

Spring 2021

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IN THIS ISSUE

1. A Word from the Chair
2. Special Events
12. Student Achievements
16. Alumni Achievements
20. Faculty Achievements
24. Farewells



UNC CHARLOTTE

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department of Languages & Culture Studies

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Michèle Bissière

Spring 2021

In spite of the ongoing pandemic, our department had many accomplishments in Spring 2021. First and foremost, we continued delivering our courses remotely, incorporating the technological expertise we have acquired in the past year. In lieu of study-abroad experiences, some of our students had a chance to participate in virtual classroom activities with their peers around the world. For the first time since December 2019, we were able to celebrate our students' accomplishments at in-person commencement ceremonies in May. Our department was well-represented, with 81 graduates and 6 Spanish MAs. Over 100 students graduated with a language minor, and we also awarded 79 undergraduate and nine graduate certificates. These are impressive numbers, especially given the challenges of the last year and a half.

Our faculty was very active as usual in research (several books, book chapters, and articles in Spring 2021), curriculum development, and service to the profession and the community. The department hosted several successful events again this spring that were funded by Chancellor's Diversity Challenge Grants and other internal/external grants: a Heritage Language Learning Symposium, a workshop on Japanese for the Professions, and a presentation on "Your Name [Japanese animated film] and the Religion of Anime." The department held its annual Translation Day celebration, and many faculty members were involved in the annual SEACS (Southeastern Association of Cultural Studies) Conference as organizers and/or participants. We also hosted a Fulbright Visiting Scholar from Poland, Dr. Pawel Korpai, who did collaborative research with Dr. Chris Mellinger.

Our faculty and students have continued to receive grants, scholarships, prizes, and honors for their outstanding contributions. The rest of this issue will provide more details on some of these highlights.

I wish everyone a restful and productive summer and look forward to seeing you in person in August.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Women + Girls Research Alliance

The 2021 Women + Girls Research Alliance research summit took place on March 10. The theme of this biannual summit was “Recovery and Discovery: Women & Girls in a Dual Pandemic.” This session was informative and helpful in framing the discussion about what is happening to the Spanish speaking population in North Carolina and nationwide. Moreover, it helped to inform our call-to-action to create a positive and equitable future for Spanish-speaking women and girls in the Charlotte metropolitan area.

Susana Cisneros, Senior Lecturer of Spanish in the Languages and Culture Studies Department moderated a summit session via Zoom. She commented that “working together across disciplines can enhance the experience of seeing the community through different perspectives.” Maria Mahaffey, Senior Lecturer and Coordinator of Intermediate Spanish, added, “Insightful panelists who discussed the impact of COVID-19 on the local and national Spanish-Speaking diaspora. Enlightening, enriching and wonderfully conducted. Bravo!”



Duke Japanese Speech Contest

The Japanese Studies program received exciting news on April 12. Ms. Tazreean Ahmed (Level 1) won 1st place for the level 1 category of the 2021 Duke Japanese Speech Contest. Due to the pandemic, four judges evaluated the candidates' speech videos and interview videos with a Japanese instructor at Duke University. Criteria for scoring included Topic/Organization, Depth/Message/Originality, Pronunciation & Intonation, Delivery & Fluency, and Overall Impression.

Ms. Ahmed's speech encouraged people to learn foreign languages in order to broaden their perspectives. She was raised in a family where both Bengali and English were used, and she knew that the world was bigger than what she had imagined in her young age. Therefore, she has studied French, Korean, and Spanish since middle school, and now she is learning Japanese at UNC Charlotte. Her speech also mentioned that language represents its culture. For example, Japanese language has “Keigo,” or honorific language, which showcases Japanese people's respect for elderly people and those more experienced in society. The Japanese Studies program at UNC Charlotte hopes that many of our students hear Ms. Ahmed's message and continue to study Japanese to broaden their perspectives and become global citizens.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Heritage Language Learning Workshop

Español

La última semana de febrero de 2021, se llevó a cabo el simposio Heritage Language Learning, organizado por el Dr. García León y la Dra. Fernández Sánchez y financiado con fondos de UNC Charlotte Chancellor's Diversity Grant y de CLAS Alumni Council Fall Faculty Grant. Durante los dos días del simposio, la Dra. Irma Alarcón (Wake Forest University) y la Dra. Lina Reznicek-Parrado (University of Denver, Colorado) presentaron sus investigaciones en el campo de la enseñanza del español como lengua heredada. En las sesiones diurnas, la Dr. Reznicek-Parrado lideró dos talleres prácticos en los que se presentaron recursos pedagógicos con los que abordar la enseñanza del español a la comunidad hispanohablantes.

El simposio contó con la participación de más de 150 estudiantes, educadores y administradores de los Estados Unidos (K-12 y universitarios) así como de distintos puntos de Latinoamérica y Canadá. Cuatro organizaciones estudiantiles Latinx (HCAP, LASO, HLXU, y LHS) de UNCCharlotte tuvieron un papel destacado en el mismo. Lideraron la última sesión del simposio en la que los estudiantes latinx, vinculados con el campus, compartieron sus experiencias y percepciones como hablantes y/o estudiantes de español.

El evento contribuyó a mejorar las prácticas educativas en el campo de la enseñanza del español como lengua de herencia al conectar a investigadores, profesores de lenguas y estudiantes en UNC Charlotte, Carolina del Norte y el extranjero.

(See the following page for the English Translation ->>>)

Escobar & Potowski (2015)

Generation	Possible definition	Typical linguistic profile
First (0.5)	5 years or less in the U.S.	Native Spanish speaker English = new/second language
First (1.0)	Immigrant arriving at more	Spanish speaker English = new/second language depending on length of time in the U.S.
First (1.5)	Immigrant arriving between 6 and 11 years old	Native Spanish speaker English as a new/second language depending on length of time in the U.S.
Second (2.0)	Immigrant arriving before U.S. born whose parents	depends, strong ability English = stronger ability
Third (3.0)	U.S. born, one or two parents are 2.0	Spanish = depends, weak ability English = stronger ability
Third (3:1)	U.S. born	Spanish = depends, weak ability English = stronger ability
Third (3:2)	U.S. born, both parents 2.0	English = Strongest language

SPECIAL EVENTS

Heritage Language Learning Workshop (continued)



English

During the last week of February, Dr. García León and Dr. Fernández Sánchez organized the Heritage Language Learning Symposium. The event was sponsored by the UNC Charlotte Chancellor's Diversity Grant and the CLAS Alumni Council Fall Faculty Grant. During the two-day event, Dr. Irma Alarcón (Wake Forest University) and Dr. Lina Reznicek-Parrado (University of Denver, Colorado) shared their research projects on Spanish as a heritage language with the audience. In the afternoon sessions, Dr. Reznicek-Parrado also facilitated two workshops whose objectives were to provide pedagogical resources for teaching Spanish to the Latinx community.

More than 150 students, educators, and administrators from the USA (K12-University level), Latin America, and Canada attended the Symposium. Four UNC Charlotte Latinx student organizations (HCAP, LASO, HLXU, and LHS) also actively participated in the event. They co-organized the last session of the symposium where Latinx students shared their needs and perceptions as Spanish speakers and learners.

The event helped strengthen bilingual/heritage language education practices by connecting scholars, language instructors, and students at UNC Charlotte, North Carolina and abroad.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Japanese For Professions: Virtual Seminar



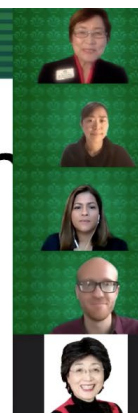
A virtual seminar, “Japanese for Professions,” was held via video call on February 13. The Japanese Studies Program hosted this 2.5 hour webinar focused on Japanese for professions, that is, Japanese business, business Japanese and translation. Four prominent professors, Dr. Yoshiko Saito-Abbott, Dr. Motoko Tabuse, Dr. Yuki Matsui, and Professor Tomoko Takami were invited as guest speakers. These four professors have been engaged in the field of Japanese for professions for numerous years. The goals of this seminar were to train instructors in Japanese for the professions to instruct students to: 1. be culturally fluent, 2. apply their linguistic knowledge to professional settings, and 3. gain employment using their Japanese language ability and cultural fluency.

In total 150 participants attended the seminar from all over the United States and beyond. Participants were from places such as Alaska, Florida, and Hawaii, and Japan, Canada and Argentina. The majority of the participants work as Japanese professors or instructors. Some of the participants work at Japanese companies, such as the Japan Foundation from which we received support funding for this seminar. The Association of Asian Studies also provided funding for this event. According to the outcomes of the poll taken at the end of the seminar, 98% of the participants were satisfied with this seminar.

Japanese for Profession

February 13th, 2021

Saturday 2:00pm - 4:30pm US EST



SPECIAL EVENT

International Translation Day goes Virtual!

Every year the Department of Languages and Culture Studies comes together as a community and invites all UNC Charlotte members to join us in celebrating languages across the world. As a long-standing tradition, this event sparks interest and appreciation of our many cultures and our different ways of expressing thoughts. This year the International Translation Day event took place via video call for the first time. It was held at 10 a.m. on March 5. Many students as well as faculty and staff attended. It opened with a selection of multilingual music while attendees were joining the call. What followed was a diverse set of readings of original poems, chapter translations and even a children's book excerpt. Pieces featured were in English as well as French, Japanese, Tang, Spanish and Polish. The content and presentations were so varied that there was never a dull moment for the audience members.



Jeenus Mahkani: Winner of the Untranslatable Contest



As part of the Translation Day we conducted a contest, asking participants to invent a word which can stand up as a translation for an untranslatable word. This year's word came from Japanese. "Yoko Meshi" refers to the struggle and difficulty processing and speaking a new language. Its literal translation, "a meal eaten sideways", also alludes to the differences between Western horizontal writing and Japanese vertical writing.

The contest winner, Jeenus Mahkani, said, "My invented word, 'Lingestion', attempts to encompass both interpretations by uniting the language aspect of this term, by using the adjective 'lingual' from Latin *lingua* 'tongue', in combination with the ending of the word 'digestion' referring to the processing of food in the body. Overall, I found this contest to be a very fun and creative exercise that allowed me to learn a little bit more about Japanese culture. I hope this word is useful to you all, and maybe we can make it catch on. Happy translating!"

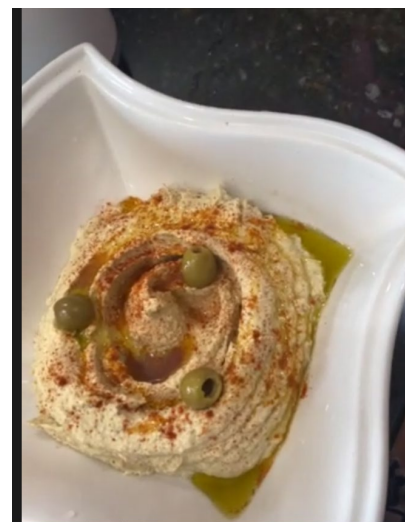
SPECIAL EVENTS

Middle Eastern Cooking on Zoom



On February 25, Ms. Amna Naeem, Ms. Sida Mohamed, and Mr. Ayser Jama, the President, Vice President, and Treasurer of the Arabic Club respectively, led an online “Cook With Us” event for more than 15 UNC Charlotte students and faculty. The students shared how to cook homemade Falafel and Hummus. The event represented the first among other initiatives to promote Arabic language and culture throughout the UNC Charlotte community.

Students, faculty, and staff attended the Cook With Us event during which Mr. Jama shared a PowerPoint to show the audience the ingredients required for the two dishes. This was followed by Ms. Mohamed and Ms. Naeem cooking live from their kitchen, while answering audience members’ questions on the spot. The presenters explained that the event presented an easy, healthy and fast way of preparing very popular middle eastern dishes at an affordable cost, and that this can be considered an initial step toward more cooking events in the future. The audience noted that the event was enjoyable and said they are looking forward to more similar cooking events in the future.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Japanese Speech Video Contest

The Japanese Studies program found a way to maintain our traditional event for Spring semester, the annual Japanese speech contest. Instead of a live speech contest, the program accepted video entries for the internal speech contest. Another change the program made for this event was the length of the speech entry. The length was increased in order to align with the Duke University Japanese Speech Contest, a regional contest. The program called this event the 2021 Internal Japanese Speech Video Contest.

In the end, there were a total of 16 entries: 6 entries for level 1 (2-3 minutes long, JAPN 1202 and 2201), 8 entries for level 2 (3-4 minutes long, JAPN 2202 and 3201), and 2 entries for level 3 (4-5 minutes long, JAPN 3202 and above). The video viewing started at 2:30 pm on Friday, February 26, via a Zoom meeting, and the Japanese faculty members evaluated the entries based on content, language pronunciation and intonation, delivery and fluency, and overall impression. The winners were Ms. Tazreean Ahmed (Level 1), Mr. Graham Hall (Level 2), and Mr. Churk Kei Tai (Level 3).



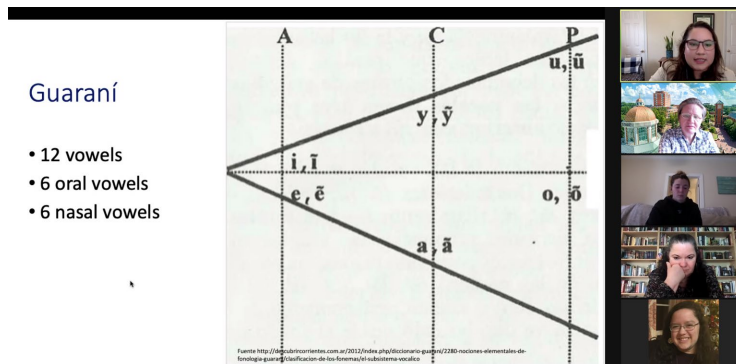
The speech contest is one of the traditional events in the Japanese program where students use Japanese to express their opinions, share their interests with the audience, and explain about themselves. It is a challenging task. However, when the students are able to deliver their messages as a result of solid preparation including writing a speech draft, revising it, and practicing the speech until they memorize it, it is very rewarding. Despite the hardships due to the pandemic, the Japanese faculty members were very happy to witness students' hard work and their academic progress. As usual, the speech topics were unique and diverse. We are all proud of the students who challenged themselves by entering their speech videos this year!



SPECIAL EVENTS

SEACS Conference

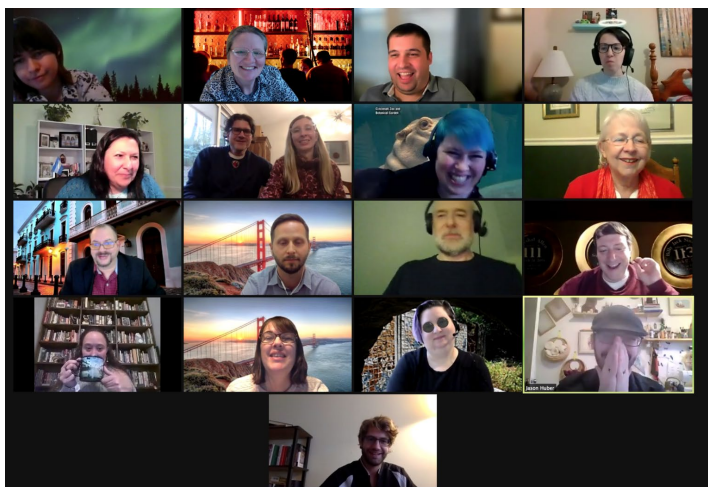
The Southeastern Association of Cultural Studies, SEACS (www.theseacs.org), is an organization dedicated to connecting and learning from colleagues devoted to scholarship in Cultural Studies, Literatures, World Languages, Linguistics, and Pedagogy. As a regional organization with an international scope, SEACS holds annual meetings in the southeast region of the U.S. and draws participants from the area and beyond. SEACS is a regional, non-profit organization that promotes scholarly exploration in a collegial spirit. This organization is dedicated to maintaining a supportive community of educators, scholars, and graduate students as well as to providing early professionalization opportunities for advanced undergraduate students.



This year the Department of Languages and Culture Studies at UNC Charlotte hosted SEACS as a virtual conference. This allowed many people to join from places as far away as Germany, Canada and Ecuador. Panels covered a broad range of topics from pedagogy, literature, film, linguistics, study abroad in a pandemic, to Latinx studies, language and epistemology.

A team of UNC Charlotte faculty and student volunteers worked together as Zoom room hosts and technical support. Many faculty members supported the program by chairing panels. A virtual break room remained open throughout the conference for networking and discussion (and the occasional visit of a pet). We even had a well attended Happy Hour.

(Continued on next page >>>)



SPECIAL EVENTS

SEACS (continued)

The SEACS program culminated in the Keynote Address of Annette Sanouke Clapsaddle. She is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and resides in Qualla, N.C. Her debut novel, *Even As We Breathe*, was released by the University Press of Kentucky in 2020. It was named to NPR's Best Books of 2020 and Bookriot's Best of 2020. Her first novel manuscript, *Going to Water*, is the winner of the Morning Star Award for Creative Writing from the Native American Literature Symposium (2012). Clapsaddle's work has appeared in *Yes! Magazine*, *Lit Hub*, *Smoky Mountain Living Magazine*, *South Writ Large* and *The Atlantic*. Audience members said that her reading and presentation sent chills down their spines, while inspiring many questions.



The conference generated ideas and has led to submissions to *Convergences*, SEACS's peer-reviewed journal. Although the conference took place entirely online, it was good to see the faces of the community. UNC Charlotte will host SEACS in 2022, hopefully in a hybrid format, to allow for in-person interaction but also to invite participants from far away. We might even be in the recently opened UNC Charlotte Marriott Hotel & Conference Center on campus. See you next year!



SPECIAL EVENTS

Picks & Flicks: UNC Charlotte Student Film Festival

Every year the Film Studies students put on a Film Festival to showcase their work. This year's showcase was entitled: Picks & Flicks. The following were the winners of Picks & Flicks: the 2021 UNC Charlotte Student Film Festival. Each of these students received a \$10 cash prize along with a laurel:



- **Best Documentary**
 - *Caving: Understanding the Underground* by Maria Rotunda
- **Best Narrative**
 - *The Nomad* by Nicolas Lemaster
- **Best Music Video**
 - *Sorry Seems to be the Hardest Word* by Christopher Grissett
- **Best Animation**
 - *To The Sea* by Benjamin Moore
- **Best Experimental Film**
 - *Shift: A Life in Isolation* by Hameed Hasawi

As winner of both Best Film (\$25) and the Audience Award (\$25), Lemaster's film was awarded an additional \$50 dollars.

- **Best Film**
 - *The Nomad* by Nicolas Lemaster
- **Audience Award**
 - *The Nomad* by Nicolas Lemaster

Overall the event was a great night of food-for-thought. The audience participated not just by watching the films, but also by asking questions and answering trivia polls. The five winners of the trivia games each received \$5 dollar Starbuck gift cards. We look forward to next year.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Lama Khachab

Lama Khachab is a student majoring in International Studies and Political Science, with an Arabic Studies minor. She is excited to spend the next Fall 2021 semester in Lebanon using the Robert J. Fowler Scholarship funds to join Khaddit Beirut as an intern. Khaddit Beirut is an organization which has a network of 150+ experts implementing a community-driven roadmap for recovery following last year's explosion in Beirut. This internship will provide Ms. Lama with practical experience on community engagement, identification of social deficits, and implementation or remedial measures. This type of professional enrichment will have a profound effect on Ms. Khachab's career and hopefully in providing important means of social change.



Like many students, Ms. Khachab thought that studying abroad was too expensive, that was until she realized how many scholarship opportunities are out there. This experience will not only help her develop her Arabic skills and further her understanding of the culture, but it will also help advance Ms. Lama's professional skills and expand her knowledge on what it means to be a global citizen.

Madison Snyder

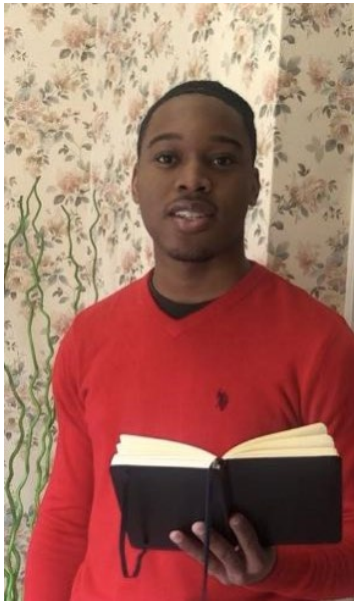
Madison Snyder is a sophomore Levine Scholar majoring in Biology and Spanish with a minor in Public Health. She and Amogh Bandekar applied to the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGI U) with the goal of producing a Commitment to Action that will create a positive impact in the community of Charlotte. While creating these Commitments to Action, CGI U Participants will have access to support in terms of leadership development training, mentorship, skills training, and partnership building.



Madison and Amogh's project focuses on developing a semester-long course for UNC Charlotte Students trying to raise students from diverse backgrounds' awareness to health disparities in under-representative groups and come up with innovative ways to help solve them. At the end of the semester, the students will take what they learn and participate in a public health hackathon where they will develop solutions for at-risk populations in Charlotte. They will be presented with the opportunity to participate in carrying out the solution with public health officials and create long-lasting interventions. LEADS will offer a one-credit hour class, Addressing Health Disparities Through Innovative Thinking (CLAS 3000-004), during the Fall 2021 semester for CLAS students interested in contributing to this initiative.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Jordane Williams



Jordane Williams has always loved poetry. As a native English speaker, he writes his poems in English, so he was surprised when his Intermediate Spanish professor Susana Cisneros, asked him to write a poem in Spanish. The poem was to be written and performed for a Valentine's Day event, "La Tertulia: El amor en tiempos de COVID," organized by the Latin American Coalition organization in Charlotte. The event was to serve as a Valentine's day special, centering around the themes of love, friendship, grief, and healing, themes that had assumed greater meaning in the context of a global pandemic.

The instructions that the organization provided for the recording stipulated that the video be taken from four different angles. Mr. Williams explains the process of creating the poetry video: "With all the devices we needed, my mother and I set up a makeshift film studio, with two smartphones held by tripods that we found around the house and one perched against a rigid object. We took multiple takes, deleting more than few videos that had gone awry. After a painstaking recording process—including having to scrap a full set of videos because we had recorded them in portrait orientation as opposed to landscape—we finally obtained an agreeable end product."

The hard work paid off because Mr. Williams was recognized for his outstanding poem. He concluded that the experience was worth his while; "It really challenged me, as I was pushed outside of my comfort zone and prompted to adapt my intermediate knowledge of Spanish into poetry. Now, I feel capable of writing a poem in Spanish whenever I want. Thank you Profesora Cisneros for the push! And thank you to the Latin American Coalition for having organized the wonderful event!"

Shaneice Board

Shaneice Board is an International Studies/Computer Science Major and Chinese Minor who plans to study abroad in Thailand, in a dream that is about to come true. Ms. Board was recently awarded a scholarship through the Fund for Education Abroad. With this funding Ms. Board will be able to study abroad through the Education Abroad Network's Semester in Thailand program in Fall 2021.

The mission of the Fund for Education Abroad (FEA) is "to provide scholarships and ongoing support to students who are underrepresented among the U.S. study abroad population. FEA makes life-changing, international experiences accessible to all by supporting students of color, community college, and first-generation college students before, during, and after they participate in education abroad programs."

The Department of Languages and Culture Studies is proud of Shaneice Board for finding a way to go out into the world and learn about not only other languages, but other cultures. We hope that she inspires more students of Chinese and all languages to keep learning and keep exploring.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Will Patten, Recipient of the Critical Language Scholarship

Will Patten came across the Critical Language Scholarship Program provided by the United States Department of State whilst searching for summer opportunities. This program provides summer study abroad opportunities for students looking to achieve mastery in foreign languages that are critical to developing and maintaining modern international business and relations. Having studied Mandarin in a classroom consistently since middle school, Mr. Patten felt that this language immersion opportunity was the big leap that he needed to take his proficiency to the next level.

Mr. Patten will be doing an online summer language program with China's Northeast Normal University in Changchun of Jilin Province. He is extremely grateful for the prestigious opportunity offered by the American Councils for International Education and will fully take advantage of the world-class language education.

Mr. Patten said, "I would also like to show my gratitude for my Chinese Professors who both make tremendous efforts to meet the needs and curiosities of all of their students and teach passionately and engagingly about China's rich culture. Dr. Yongling Gorke initially urged me to seek out study abroad opportunities, supported me throughout my application process, and has provided introductions to potential opportunities for after graduation. Professor Tianran Liu greatly improved my foundation of the Chinese language during my first year at UNC Charlotte by effortlessly explaining the language's complexities and continuously supports my endeavors."



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Megan Bird

Megan Bird, a double major in Spanish and Political Science, was awarded a \$1,500 Bonnie E. Cone Phi Kappa Phi scholarship to fund her graduate studies. Ms. Bird is a member of the UNC Charlotte chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, the oldest and most selective of honor societies. She served for three years as news editor for the *Niner Times*.

Megan Bird hopes to attend the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School as a Levy Scholar, where she would be able to study criminal defense and labor law. Ultimately, she wants to work in public policy.



Razaan Abnowf

Razaan Abnowf is a second-year student majoring in Economics and International Studies with Arabic and Spanish minors. She is honored to be awarded the Odyssean Scholarship of \$10,000 from the Office of Education Abroad to attend her education abroad program in Meknes, Morocco in Spring 2022. Ms. Abnowf was also selected as one of five awardees of the Faculty Legacy Scholarship for the academic year 2021-2022 and awarded \$500.

While attending her program, Ms. Abnowf will complete courses in Arabic language, culture and international relations. Her Arabic minor instructor and coordinator wrote about her, “Ms. Abnowf brings to her work a commitment to academic excellence and achievement, a willingness to work collaboratively with others, and a strong desire for quality outcomes.” Ms. Abnowf looks forward to going to Morocco, an Arab country, and exploring a new dialect different from her family's and the one she learns in class: Sudanese and the modern standard.



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

Susan L. Cox

Susan Cox graduated in 2003 from UNC Charlotte with a bachelor's degree in Spanish and a minor in Communications Mass-Media. She also received a Certification in Business Spanish with Professor Michael Doyle. While at UNC Charlotte Ms. Cox's most memorable experience was the Study Abroad program in Costa Rica, where immersion in another language and culture enhanced what she had learned in class.

After graduation from UNC Charlotte, she moved to Tallahassee, Fla. and started a family (she has a 17-year-old and 13-year-old twins) before resuming her Spanish studies. She graduated in Spring 2021 with a Master's in Spanish Linguistics and will join the Doctoral Program at FSU in the Fall.

Ms. Cox says, "The part of Spanish Linguistics that I find most intriguing is Phonology/Phonetics, specifically acoustics and sound analyses using spectrograms and oscillograms. I have also enjoyed classes such as SLA, Heritage Language Acquisition, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics and Codeswitching."

She loves teaching students as well. She has been a graduate teaching assistant for two years. She has taught both first and second level elementary Spanish at FSU, which has been highly challenging over the last year due to COVID. Taking all precautions as outlined by the CDC, Ms. Cox taught over Zoom and live in the classroom. Her teaching experience also includes younger children with special needs, ranging in age from elementary to middle and high school. Representing the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics, she presented at a STEM fair at a local middle school. Ms. Cox spoke to the children about vocal cord vibrations and sound waves.

"My current project is a Self-Paced Reading experiment on the website FindingFive," Ms. Cox says. "Due to COVID, all in-person research had to be shut down, temporarily. This forced us to be creative with our data collection methods. My experiment looks at Spanish learners' processing and how word order and context may either facilitate or inhibit comprehension. Once in-person research resumes, I will be able to convert this study to an eye-tracking study."

Ms. Cox's strengths are her resilience as well as perseverance. For the doctorate program at FSU, her goals are to broaden her own linguistic knowledge, and she is ambitious and determined to make ample contributions to the field. "I am preparing myself for a career in academia and keeping my options open to new opportunities in the future," Ms. Cox concluded.



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

Kellie Giordano

French major Kellie Giordano (class of 2021) will be attending The Ohio State University to start working towards her Ph.D. in French and Francophone Studies beginning in August 2021. Since the early days of her undergraduate career, Ms. Giordano knew that she wanted to pursue a doctoral degree—though the field in which she would do so did not reveal itself until recently. After defending an honors thesis in French under the supervision of Dr. Allison Stedman in Fall 2020, entitled “Romanticizing Consumption: Luxury Goods Portrayed in Stendhal’s *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830),” she felt compelled to further pursue this study at the graduate level and to answer new questions that arose throughout this original research. In her French thesis, she argues that the overarching theme of consumption in Stendhal’s novel acted not only as a vehicle for social mobility, but also for romantic self-expression. As such, luxury commodities, and fashion specifically, served as external signifiers of wealth that characters use to arduously climb up the social ladder of Restoration society.

Alongside her French major, Ms. Giordano spent much of her time at UNC Charlotte as a steadfast history student, completing a double-major and a second honors thesis in history. She defended her history thesis in Spring 2020 under the supervision of Dr. Christine Haynes, entitled “Restoring the French Café: Coffee, Class, and Culture during the Bourbon Restoration, 1815-1830.” Here, she asserts that during the Bourbon Restoration, both Parisian and provincial cafés served as sites for social mixing of classes, occupations, and nationalities that regenerated French consumer culture in the wake of Napoleon. To make her experience in both programs well-rounded, she also completed a minor in Francophone Studies.

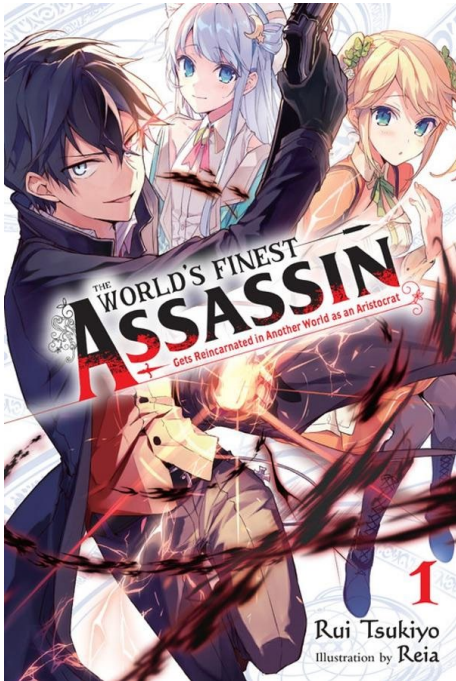
At OSU, she plans to continue her study of the Bourbon Restoration and romantic French literature, as well as focus further on fashion theory, consumer society, and women and gender studies. In addition to writing a doctoral dissertation that tentatively will focus on the combination of the above topics, she will also be teaching elementary and intermediate French to undergraduates, as well as begin learning Italian at OSU as a part of her fellowship.

Ms. Giordano remains grateful to and inspired by the French faculty at UNC Charlotte, with whom she has had the pleasure to work over the years, as well as her mentors and professors in UNC Charlotte’s History Department. In particular, she is indebted to her thesis advisors, Drs. Allison Stedman (French) and Christine Haynes (History), who have helped her to shepherd each thesis into fruition. They both provided her with invaluable support, stimulating feedback, and a great deal of patience while she learned and grew as both a writer and a scholar. She seeks to make us all proud in the next steps of her academic career at Ohio State University!



ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Luke Hutton: Japanese Light Novel Translation



Luke Hutton graduated from UNC Charlotte with a B.A. in Japanese in December 2019. He published his first light novel translation in December 2020. Hutton's translation of Rui Tsukiyo's *The World's Finest Assassin Gets Reincarnated in Another World as an Aristocrat* (vol.1) is published by Yen Press.

Hutton studied abroad during the 2018-19 academic year at Doshisha University, and he passed the N2 Japanese Language Proficiency Test in December 2018. Following this, he attended Dr. Boyd's Practicum in Translation in the Fall of 2019, where he further developed his translation skills. Hutton has already translated several other light novels for Yen Press, which will be published in 2021 and beyond.

Riley Jones

When Susana Cisneros assigned a student to work with José Alvarez from Prospera, one of the Span 4410 Professional Internship partners in 2019, she had no idea what would come out of it. Riley Jones seemed like a good fit to work with Prospera based on his language skills; his second major was business, and he had a personal interest in supporting Hispanic entrepreneurship.

During his professional internship, Mr. Jones not only learned how Prospera works but how he could continue working along with them beyond his class requirements. As a Levine Scholar, he received a grant to create a bilingual technology resource center at Prospera's office. This resource center will streamline the process of assisting Hispanic entrepreneurs with starting their own businesses. In the past, they had to go to the library for consulting, and there was no centralized location to find all the resources they need.

We are so happy to learn that there was a tangible impact on the community and the student's life which came of this internship. This is an innovative way for him to use his Levine grant, to fund a technology resource center at the non-profit Prospera, where clients starting businesses may use bookkeeping and tax filing software free of charge.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS

Marlen Gomez Avelar



After graduating from UNC Charlotte in 2018, Marlen Gomez Avelar followed her passion for education and unknown cultures to the most rural province in South Korea by accepting a native English teaching position with Jeollanamdo Language Program.

Ms. Gomez Avelar had a challenging yet fulfilling experience abroad. During her second year, South Korea first began to have COVID-19 cases. The Korean government began to closely monitor and trace the whereabouts of its residents by sending constant alerts via text messages. The messages would include the daily number of people infected in her area and where those people traveled before they tested positive. At the same time, instead of having a shortage of toilet paper like in the US, there was a shortage of face masks. Ms. Gomez Avelar worked from home for about three months. She commented that, "Planning and researching about what career I wanted after teaching abroad provided me with a distraction and helped me look beyond some of the difficulties of going through the global pandemic by myself. One accomplishment that I'm proud of is making it as a finalist for the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship. With the help of professor Susana Cisneros, Dr. Sandra Watts from the Spanish department, and UNC Charlotte's Career Center, I was selected to participate in the final stage of the selection process. This was a valuable experience, and it reinforced my commitment to pursue a graduate degree."



In August, Ms. Gomez Avelar will return to the U.S. to pursue a Master's degree. She has been accepted to universities such as American University School of International Affairs, the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service. She has chosen to attend The Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. "I'm confident my undergraduate experience at UNC Charlotte provided me with the foundation to tackle graduate school." She adds that the professors, faculty, and leadership opportunities she encountered as a UNC Charlotte student gave her the confidence to work in another country and to strive for world citizenship in everything she does. Ms. Gomez Avelar's goal after completing her Master's degree is to join the Department of State as a foreign service officer. "I hope to be a positive role model for the Latino community and support the next group of aspiring leaders."

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Ten Faculty Members were Reappointed, Tenured, or Promoted in 2020-21

Congratulations to the following faculty members, who were re-appointed, tenured, or promoted in 2021: **Dr. David Boyd** was re-appointed as Assistant Professor of Japanese; **Enika Banerjee**, **Will Davis**, and **Lorena Delgadillo** were re-appointed as Lecturer of Japanese, Film Studies, and Spanish, respectively. **Dr. Mary LaMarca** and **Aura Lawson-Alonso** were promoted to Senior Lecturer of French and Spanish; **Dr. Olga Padilla-Falto** was promoted to Teaching Professor of Spanish; **Dr. David Dalton** and **Dr. Chris Mellinger** received tenure and were promoted to Associate Professor of Spanish; **Dr. Fumie Kato** was promoted to Professor of Japanese.



Dr. Javier García León

The Ackland Art Museum in collaboration with the Film Studies Programs in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at UNC-Chapel Hill invited Dr. Javier García León as a guest speaker for its Queer Cinema Series. Dr. García León talked about transgender representation in Latin America and commented on the Chilean film *A Fantastic Woman* (2017). The film was streamed on April 27 and followed by a live panel discussion where Dr. Javier García León (UNC Charlotte) in conversation with Dr. Martin L. Johnson (UNC-Chapel Hill) discussed how we can locate this film within a history of queer and trans cinema in South America and within the increasing visibility of trans stories globally. See the link for more information

<https://events.ackland.org/event/aff0427721/>



Dr. Concepción Godev

Dr. Concepción Godev received the Outstanding Leadership Award from the UNC Charlotte Graduate School for her leadership as Graduate Council Chair (2019-2021). Dean Tom Reynolds presented the award on May 4, 2021.

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Michael Doyle



UNC Charlotte Professor of Spanish Michael Doyle has received the top international award of the Hispanic honor society Sigma Delta Pi, with his induction into the Order of Don Quijote. Each year, the organization chooses no more than three people worldwide for the honor.

“This has been a great surprise, a wonderful moment in my career, and so very humbling,” Doyle said. “For Hispanists, this honor is like the Cooperstown Baseball Hall of Fame or the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The focus for my selection is on my contributions in scholarship, which I particularly appreciate. I’m so very grateful to my past professors, mentors, and supporters over the years.”

The award recognizes exceptional and meritorious service in Hispanic scholarship, the teaching of Spanish, and the promotion of good relations between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking countries. Doyle and Joan Brown of The University Delaware each received the award in a virtual presentation earlier in May. Doyle’s work has significantly advanced Hispanic scholarship, particularly in translation studies and in shaping the field of business Spanish throughout the U.S.



“He teaches courses and conducts research in a range of areas, including Spanish for business and international trade, translating and translation studies, language for specific purposes, and 20th century Spanish literature, among others,” said Lucy F. Lee, Sigma Delta Pi national president. “Dr. Doyle’s publication record is extensive, with dozens of articles and interviews in leading journals, book chapters, a literary translation and a monographic volume, as well as several textbooks.”

Doyle is a highly productive researcher, with:

- **99** publications including textbooks, book chapters, translations, digital materials, workbooks, a monographic volume, articles, essays, a case study with over **690** downloads, interviews, video scripts, and reviews
- **70** conference presentations
- **72** invited lectures, panels, and keynote addresses
- **65** workshops
- **45** different classes in Spanish and translation studies



Read more at: <https://exchange.uncc.edu/professor-of-spanish-michael-doyle-earns-honor-societys-highest-accolade-2/>

*Words: Lynn Roberson, College Communications Director |
Images: Courtesy of Michael Doyle*

FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

Faculty Publication:

***Studying a Foreign Language: An Interactive Guidebook* by Dr. Bobby Hobgood and Dr. Adriana Laza Medina Addresses a Curricular Challenge**

By Dr. Bobby Hobgood

Three years ago, a serendipitous meeting during a search committee gathering led to the writing of a text to support language learners. Neither my co-author, Dr. Adriana Laza Medina, nor I could have imagined that a single sidebar conversation would result in a three-year collaboration culminating in the publication of this book. To be specific, the conversation began as an acknowledgement of the often-uttered complaint, “Students struggle with studying a language.” The reality: Have they ever been taught how to study a language?

The first phase of the writing process, in retrospect, was the planning, development, and delivery of a series of workshops in the newly renovated Language Resource Center to address studying a language. To be clear, “studying” in this case, refers to what, why, how, when, and where students engage in a second or third language outside of the classroom. We offered six workshops the first year. Students and faculty members attended. Neither of us had suggested the idea of a book at that point. One student, who was also a teacher, requested we present the workshop to her high schoolers, so we did. Later, we collapsed the six workshops into a conference proposal. It was following a standing-room only presentation at a national conference where attendees affirmed their students’ struggle with language study, that we wondered how we might parlay this topic into a book to help more language learners.

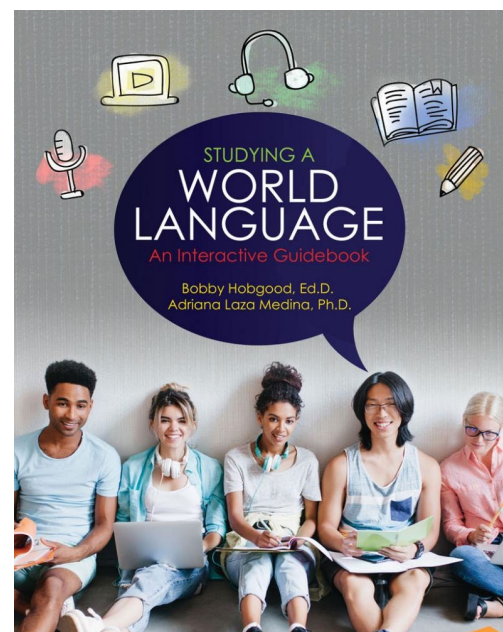
The book is organized as a guidebook, and is intended for anyone who is studying a language through formal or informal study. It was written with two underlying premises:

1. *Study* is essential to language learning
2. The responsibility for language study is primarily the *learners’*.

It was written to help language learners achieve several goals:

1. Understand what it means to study a language
2. Develop a mindset and habits for language study
3. Organize themselves, their environment, and their time for success
4. Implement study strategies
5. Capitalize on readily available resources
6. Become self-directed as a language learner
7. Develop a Personal Language Study Plan

For more details, see bit.ly/studywl



We Wish Our Colleagues Who Are Leaving the Department All the Best For the Future



Yangtian Luo
MA Fellow in Chinese



Dr. Pawel Korpai
Fulbright Visiting Scholar



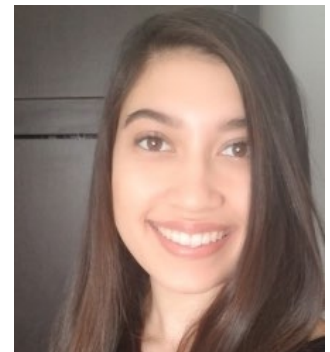
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Photographs courtesy of the Department of Languages and Culture Studies

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