressed by the visit, which taught them an important part of the history that they were not aware of before. One student commented in the reflective journal, "Since the U.S. has a large variety of cultures it can be hard to educate everyone, but offering the public the opportunity to get a glance at an important period is crucial and aids in the spreading of cultural awareness."

The group also visited two organizations with a mission to facilitate the exchange between the US and China on business and strategies. On Monday March 2, the group visited the US-China Business Council, a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization of approximately 200 American companies that do business with China. Founded in 1973, which predates the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China, USCBC has provided unmatched information, advisory, advocacy, and program services to its members for over four decades. Continued Next Page ->>>



SPECIAL EVENTS - Spring Break

UNC Charlotte Students Travel to Washington, DC to Learn about Chinese Culture 对于从事国际教育的人来说 (Continued)

Students attended a talk by three business advisory services managers on the topic of US-China Tensions and Challenges for American Companies in China. They learned about the history and current development of US-China trade, as well as the business members' perception of future US-China economic relations.

On Wednesday March 4, the group was once again received warmly by another organization in DC. A think tank called the Institute on China-America Studies (ICAS). ICAS focuses on key issue areas in the US-China relationship in need of greater mutual understanding including maritime security, Asia-Pacific economics, trade, strategic stability, international relations as well as global governance issues. It also explores avenues for improving this critical bilateral relationship. The students had a lively discussion with the ICAS team members, including Dr. Nong Hong, executive director, Mr. Sourabh Gupta, resident senior fellow, Mr. Matt Geraci, research associate and

program officer, and Mr. Yilun Zhang, research associate. The students not only appreciated the insightful knowledge shared by ICAS members, but also the valuable career advice that was shared.

An excursion about Chinese culture cannot be complete without first-hand experience with authentic art and crafts from China. At the Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC, in the building designed by the famous Chinese American architect I.M. Pei, the students were amazed by the wide array of Chinese arts and craft, including paintings, embroideries, and sculpture installations. The students also learned more about study abroad opportunities in China through their visit. The three-day excursion concluded with a Chinese lunch, served family style, in the Dupont Circle area in Washington, DC. Students tasted all kinds of delicacies, including tofu, lamb, beef, chicken and vegetables, cooked with authentic Chinese spices.

Article by Dr. Yongling Gorke



SPECIAL EVENTS - Spring Break

Snapshots from Paris: Short-Term Study Abroad

“French Civilization in Paris”

February 29 - March 7, 2020

Before normal life stopped on a dime, before the world shifted and shut down, we made a trip to Paris. Blessedly, we returned safely. Here are our defining moments.



“An American in Paris”

Here they are, my students, alongside Thomas Jefferson, the first official United States ambassador to France. Under a leaden sky, they shine. Whenever I announce that it's group photo time, they comply without protest and arrange themselves in an artful pose. This trip will push them out of their comfort zones, but they will rise to the challenges. After weeks of preparation in the classroom, they are ready. This city is theirs for the taking. “Paris,” they might say, “est à nous (Belongs to Us).”

By Professor Jane Houston

“Reliving the Past”

This is the view from the front steps of the Eglise de la Madeleine church, looking down the street toward the Luxor Obelisk. I have heard all my life about the church I was named after, and I got to stand at the very spot my parents did when they decided to name me after this church and the city they fell in love with. By Madeleine Lane



“La Madeleine”

My defining moment came when I was able to go with Paris to the Madeleine. I got to see the excitement come across her face as we got closer to this church. This helped remind me of why I came to Paris; to see a beautiful city and realize just how much history is behind each building. La Madeleine may not have been the most famous building we saw, but it was special to my friend from a small town in North Carolina. This really helped me realize just how much significance and history comes with one building and the kind of story it could tell. By Taylor Cox

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SPECIAL EVENTS - Spring Break

Snapshots from Paris: Short-Term Study Abroad French Civilization in Paris (Continued)



“I Traveled 4,000 miles and All I Cared about was Food”

I have heard that immersing yourself in the culture is a major key when traveling, so when I went to Paris, I was set on trying as much food as possible like this veal steak with fries and a salad. The only downside was that when I returned to America, I was disappointed by the quality of food here that I previously enjoyed.

By Carolyn Minge



“When in Paris!”

It was the last day of the trip and a lovely Friday when I was able to visit The Louvre with some of my classmates. It was an amazing experience, and it was one of the best moments in Paris.

By Shelby Lenice



“Underwhelming Mona Lisa”

This picture is very significant to me as I was in the Louvre. Seeing the Winged Victory of Samothrace up close was unbelievable as it is one of a small number of major Hellenistic statues surviving in the original, rather than Roman copies. The Louvre holds many masterpieces, and it was exhilarating and overwhelming to be surrounded by historic art pieces like this one. It felt like a dream.

By Marwa Alqatari



“The March over to Versailles”

On our fifth day we visited my top priority spot, Versailles. Versailles is the French palace. I mostly enjoyed this site due to my personal preferences. I really appreciated just how spread out and manicured everything was. When viewing the royal quarters, the first fact I learned was how a lot of French Royalty did not want to stay in Versailles because of just how big the palace was which consequently made it terribly hard to keep warm with its fireplaces. I personally noticed every room had a fireplace in it.

By Farris Rogers

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SPECIAL EVENTS - Spring Break

Snapshots from Paris: Short-Term Study Abroad French Civilization in Paris (Continued)

“Seeing something that I have always wanted to!”

This picture is very special to me because ever since I was little, I have always wanted to see the Eiffel Tower and to be able to see it with my boyfriend was definitely an amazing experience.

By Ashley Schrum



“Louvre Come True”

Seeing the Louvre was one of the few things in Paris I wanted to see but seeing it with my girlfriend made it even more special.

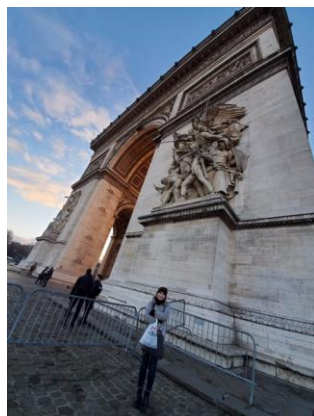
By Dakota Putnam



“Arc de Triomphe”

Standing in front of the Arc de Triomphe left me in awe. Seeing how small I was in comparison to this structure was insane. The amount of time and dedication that was put into this structure far surpasses any modern architecture.

By Olivia Oyler



“Staying in touch with the French culture”

Visiting the Louvre was an amazing experience. I was able to see the originals of the world-famous paintings and sculptures.

By Gabi Swic



SPECIAL EVENTS - Conferences

SEACS Conference

On February 7 and 8 the Southeastern Association of Cultural Studies (SEACS) held its inaugural conference at UNC Charlotte Center City. SEACS is dedicated to scholarship in modern languages and literature, including linguistics, pedagogy, and cultural studies.

The event brought over 90 participants to Charlotte and featured more than 20 panel discussions. The keynote speaker, Dr. Paul Youngman, Associate Provost and Professor of German at Washington and Lee University, addressed the challenges of higher education in the 21st century.

The Department of Languages and Culture Studies was well represented. Other participants came from several universities including The Citadel, Francis Marion University, UNC Wilmington, UNC Pembroke, Western

Carolina University and more.

The conference is vital to the health of the Humanities in that it brings professionals of all cultures and languages together in an intellectually stimulating yet friendly environment.

Overall the SEACS conference was a great success. The final agreement at the board meeting was to hold the conference at UNC Charlotte again in 2021. Due to COVID-19, the SEACS 2021 Conference will be hosted virtually on Zoom.



SPECIAL EVENTS - Conferences

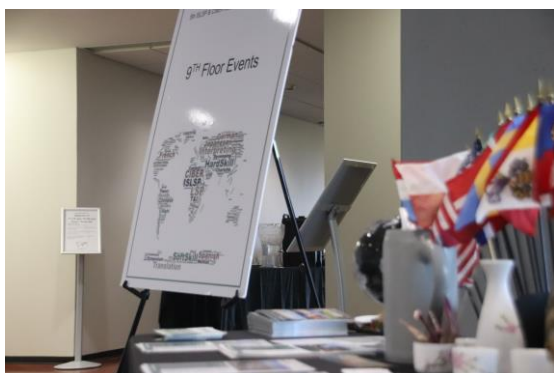
5th International Symposium on LSP and CIBER Business Language Conference

This spring, the Department of Languages and Culture Studies hosted the 5th International Symposium on Language for Specific Purposes (ISLSP) and Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) Business Language Conference. The three-day event was held in March at the UNC Charlotte Center City campus. In total, there were over 150 attendees and speakers from across the country and several countries.

The event started on Thursday with several pre-conference workshops. The first two, which dealt with the integration of LSP topics into the language classroom, were facilitated in the morning by Dr. Christopher D. Mellinger

(UNC Charlotte) and Dr. Diana Ruggiero (University of Memphis). Dr. Laura Gasca Jiménez (Fairfield University) and Dr. David A. Victor (Eastern Michigan University) facilitated additional workshops after lunch that afternoon, discussing heritage language learning in LSP courses and the expectations of professional language and culture service providers, respectively. That evening, Dr. Bill Rivers, Executive Director at the Joint National Committee for Languages, delivered the opening ISLSP keynote, providing a high-level overview of the importance of languages in the 21st century. The first day concluded with a welcome reception at the nearby Holiday Inn Ballroom.

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SPECIAL EVENTS - Conferences

5th International Symposium on LSP and CIBER Business Language Conference (Continued)

The next day started with the CIBER plenary keynote by David Utrilla, Honorary Consul to Peru in Utah and owner and CEO of U.S. Translation Company, who discussed the language industry and the importance of translation and interpreting in the global economy. Throughout the day, five parallel sessions of presentations covered a range of topics, including the use of language in medical, legal, agricultural, and community settings. Speakers talked about how to teach these languages and how to inspire students to engage with languages in a host of diverse contexts. At midday, Klaus Becker, Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in North Carolina, presented his thoughts on the importance of language as a means to communicate with new people and across cultures. After a full day of presentations, attendees were able to relax at an evening reception, during which time the CIBER institutions were able to talk about their critical work in advancing language in business education. A highlight was recognizing eleven graduate students who were the first to receive support to attend that conference as part of the newly-instituted Next Generation LSP Scholars program.

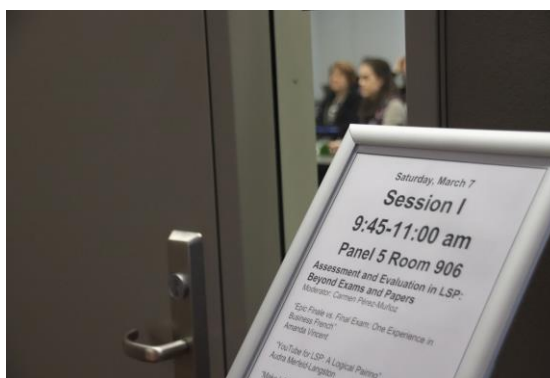


The final day of the conference started with another keynote by Dr. Lourdes Sánchez-López (University of Alabama at Birmingham) who spoke about the origins of LSP research in the United States and charted a path forward for this burgeoning area of research. Additional parallel sessions were held throughout the day as well as roundtables from distinguished journal and book editors from across the country. The conference concluded with the general session ISLSP business meeting.

While too many to name, the conference touched on many topics including heritage language learning, language for business, curricular design, financial analysis, motivation science, body language, medical interpreting, dual language immersion programs, study abroad, trans-linguaging strategies, intercultural competency, foreign language education in the US military, and more. To see more of what guests and presenters themselves had to say about the conference, including additional photographs, visit

<https://walls.io/e4upx>.

Article by Andrew Meyer



SPECIAL EVENTS - Conferences

Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI) – Annual Conference



Dr. Mónica Rodríguez-Castro, Associate Professor of Spanish and CATI's Director, was the organizer and moderator of a two-day webinar of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CATI Annual Conference was scheduled to be held at Meredith College (Raleigh) on March 28, 2020. However, due to travel restrictions, the Board decided to have a two-day webinar instead. The current president of the CATI Board, Javier Castillo, consulted with former CATI presidents and the board and decided that during this time of hardship for translators and interpreters the association would like to give back to our professional community of translators and interpreters, by offering this two-day event at no cost.

The Department of Languages and Culture Studies had hosted CATI's Annual Conference multiple times in the past. This year, Dr. Rodríguez-Castro volunteered to host the two-day webinar using teleconferencing software provided by UNC Charlotte. "It was an incredibly rewarding experience to help our regional translators and interpreters to continue learning and earn their continuing education points during this challenging time. This was a great opportunity to strengthen the professional profile of the members by engaging in new learning opportunities. With UNC Charlotte's support, it was possible for me to organize this event and give back to our professional community," she said.

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SPECIAL EVENTS - Conferences

Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI) – Annual Conference (continued)

CATI translators, interpreters, and students from across the Carolinas convened to deepen their understanding of emerging research, current topics, and best practices and trends in the profession. Day 1 of the webinar began with Javier Castillo, CATI President and renowned Federal Court Interpreter, welcoming all members and reminding the professional translators and interpreters that they can make the best of current circumstances by engaging in online learning and sharpening their skills. This is particularly important since most of the attendees were freelancers who have been losing a lot of projects due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The topics presented on Day 1 of the webinar included “Technology has Changed the Language Services Industry: Now What?” presented by former CATI Presidents Michael Collins and John Milan. Additional topics included “Stay in Your Lane! (But Who’s Drawing the Lines?)” by Janis Palma and one presentation on Sign Language Interpreting, “Who are the Sign Language Interpreters? Are They My Colleagues” by Sarah Baker and concluded with an “Overview of ATA’s Certification Exam” by David Stephenson.

During Day 2, attendees also heard from experts in the field that included current topics such as “LatinX: A 21st Century Enigma” by Hernán A. Silva-Zetina and Matthew T. Benton. Dr. Indira Sultanić, Assistant Professor of Spanish Translation and Interpreting at Virginia Commonwealth University, discussed the Ethical Dilemmas in Patient Counseling and Spiritual Care. Day 2 concluded with a panel chaired by Dr. Rodríguez-Castro on communication workflows in translation project management with the last topic in the panel presented on postediting and mismatched expectations between linguists and project managers by Delfina Erochenko, MA student in Spanish at UNC Charlotte.

The event was a great success with more than 100 attendees per day and the CATI Board received overwhelming notes of gratitude from the community of translators and interpreters. CATI has allowed this professional community to come together and share their business knowledge and practices. CATI highly appreciates the continued support and collaboration of UNC Charlotte in accomplishing its mission.

Article by Dr. Mónica Rodríguez-Castro



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Adriana Figueroa: The Congressional Internship Program



Adriana Figueroa is currently a sophomore at UNC Charlotte. She attended high school in Puerto Rico. She participated in the Millennium Fellowship Program in Fall of 2019 during which the team developed a project called the LIFE initiative. LIFE stands for Lifestyle, Interpersonal, Financial and Educational skills. The objective of the project was to reach out to Title I high schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area and give the students access to resources they can use to learn helpful life skills. Although the Millennium Fellowship Program was only scheduled to span one semester, the team of students, including Adriana Figueroa, continued to implement plans by reaching out to Charlotte-Mecklenburg School liaisons.

The incredible work Adriana has been devoting herself to has led to her recently entering a paid internship in Capitol Hill called the Congressional Internship Program. It is facilitated by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. During the internship she will take classes at George Washington University in Washington, DC on Mondays, and work for a Representative on the rest of the days of the week. Her duties will include: responding to constituent inquiries, writing policy briefs, conducting legislative research on issues such as education, health, foreign affairs, defense, science and technology. She will also attend congressional hearings and policy briefings.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Alexandra Potter Receives Scholarship to Study in Morocco

Like many students, UNC Charlotte Senior Alexandra Potter, who majored in International Studies and Political Science with a minor in Arabic Studies, always thought that studying abroad was too expensive. Fortunately, she discovered the many scholarship opportunities available for those who seek to study Arabic and other critical languages. Before COVID-19, Potter spent the beginning of the Spring 2020 semester travelling to the Middle East where she learned more about Arabic language and culture thanks to the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE)'s Arabic Language and Moroccan Culture Program in Rabat, Morocco. She obtained two scholarships to cover her expenses. She was selected as the

only UNC Charlotte recipient of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship (a nationwide prestigious scholarship that seeks students practicing critical need languages such as Arabic) and the Robert G. Fowler Jr., Esquire International Scholarship.

Potter studied colloquial Moroccan while furthering her study of standard Arabic. She also took a class on the Qur'an and Islam. This experience not only helped her develop her Arabic language skills and further her understanding of the culture, but it will also help advance her professional skills and expand her knowledge on what it means to be a global citizen.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Najir Johnson

Najir Johnson, a highly talented undergraduate and Early Entry student in the Department of Languages and Culture Studies, graduated in May 2020 with a double major in Spanish and German. He was also awarded an undergraduate Certificate of Translation in German. Johnson is very passionate about learning new languages, and he plans to learn many more languages in the future.

Johnson joined the Honors program while becoming an Early Entry student. When asked about his motivation to join the Honors program, he stated, “I chose honors because I wanted to challenge myself for my final semester in college.” In fall 2020, he began his M.A. in Spanish while continuing with a Graduate Certificate in German Translating.

However, prior to starting graduate school, Johnson wanted to challenge himself to translate two chapters of a book from Spanish into English. Interestingly, this project became his undergraduate Honors Thesis. Albeit struggling with the load in the early stages, Johnson completed the translation and further analyzed the cultural and linguistic aspects of translating the discourse of rare diseases.

His Honors thesis advisor, Dr. Mónica Rodríguez-Castro, wrote: “From the moment I started working with Johnson, I was highly impressed with his determination. He insisted that he did

not want to take the easy way out. I can attest that he did not take the easy route and challenged himself much beyond my expectations for an undergraduate student. I am very proud of his work ethic and perseverance. I am particularly proud of his project that required the acquisition of research and writing skills on his second language and his overall intellectual development over such a short span of time. Under new circumstances with COVID-19, he continued to work hard and demonstrated his commitment to academic excellence. I believe that Johnson is going to excel, and the best is yet to come for him.”

Najir Johnson is a passionate student and a role model for the new generation of graduate and Early Entry students. Johnson wants to continue to push himself to deepen his knowledge in the field of translation and possibly pursue a Ph.D. degree.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Graduate Student Award: April Vazquez



April Vazquez was awarded the Claudia Reynolds Graduate School Fellowship Award for 2020-2021. She is studying to receive an M.A. in Spanish. Our department extends congratulations to her and the example she is setting. Dean Tom Reynolds also congratulated the award recipient, saying:

“We are so proud of you, your academic accomplishments, as well as your dedication and commitment in attaining your advanced degrees. We also want to say ‘thank you’ to the generous donors who have the vision and foresight to give selflessly of their time and treasure in order to help our graduate students be successful. Your gifts also help support research that cannot be found anywhere else in the region and bring internationally recognized faculty to instruct our students on cutting edge issues.”

DAAD RISE Summer Internship: Melina Richardson

2019 DAAD RISE Summer Internship Program in Germany

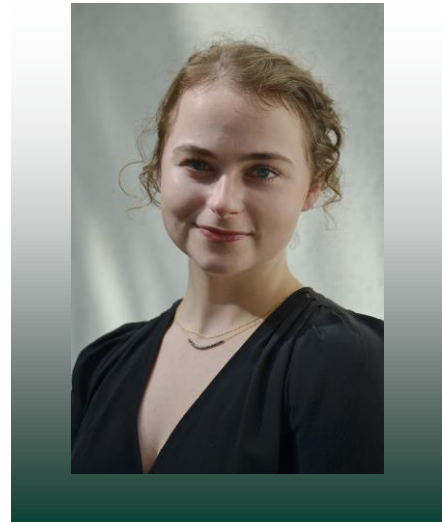
Melina Richardson is currently a major in Biology and minor in Japanese as well as Bioinformatics. She is currently on the Chancellor's List as a rising Senior. She is originally from Kansas City, MO and aspires to work for the CDC. Ms. Richardson was one of the authors of a science article published in 2019 called “RNA–DNA fibers and polygons with controlled immunorecognition activate RNAi, FRET and transcriptional regulation of NF- κ B in human cells”. During the summer of 2019, Ms. Richardson participated in the DAAD RISE program. Ms. Richardson's longtime Japanese Professor, Seirin Nagano, commented, “And, since I've known her, she's been a thoughtful, diligent, and active learner who enjoys finding and learning new things.”



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

Carly Bummel: Semi-finalist for the Fulbright

Carly Bummel graduated in 2019. She not only majored in German but also went the extra mile to earn a Languages and Culture Studies Business German, Undergraduate Certificate and another for Translating German-English. She is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Business for Management. Ms. Bummel notes that one of the first steps in her journey towards the German major started when she was studying Freshman year at Virginia Tech. “I was a member of an organization called Teach For Jamie, where I taught local elementary school students the German language through after school programs.” Her status as a semi-finalist for the Fulbright comes with odds of about a 36% acceptance rate. Ms. Bummel’s German professor, Angela Jakeway, commented that she was, “Very respectful, reliable and smart.”

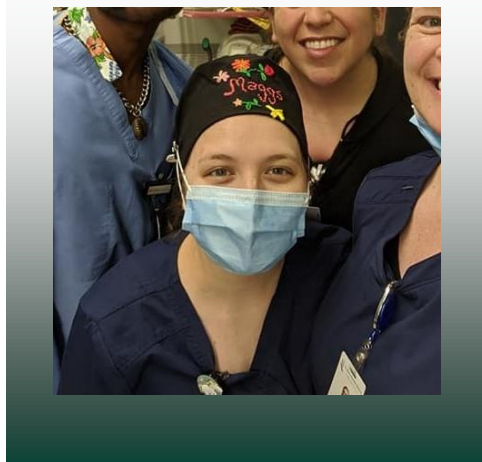


Margaret Johnson: Fulbright Alumna

German major Maggie Johnson, who was brought back from her Fulbright in India for the 2019-2020 AY, has applied to continue her Fulbright research with a Fellowship in 2021-22. In the meantime, she is working as an ER nurse in Coronavirus Hotspots. She just completed three months in New York and was heading to Miami in August.

“I think the most important thing for me on my Fulbright was realizing how much independence and self-starting you need to be capable of and that why it’s so important for your personal experience and passion to be embedded in your project. It is definitely what helped me most on the days where it felt like nothing was going right and I just wanted to give up on certain things all together. It is also what had driven me to apply for grants and other opportunities to go back and finish what COVID interrupted.”

We are very proud of our students for the lengths they have stretched to in their learning. The professors who had the joy of teaching them can take this as a sign that their teaching methods inspire students.



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

Samantha Roberts: Fulbright Recipient

German has been a part of Samantha Roberts' life for a long time. She was part of the World Languages Magnet Program in CMS and participated in the German immersion program beginning in First Grade. During her time as a student at UNC Charlotte, Roberts majored in German and studied abroad at the Goethe Institut in Freiburg, Germany funded by the prestigious German Language and Culture Foundation. She also received the Languages and Culture Studies Undergraduate Certificate in Translating German-English, as well as German Business. Roberts was extremely active in the German program and the German Club. She accompanied faculty on student excursions to Washington, D.C. to visit the Holocaust Museum and to New York to visit Ellis Island and the Tenement Museum in the steps of German immigrants. She graduated in 2015, but did not leave UNC Charlotte. She contributed to the department by serving as Administrative Support Associate in the main office after graduation, while completing her MAT in the College of Education. Samantha Roberts has earned her place as a Fulbright Scholar to teach English in Germany in 2021. Roberts commented, "The Fulbright's mission statement – 'The Fulbright Association is to advocate for the Fulbright Program and promote international education. Our vision is a world where international exchange is widely recognized as a force for peace'-- really speaks to me because I really have a love for both Germany and the United States and I really want to help strengthen the connection. I have been studying the German language and culture for most of my educational time and it is a passion of mine.

I also have a Graduate Certificate in Teaching, so I am thrilled to use my knowledge and passion in the English Teacher Assistantship program with the Fulbright in Hamburg, Germany."

She will teach English in Hamburg in northern Germany. Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau says about Roberts: "Samantha is an incredibly determined person. When she sets her mind to doing something, she will not shy away from very hard work, long hours and whatever it takes to get to that goal. When she studied abroad in Germany she was on a quest to see as many concentration camps as possible. With amazing courage, she rented a car in Berlin and traveled to Poland by herself to visit Auschwitz-Birkenau, which is not an easy journey to complete in the best of circumstances. I admire her ability to walk the walk instead of just talking the talk. I have worked with Samantha for many years, and appreciate her 'can-do' attitude and her ability to manage any crisis that might arise. I am so proud that she beat the odds of getting a Fulbright Scholarship. It is a huge honor and I could not be happier that she will be teaching English in my native northern Germany."



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

MA Fellow Feature: Matt Sykes

After graduating with an M.A. in Spanish (Translation track) from UNC Charlotte in 2014, Matt Sykes served as an M.A. Fellow in the department of languages and culture studies during the 2014-2015 academic year.

In July 2015, Sykes moved to Juana Díaz, Puerto Rico to work at Camp Caribe, a year-round Christian camp. There, he worked in a bilingual environment, primarily hosting U.S.-based mission teams, coordinating ministry and service projects at the camp and in the community.

Sykes married his wife, April, in October 2017 after weathering Hurricane María, which devastated much of the island. They were both heavily involved in

hurricane relief efforts in their community. April also served as a missionary in Puerto Rico, running an after-school center for kids in a low-income neighborhood with a high crime rate.

Matt and April left Puerto Rico in September 2019 with plans to continue missionary work in Nicaragua beginning in May 2020. However, during the fundraising process, the Covid-19 pandemic began, preventing them from traveling to Nicaragua. They are hopeful flights will resume soon, so they can begin the term on their new field. For more information, visit:

<https://gracem.org/matt-and-april-sykes-3/>



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS - UNC Charlotte Awards



CLAS Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Full-Time Lecturer Winner: Professor Angela Jakeway

The 2020 College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Full-time Faculty Member was awarded to a full-time faculty member who has made exceptional teaching contributions to the undergraduate classroom. Nominations occur in early spring, the nominees compile a packet of teaching materials, and a faculty committee makes the selection. Professor Angela Jakeway was one of three finalists and won the award in a virtual ceremony moderated by Dean Gutierrez. The department was thrilled and held a WebEx celebration after the ceremony to congratulate her.



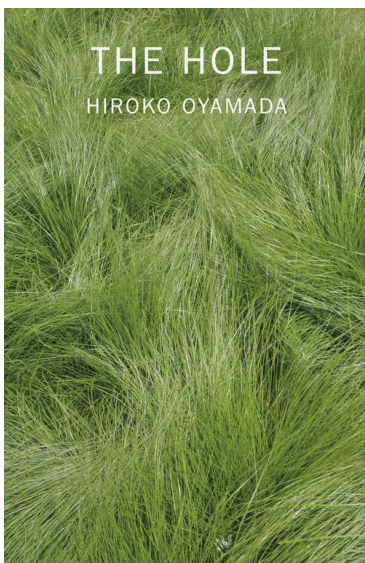
UNC Charlotte Award for Teaching Excellence Finalist: Professor Susana Cisneros

Professor Susana Cisneros creates academic experiences outside of the classroom that students often say are life changing. A senior lecturer in Spanish who is known for her enthusiasm and positive attitude, Cisneros seeks to engage students in learning both the language and the culture by exposing students to such places as a Latino supermarket, a quinceañera store, or an archaeological site in Argentina. "I challenge myself to present courses in a way that transforms learning a language from simply memorizing vocabulary and grammatical conjugation to an experience that engages students with the opportunity to learn how the culture embedded in the language provides them with deep critical thinking skills, a cultural frame of reference, tolerance and empathy," Cisneros says.



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS - Selected Publications

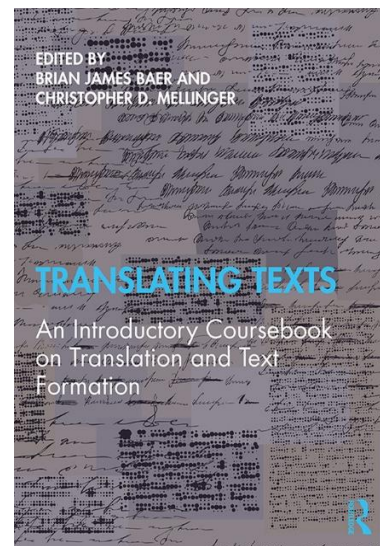
Dr. David Boyd Publishes a Translation of “The Hole”



In October, Dr. David Boyd published his translation of Hiroko Oyamada's award-winning novella *The Hole* (Ana) with New Directions. The book has been positively reviewed by a number of journals and magazines. For *4Columns*, Megan Milks wrote, “Pleasantly confounding, *The Hole*... sustains a smooth creep, its energies gathering to a force that teeters between dread and hysteria.” In her review for *The New York Times*, Hilary Leichter (author of *Temporary*) wrote, “Oyamada mines the horror in the predictability of metamorphosis — the inevitability of who we are, and who we are bound to become.” For *The Japan Times*, Iain Maloney wrote, “Oyamada is in complete control of her talent. *The Hole* is the work of a writer flexing their muscles and preparing for something truly profound.”

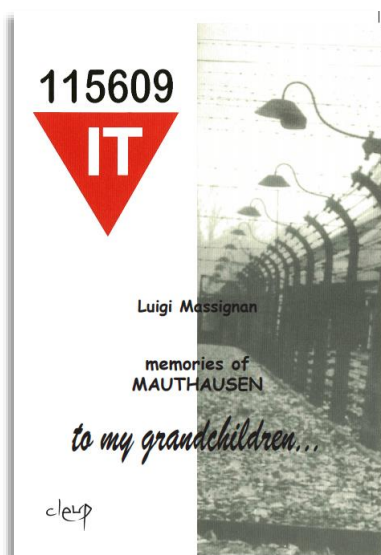
Dr. Chris Mellinger Publishes “Translating Texts: An Introductory Coursebook on Translation and Text Formation”

Dr. Chris Mellinger's recent co-edited textbook with Dr. Brian Baer (Kent State), *Translating Texts: An Introductory Coursebook on Translation and Text Formation* provides a step-by-step guide to textual analysis for beginning translators as well as those interested in professional multilingual communication. Covering a variety of text types – e.g., business letters, recipes, new reports, patient education materials, instruction manuals, and museum guides – in six languages (Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish), this book presents authentic, research-based materials to support translation among any of these languages. All the contributors are specialists in these various languages, and Dr. Jeff Killman contributed to the English text analyses and introductory comments to several chapters. The book was designed for both language-neutral and language-specific classroom settings so that it can be used in undergraduate and graduate-level programs in modern languages, translation, and language for specific purposes.



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS - Selected Publications

Dr. Daniela Cunico Dal Pra Publishes a Translation of “Memories of Mauthausen”



Dr. Daniela Cunico Dal Pra translated into English the book of memories by concentration camp survivor Dr. Luigi Massignan. He was a psychiatrist and Director of the Psychiatric Hospital of Padova for many years. A researcher of individual insanity in his clinical role, at the age of 25 he was also obliged to observe firsthand, and personally suffer as a prisoner, the madness of the Nazi Concentration Camp of Mauthausen during World War II.

This collection of memories is a direct and painful testimony of a historic event that must never be repeated. It is meant to serve as a warning for the younger generations to not forget. The moral compass in each one of us must reflect the values universally accepted by people around the world or disaster can strike. This story contains the eloquent, dramatic, tragic and sometimes poetic experience of a man put in extreme conditions.

The translation of this 1999 book for a broader circulation was the author's wish for a while. The family seized the opportunity to fulfill this desire to celebrate Dr. Gino Massignan's 100th birthday in October 2019.

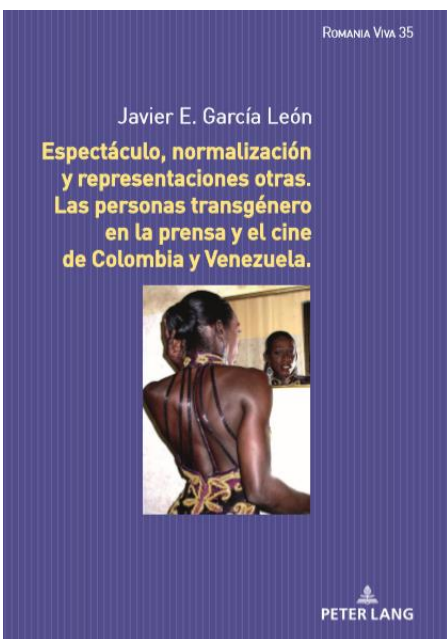
Dr. Anabel Aliaga-Buchenau Publishes a Translation of B. Traven's “Aslan Norval”

Dr. Anabel Aliaga-Buchenau published the translation of B. Traven's “Aslan Norval” with Farrar, Straus and Giroux in summer 2020. “Aslan Norval” was first published in 1960 as B. Traven's last novel and had never been published in English before. The novel was rediscovered after B. Traven's death in 1969 and brings new insights into the life and work of a literary genius who produced such classics as “The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.” Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau was in the process of translating another work by B. Traven, his travelogue “In the Land of Spring,” when B. Traven's step-daughter, Malú Montes de Oca Luján de Heyman, contacted her and requested the translation of “Aslan Norval”. Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau is now working on translating “Die Fackel des Fürsten” by Ret Marut, considered an alias of B. Traven.



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS - Selected Publications

Dr. Javier García León Publishes a Monograph on Representations of Transgender People

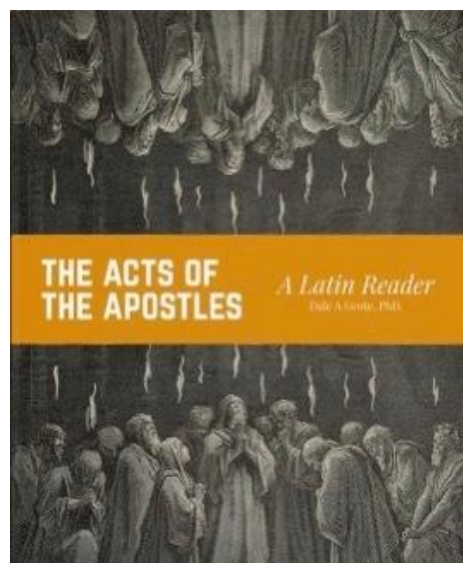


Transgender visibility is a pressing issue for scholars, activists, and media producers, especially in times when racial, sexual, and gender minorities continue to suffer extreme violence and exclusion in Latin America and around the world. In his book, Dr. Javier García León explores the representation of transgender people in Colombian and Venezuelan news media and film. With a methodology that combines Critical Discourse Analysis and Queer Linguistics with Trans Theory and Decolonial Cultural Studies of Representation, García León identifies the various stereotypes and discursive strategies employed by newspapers when portraying trans women. This publication was funded by *BETA Asociación de Jóvenes Doctores en Hispanismo* as part of the Félix Hangelini award.

Dr. Dale Grote Publishes “The Act of the Apostles: A Latin Reader”

Dr. Dale Grote, Associate Professor of Classics, published the second volume in his series on the Vulgate texts of the New Testament in 2020. This installment was an annotated study of the Acts of the Apostles, which includes a running vocabulary, extensive grammatical and cultural notes, several illustrations, a complete glossary, and brief bibliography for future study.

Dr. Grote’s first volume appeared in 2015, “The Vulgate of Mark with Synoptic Parallels.” He is currently finishing the third volume, which covers the first four of the uncontested Pauline epistles: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians and Philemon. This will be followed by a study of the remaining three uncontested letters: Philippians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans.



FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS – Community Service

Faculty Members Dr. LaMarca and Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau Contribute to PPE Needs in the Community

Faculty members Dr. Mary LaMarca and Dr. Anabel Aliaga-Buchenau got out their sewing machines at the beginning of the stay-at-home order and began producing masks. Dr. LaMarca has sewn more than 500 masks which she has contributed as part of a group called “Masks Made with Love,” organized by a local RN, Debra Johnson. The group donates masks to hospitals, health care workers, and area nursing homes.



Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau began making masks for family, friends and neighbors. To date she has made more than 300 masks. A friend who works at a clinic for patients without health insurance, “Care Ring,” inspired her to donate masks for their employees. Eventually, Dr. LaMarca and Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau coordinated and Dr. LaMarca also sewed for Care Ring workers and patients.

Dr. LaMarca says: “The work has helped me stay sane by being of service during this difficult time,” and Dr. Aliaga-Buchenau says, “It’s my therapy and makes me feel I can contribute in a tiny way.”

FACULTY RETIREMENTS

Dr. Ann González: Former Chair and Longtime Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies, Retires

After thirty years of teaching at UNC Charlotte, Dr. Ann González is set to retire at the end of December 2020. González, who received a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of South Carolina in 1983, joined the faculty of the Department of Languages and Culture Studies in 1990 as an advanced Assistant Professor, after leaving her position as a tenured Associate Professor in the School of Languages at the University of Costa Rica where she taught for eight years. She has held a number of administrative positions over her career including two stints as Coordinator of the Spanish Staff (1993-95 and 2001-03), Director of Graduate Studies (2004-05), Associate Chair (2008-12), Interim Chair of Philosophy (2012-14) and Chair of the Department of Languages and Culture Studies (2014-19).



She has been dedicated to promoting study abroad and served as Director of the Semester in Spain Program twice (Spring 1999 and again for the academic year 2005-06). In 2006 she was promoted to Full Professor, and then during the academic year 2010-11, she served as a Faculty Fellow in the Provost's Office.

She has written three books, one textbook, one co-edited book and 45 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters over the course of her career. Her initial research area centered on Central American narrative, but she developed a second area of interest in Latin American children's literature (the subject of her textbook). She developed a course on the subject that she taught a number of times at both the graduate and the undergraduate level. She also enjoys teaching translation classes online and may continue to do so even after retirement from time to time. Her goals for retirement include travelling (once the pandemic permits), catching up on all of the reading she has postponed over the years, and spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren.



We Wish our Colleagues who are Leaving the Department all the Best for the Future



Dr. Ann González



Dr. Shirley Wright



Li Cao



Haiyan Tian



Austin McComas



Mofang Ji



Dr. Ji'e Zheng

Managing Editor: Julia Geaney-Moore

Photographs courtesy of the Department of Languages and Culture Studies

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