



ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT of MODERN & CLASSICAL LANGUAGES
520 North Main Street
Meadville, PA 16335-3902

Dear alumni, friends, colleagues and students of Modern & Classical Languages at Allegheny College,

Our department continues to foster the exploration of language and culture for Allegheny College students, through solid curricula and numerous extra-curricular activities. The last departmental newsletter of record was written in 1985-86. A thorough update for all readers is a herculean task I cannot undertake at this moment, and welcome any questions you may have to fill in any lacunae that remain. What follows is a summary of general faculty/staffing changes and the year's activities for 2015-16.

Our curriculum and faculty

We continue to offer major and minor programs in French, German and Spanish and minor programs in Chinese, Latin, and Classical Studies. In recent years Mary Wagner (French) Lou Wagner (Russian) and Courtenay Dodge (French) retired. In fall 2010, Assistant Professor Briana Lewis began her tenure-track position in French, Assistant Professor Xiaoling Shi took over the development of the Chinese language program and in fall, 2012 we welcomed Reem Hilal, Assistant Professor of Arabic to the department to offer the language component of the Middle East and North Africa Studies (MENA) minor.

We said goodbye this year to Linda DeMeritt and Jochen Richter of the German section and to Karen Richter who wrote 11 successful grants for our Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant in Arabic and directed our Center for Language and Culture.

Retirement Dinner

May 4, 2016



Jochen Richter



Linda DeMeritt



Karen Richter and Mary Wagner

Our students

This year, over 20% of the entering first-year class enrolled in language classes and the department graduated 15 majors (3 French, 2 German and 10 Spanish) and 62 minors (8 Chinese, 14 French, 8 German, 2 Latin, 30 Spanish).

Awards

Kelly Frantz, a double major in International Studies and Spanish, was awarded a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship Grant in Ecuador.

The following students graduated with departmental honors, having achieved a GPA over 3.5 in languages and an A or A- on their senior projects:

In French:

Alyssa King, "La lutte pour 'l'ouverture' de l'identité française des femmes."

Derek Reno, "Le Terroir et l'écosystème : Un regard à l'usage de paiements pour préserver les services écosystémiques en France."

In German:

James Lasher, "Managerial Constraint and Gross profit Volatility in Automobile Manufacturing: An Analysis of the United States, Germany and Japan. Fallstudie im Deutschen an den Beispielen Volkswagen AG und General Motors."

Laura Hagen, "Wie das grammatische Geschlecht zum Sexismus in der deutschen Sprache fuhrt."

In Spanish:

Thomas Alvarez. "The Evolution, Resilience, and Future of Bolívar's Dream: Reevaluating Regional Integration. Buscando una armonía latinoamericana."

Paul Cancilla "Democracy and Urban Space: The relationship between the Rise of the Privatization of Urban Space and the Emergence of Democracy in Mexico City. Un análisis de *Los rituales del caos*, de Carlos Monsivais."

Kelly Frantz, "Saving Quichua: An Examination of Ecuador's Intercultural Bilingual Education System."

Devin Malone, "The Economic and Cultural Impact of the Recreational Marijuana Market in Colorado, Washington, and Uruguay."

Casey Weltner, "La pobreza o la muerte: una aproximación económica a los empleos alternativos de los jóvenes colombianos."

We continue to award our outstanding students through the generosity of our alumni and former faculty. **The Blair Hanson Prize in Modern Foreign Language** was awarded to Kirsten Zebrak and Jacob Ballinger; Laura Kagen and Leah Thirkill earned **The Mildred Joanna Ludwig Prize**, **The Alice Kemp Moessner Prize** was awarded to Nathaniel Freed and Thomas Manning and **The Harald Robert Sauer Prize Fund** to Thomas Alvarez and Derek Reno.

To help outstanding continuing language students the department awarded the **Blair Hanson Study Abroad** to Elsie Hendricks and Tyler Walker, and the **Kalfayan Memorial Scholarship** to Josh Patton.

Activities of Interest

MCL is now on Facebook! Through [our page](#) you can see the many extracurricular events planned by the department (like our Phi Sigma Iota induction dinner and International Film Festival) and those organized by our international Language Teaching Assistants, who help provide a language immersion experience for students living in the language houses of the North Village Max Kade International Wing. **The TAs for 2016-17** are: Arabic: Mariam Nashaat; Chinese: Kaidi Chen; French: Amandine Brizard; German: Jasmin Wagner; and Spanish: Tamara de la Via Carrasco. Study Abroad. We had 31 students abroad in 2015-16: 3 in Argentina, 2 in China, 10 in France, 10 in Cologne Germany, 1 each in Chile, Mexico, Morocco, and Ecuador, and 2 in Seville Spain. Do you live in one of these places? Let us know! I'm sure our students would love to connect with a Gator while abroad!

Internships! This summer students are completing internships at the Modern Language Association (MLA) in New York, at the Town Hall in Meadville's Sister City, Fismes, France, and at the ECI Gran Pacífica Resort in Nicaragua. We are developing more internship opportunities for our students. If you have one, let us know!

[Gator International](#) is a student authored and edited annual magazine that gives language students the opportunity to publish their own creative work in a foreign language.

Our website has a [newsfeed](#) which features events and accomplishments of our students and faculty.

Department Faculty Highlights

Professor **Linda DeMeritt** returned to teaching after 12 years as Provost. In October 2015, she delivered a keynote speech at the Bonner Foundation's on-campus conference about civic engagement. She chaired the search for a tenure-track replacement in German and retired at the end of the spring semester after having been at Allegheny 34 years. If anyone has plans to travel to either Michigan or Florida, please feel free to contact her ([814-282-0871](tel:814-282-0871)). She would love to hear from you!

Professor **Jochen and Karen Richter** retired after 45 years of teaching at Allegheny College. This year, Jochen was honored with the Julian Ross Award for Excellence in Teaching. On their retirement he wrote to us all: "It ain't easy for us to retire after 90 combined years of teaching at Allegheny, especially not when most of those years happened in the Modern and Classical Languages Department with colleagues like you, but so far it has not caused any major mental breakdowns ... Thank you for your collegiality, friendship, support and professionalism and for a life-time of great memories!"

Joining us in the German Section will be Assistant Professor **Julia Ludewig**, Ph.D from Binghamton State University New York (SUNY). Her research is multifaceted and is integrated with her teaching. Articles of interest are "Documentary along the Outskirts of Society: An Interview with the Filmmaker Aysun Bademsoy." Forthcoming in *Women in German*, "Gendered Discourse as Social Practice: Collective and Individual Identities in Academic Literary Criticism." Forthcoming in the proceedings of the *GEsIPI International Conference: Identity—Representation and Practices* and "Using a Graphic Novel in the German Classroom." Forthcoming in *The German Graphic Novel*.

Assistant Professor **Verónica Dantán** presented "Code-switching/Going Home" at the Allegheny College First Generation Conference in April. She is developing her course on Spanish for Heritage

Speakers, as well as new courses on Hispanic Popular Culture and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Professor **Peter Ensberg** continued as President of the *Pennsylvania Colleges in Cologne* (PCIC) consortium. The beginning manuscript of his book on German classicism (Goethe, Schiller) and its philosophical roots was accepted for publication by Königshausen & Neumann (Würzburg, Germany), renowned for the publication of works on literary/cultural theory.

Associate Professor of Spanish **Wilfredo Hernández** had an article titled "De *La quinta Dayana a Cheila, una casa pa' maíta*: Representaciones de transexualidad femenina," in the journal *Cuadernos de Literatura del Caribe e Hispanoamérica* published at University of Barranquilla, Colombia and published a translation into Spanish of the introduction of the book *The Big Archive. Art from Bureaucracy* by Sven Spieker (MIT Press, 2008) for the journal *Cuadernos de Literatura* which will come out in spring 2017. He attended the XVII International Congress of Hispanic Literature held in Mérida, Mexico, March 9-11, 2016 where he presented "Racism and Homophobia in Mariana Rondón's *Bad Hair*." *Bad Hair* is a Venezuelan film that received the main prize at the 2013 San Sebastian International Film Festival. Professor Hernández was also the moderator of the panel. In May 2015 he presented a paper on Boris Izaguirre's novels at the Latin American and Caribbean Studies (LASA) conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Teresa Herrera de la Muela, Associate Professor of Spanish, continues as a board member of ALCESXXI: Asociación Internacional de Literatura y Cines Españoles XX. She is also a referee, reviewer and editor for their journal *ALCESXXI: Journal of Contemporary Spanish Literature and Film*. <http://revista.alcesxxi.org/> She co-organized the organization's third symposium which took place in Soria, Spain July 6-9, 2015 and presented a paper titled "Manifestaciones y redefiniciones el feminismo hispánico actual. This summer, she presents "El comité de la noche (Belén Gopegui, 2014): el viaje de la heroína en la encrucijada de paradigmas." at the XVIII Congreso Internacional de Literatura y Estudios Hispánicos in San Sebastian, Spain. On campus, she participated in the panel "Tenure for International Faculty," organized by Juvia Huchert and Xiaoling Shi, in March 2016. She will be on sabbatical leave this fall.

Judson Herrman, Associate Professor of Classical Studies and Frank T. McClure Chair of Greek and Latin, has been awarded a visiting fellowship at University College, Oxford, for the Hilary Term (January-March) 2017. These fellowships recognize "distinguished external scholars" who can contribute to the academic community in Oxford and benefit from its resources. While in residence at Oxford, Professor Herrman plans to complete a book manuscript, "Selected Political Speeches of Demosthenes," in which he edits the Greek text and provides English introduction and extensive commentary. He will make a public presentation of his work to the Faculty of Classics at the University of Oxford and will mentor students and post-graduates.

Assistant Professor of Arabic **Reem Hilal** published "Constructing an 'Outlandish' Narrative of Self: The Role of Music in Muslim Experience." in the 2015 summer issue of the *Journal of the Humanities*. She is in Jordan this summer exploring opportunities for institutional exchange and study abroad.

Assistant Professor **Briana Lewis** offered our first ever FS201 in Modern Languages last fall. A course designed to guide students in finding and critically using information in cultural texts, it builds the bridge between language learning and research in the humanities. She published "The Sewer and the Prostitute in *Les Misérables*: From Regulation to Redemption," in *Nineteenth-Century*

French Studies and “*Douceur d’un autre monde: Sexuality, Disembodiment and the Young Woman’s Voice in Les Misérables*,” in *Women in French Studies*.

Awarded the Gateway Scholar Chair in the Humanities, Associate Professor of French **Laura Reeck** worked with Dave Roncolato to develop Allegheny’s first Global Citizen Scholar Program. A combination of travel, theoretical study and language courses over three years, the program was launched in Spring 2016 and now has 16 participants. Her work on the *banlieue* culture in France continues to be recognized through invitations to conferences and contributions to encyclopedias, co-edited volumes and translations. Most recently three translations were published in *Souffles-Anfas: A Critical Anthology from the Moroccan Journal of Culture and Politics* (eds. Harrison and Villa-Ignacio, Stanford UP). *Souffles* was a leading anticolonialist Marxist journal whose publication spanned 1966-72. Professor Reeck translated “Interview with Ousmane Sembène;” “The World Festival of Negro Arts, or the Nostalgics of Negritude” (Abdullah Stouky); and “The Winding Course of Negritude” (René Depestre).

In fall 2015 Associate Professor of Spanish **Barbara Riess** coordinated a national book tour for Cuban author María Elena Llana to promote their book of short fiction in English translation *An Address in Havana/ Domicilio habanero* (Cubanabooks Press, 2014). The translation was included on the “Top Ten Summer Reads” list by [Cuba Counterpoint. Public Scholarship about a Changing Cuba](#) and named a finalist for best translation of a work of fiction for Latino Literacy Now’s International Latino Book Award.

Assistant Professor **Xiaoling Shi** was on sabbatical leave in fall 2015 and returned to lead the Chinese section in the Spring. This year, she published an article titled “女性的真相：审视《传奇》、《流言》中张爱玲的女性主义意识” (“The Truth of Women: A Study of Zhang Ailing’s Feminist Consciousness in *Legend* and *Gossip*”), in 新文学评论 (*Modern Chinese Literature Criticism*) and “Disillusionment with Chinese Culture in the 1880s: Wang Tao’s Three Classical Tales,” in the *Journal of Modern Literature in Chinese*. Xiaoling received a Demmler Award for Innovative Teaching for her proposal “A New Thinking on Enhancing the Global Understanding of Allegheny College” to support the development of her FS 101 course “Cross-cultural Portraits.”

Nancy Smith represented the department at the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) Conference in Denver, Colorado in July 2015 and the attended the Pennsylvania Modern Language Association (PSMLA) Convention in King of Prussia, PA in October. She reviewed two Spanish books, one for Pearson and one for Cengage Press and continues to develop courses for the Spanish Section’s new curriculum.

Professor **Phillip Wolfe** served a two-year term as the President of the Foreign Language Honor Society Phi Sigma Iota until December 31, 2016. He continues to serve as the Chairperson of the finance committee.

Our Max Kade Writer in Residence during fall 2015 was Marion Poschmann. We will host Thomas Lang during fall 2016.

Thanks for reading. We’ll publish this newsletter annually to keep you up to date on changes in personnel and programs, activities of interests and faculty/student accomplishments...made possible only because of our continued dedication to the value of foreign languages for the Allegheny College liberal arts experience.

Our Gator Day this year is October 28th. Interested in coming to campus to share your language story?

We'd enjoy hearing from you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Riess', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Barbara Riess, Chair
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