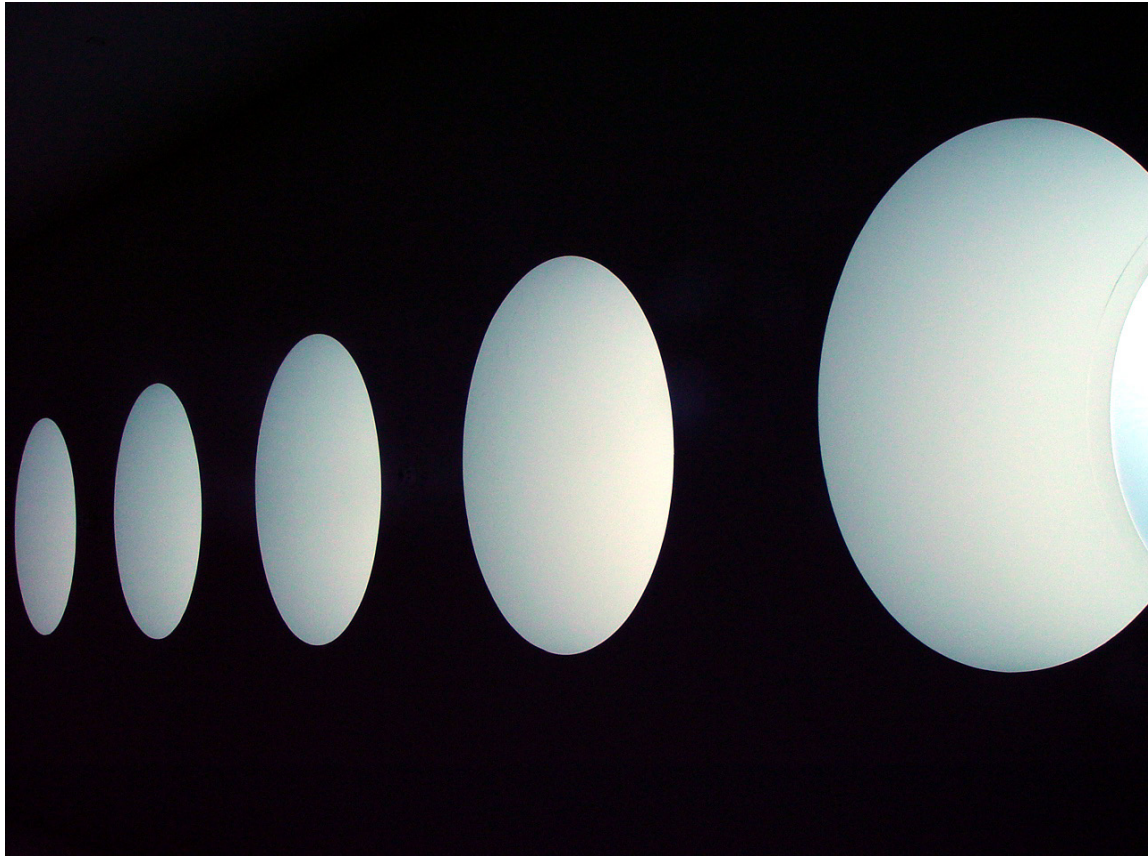


Yale

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE PROGRAM



NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2022

Issue 3

April 26, 2022

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FROM THE INTERIM CO-DIRECTOR'S DESK

It brings me great joy to be able to celebrate our accomplishments and progress this year. A look at our latest *Newsletter* shows that student interest in our program is growing, as Noël Valis's report shows. The "News and Highlights" section shows an active faculty that continues to stay current with the profession and shares their work with colleagues on campus and beyond. The Faculty Development Series retrospective showcases the work of the current Events Committee. The events, all of which were well attended, have contributed to cultivating a culture of learning, enabling us to build a newer and more modernized curriculum that is responsive to current world challenges. (Thank you, Jesús, for supporting faculty development!)

This issue's "Profile" section focuses on heritage Spanish, which has been taught and carefully stewarded by Sybil Alexandrov.

The work of curriculum renovation this year has included the Methodologies of Modern Language Teaching course, which Sarab Al Ani and I co-created and designed. We updated the course readings and introduced new assessments, among which is the conceptual coherence journal. In designing the syllabus, we coordinated with and developed a stronger partnership with Yale's Center for Language Study (CLS) so that the professional development of our graduate students is maximally enriched with knowledge of both foundational and cutting edge theories and approaches to language and culture pedagogy.

The "Spotlighting Teaching and Research" section focuses on the amalgamation of scholarly research and pedagogy in the work of current PhD candidates Karina López and Esteban Crespo-Jaramillo. They share their reflections on teaching about topics in their research areas in a new advanced language course (SPAN 228: Borders and Globalization in Hispanophone Cultures). Their reflections on the relationship between teaching and research include comments on the importance of multimodality for enriching both pedagogy and scholarship.

As my role as Interim Co-Director comes to a close, I want to thank you for the opportunity you've given me to work with you. I have learned so much from *each and every one of you*. I want to express my gratitude to **Jesús Velasco**, Chair of our Department, for his confidence in my leadership and management skills. While challenging at times, performing the LPD role was an invaluable opportunity for professional and personal growth, for which I am immensely grateful.

I could not have served the program and the department successfully without mentoring and assistance from my partner, **Sarab Al Ani**, and from Assistant Dean **Jason Zentz, Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl, Mary Jo Lubrano, Julia DiVincenzo, Christine Mullen**, and **Anne Letterman**.

Luna Nájera

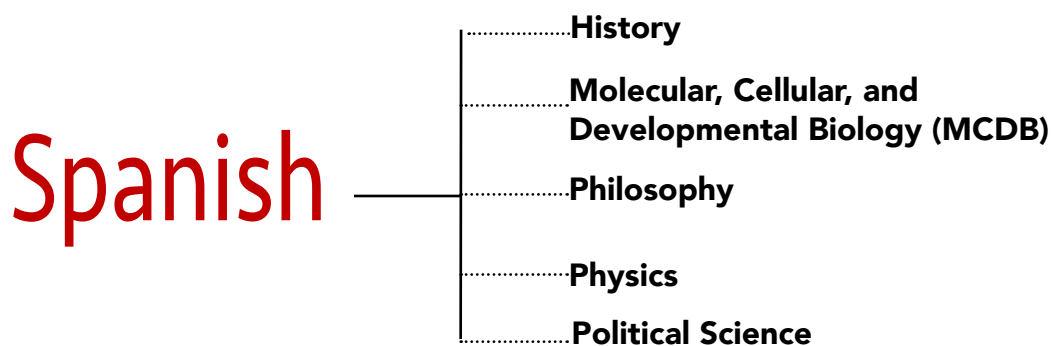
INCREASE IN SPANISH MAJORS & SPANISH LANGUAGE CERTIFICATES

by Noël Valis

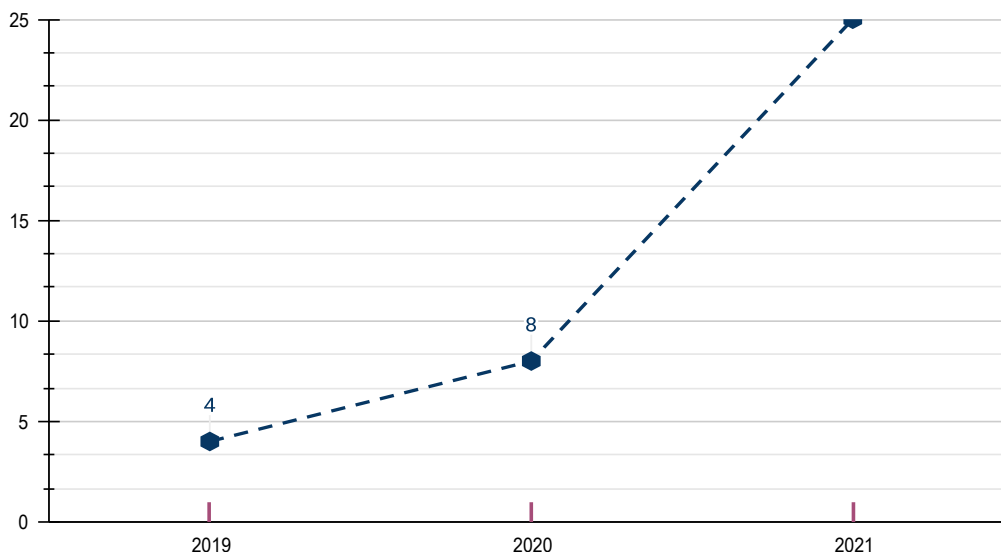
I am pleased to report that as of April 1st (2022), there are 12 Spanish majors spread across all four cohorts of undergraduates. This academic year three of them will be graduating. Most are double majors, joining Spanish with Philosophy, Political Science, Physics, Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology (MCDB), History, and other fields.

Since our first cohort in 2019, the number of students earning the Advanced Language Certificate in Spanish has grown appreciably. There were 4 graduating in 2019; 8 in 2020; and 25 in 2021.

For the Class of '22, there are currently 23, but these numbers are fluid, as some students wait till the last month of spring semester to declare their candidacy. We are on track to equal, if not surpass, last year's figure. Thus far, 9 from the Class of '23 have formally expressed an interest in the certificate; 10 from the Class of '24; and 3 from the Class of '25.



Spanish Double Majors, Current Patterns



Spanish Language Certificates 2019-2021

PEDAGOGY

Proposals by **Maripaz García**, **Luna Nájera**, and **María Vázquez** were accepted for the CLS's [Instructional Innovation Workshop](#) (IIW) May 20-26, 2022. This year's IIW theme is on "Creating a syllabus using reverse design."

Current CLS fellow **Maripaz García** will be presenting "Virtual Exchanges Platforms: Cultural Affordances and Shortcomings" 04/28

Current CLS fellow **Pilar Asensio-Manrique** will be presenting "Communication and Intercultural Competence: A Content-Based Course to Debate in Spanish" 04/28

María José Gutiérrez Barajas presented "Addressing Latin American Ecological Issues in Spanish 130: An Approach from Science Fiction and the Multiliteracies Pedagogy" at the CLS Sharing Group on 04/04

Sarah Glenski presented "Social Justice in the Spanish Classroom" in the Yale Department of Spanish and Portuguese Pedagogy Lab on 03/28

Ian Russell presented "Social Justice and the Subjunctive" in a NEMLA panel called "Social Justice in the Spanish Classroom" on 03/13

Lourdes Sabé presented "Multimodal Approach in Writing Tasks. Fostering creativity, reflection, and cultural engagement" in the Italian Department (04/22). She presented on a linguistic and cultural exchange program implemented in Intensive Elementary Spanish (SPAN 125) in the fall of 2021 in the CLS Sharing Group (04/28)

In collaboration with María José Guardia (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), **Rosmaría León** and **Lourdes Sabé** participated in a panel called "Inter-Institutional Initiatives: Virtual Exchange Programs that Promote Intercultural Communication Competence" at NEALLT 2022, hosted by Columbia University ("Emerging Realities in Language Teaching and Learning") (04/08-09)

News

The **Bulldog Days Academic Fair** took place on April 26th from 1:30 - 3:30 PM. Due to COVID-related restrictions, the session was divided into two hours, with a maximum number of participants of up to four per hour. This year **Carolina Baffi**, **Luna Nájera**, **Lourdes Sabé**, **Terry Seymour**, **Giseli Tordin**, and **María Vázquez** participated in the event.

GGD: The Yale Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies, together with the Department of Spanish and Portuguese celebrated the fifth Global Governance Debate March 31 – April. This year's topic: Does democracy guarantee security and prosperity in times of global crisis? The Department appreciates the work of **Pilar Asensio**, who organizes the event annually. Pilar, we invite you to share your thoughts on the event in the next issue!

Recognition

The year 2022 marks 30 years of service to Yale for our esteemed colleague, **Terry Seymour**.

Terry joined the Department of Spanish and Portuguese in 1992, and has taught almost every Spanish language course during her time at Yale. She has striven to constantly perfect her Advanced Spanish Grammar course, resulting in countless Yalies actually enjoying grammar. Terry has led the L3/L4 Summer Study Abroad course in Quito, Ecuador since 2008.

She has improved that program each year, making it one of Yale's most original summer study abroad programs. Terry also co-directed the Intermediate Spanish courses at Yale for many years. She has been an invaluable member of our department. We have all benefited from her wisdom, kindness, and her calm, clear perspective. During her years at Yale, Terry married, had a daughter, and became a grandmother. She is the most long-standing member of our department. We salute Terry for her 30 years at Yale!

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Sebastián Díaz participated in the 2022 OLP Series: Engaging Online Language Learners through SEL. This series highlighted how online language instructors can use the Social Emotional Learning Framework to engage students in the virtual classroom and enhance the experience and satisfaction of learning a language online. The webinar was organized by the National Foreign Language Resource Center, The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. (Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 10, Feb. 17, and Feb 24.)

Lisette Reymundi participated in four external faculty development events since the beginning of the year: Encuentros transatlánticos en torno al español: "La enseñanza de la pronunciación en el aula de ELE," by Juana Gil Fernández & Jorge Méndez Seijas, Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University; Language book presentation, *Frecuencias* by María Eugenia Gómez, Editorial Edinumen; "Digital Multi-Literacies Reframed," Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), Washington, DC.; Entre Don Quijote y Philip Marlowe: Afinidades electivas de la ficción criminal en Estados Unidos y España, by Lorenzo Silva, Instituto Cervantes at Harvard University.

Sebastián and Lisette, we look forward to learning from you!

HERITAGE SPANISH AT YALE

An Interview with Sybil Alexandrov

by Luna Nájera

Luna Nájera: Tell us about your background and how you become an expert in teaching Spanish for heritage speakers?

Sybil Alexandrov: I grew up in a bilingual home in Mexicali, México, a city on the border with southeastern California, where I attended public schools -Spanish only - through ninth grade. The consequences of not being schooled in a language became clear when my older sisters, at the age of twelve, transitioned from a Mexican school to a public school across the border in California. They spoke English fluently, but they could not spell; they wrote phonetically, as they had learned to do in Spanish. I was with my mother when she met with the school principal, who informed her with great concern that my sisters could not write. I still hear my mother's calm response: "That's why they are in school, for you to teach them." My role as a heritage language instructor is to help students fill similar gaps in their knowledge of Spanish.

Rather than consider myself an "expert" in teaching Spanish to heritage language learners, I would say that I am dedicated, open to new ideas, and flexible. I have attended numerous workshops on Heritage Language teaching led by experts in the field, among them the late Olga Kagan and the incomparable Maria Carreira, and maintain abreast of current pedagogy. I learn from HL colleagues across languages and institutions; they are a constant source of inspiration and support.

LN: Tell us in what ways the teaching of Spanish for heritage speakers differs from SLA Spanish. For example, in what ways may the content and pedagogical teaching approach or framework differ?

SA: In the foreign language classroom, I have taught using various pedagogical methods, most of which focus on accuracy. From that perspective, it is easy to be struck by the Heritage Language Learner's lack of precision in certain areas, whereas what is needed is recognition of the wealth of knowledge they bring to the classroom and explicit acknowledgment of its value. A successful HL course has a clear trajectory that combines content and explicit instruction to address what I call "FMM" (frequently made mistakes). Many students join the HL track because they don't know how to manage diacritics or because they "don't know grammar." Ironically, many of my

foreign language students say they learn English grammar through Spanish.

The affective component is paramount. It is easy to tag HL students as having missed an opportunity or to fault the parents for not having raised perfectly bilingual and bicultural offspring. But the truth is there are many reasons, some deeply personal, for their language competence, and instructors must be sensitive to these. For example, I recently learned that an HL learner did not speak Spanish at home because the parent insisted on using every opportunity to improve their command of English. Some heritage language learners stop speaking the language because they are ridiculed repeatedly and tire of the humiliation. That said, the majority of the Heritage Language Learners that enroll in my classes are highly conversant in the home register. They have deeply rooted grammar and lexical structures which should not be eliminated but rather placed in the proper context and used as a basis for developing additional skills.

Regarding course content, it is essential to know one's audience. I have adjusted the course many times and will continue to do so to address students' needs and maintain their interests.

LN: Spanish for Heritage Speakers II was first offered in the spring semester of 2009. Is that correct? Can you tell us about what led to the formation of this course?

SA: The course has existed in different iterations since 1980, years before I began at Yale.

- 1980-1987 Spanish for bilinguals (mirrored FL track)
- 1990 Spanish for bilinguals (three levels)
- 2007 Spanish for Heritage Speakers (three levels)
- 2010- present (two levels)

LN: Course enrollments for SPAN 142 doubled from spring 2010 to 2011 (6 to 12). To what do you attribute that increase?

SA: Admission of Hispanic/Latinx students fluctuates and language level placement varies, I have no control over either of these. However, I have seen an increase in interest in enrollment for personal reasons, rather than to fulfill the language requirement.

LN: What do you think is the future of Spanish for Heritage Speakers in the Spanish and Portuguese program? (E.g., do you foresee creating an L5 course for heritage speakers and if so, what's your dream course? What's the title?)

SA: I have considered creating an L5 Heritage Language course, but since I teach the HL L3 and L4 courses I would like to see my students spread their wings and experience a range of teaching styles, content, and perspectives. Students need to know that they can work productively and gain knowledge in any L5 class. For this reason, instructors working with Heritage Language students should be aware of and incorporate best practices in Heritage Language teaching.

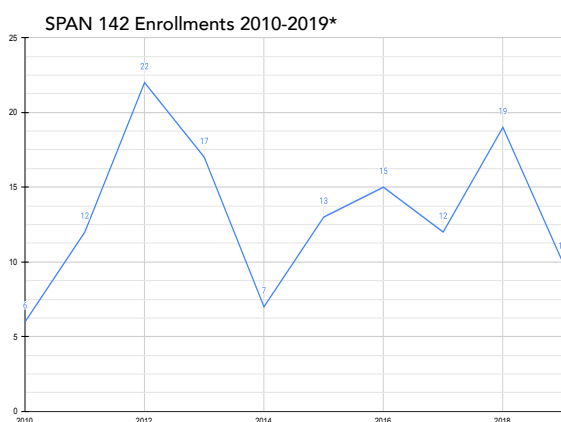
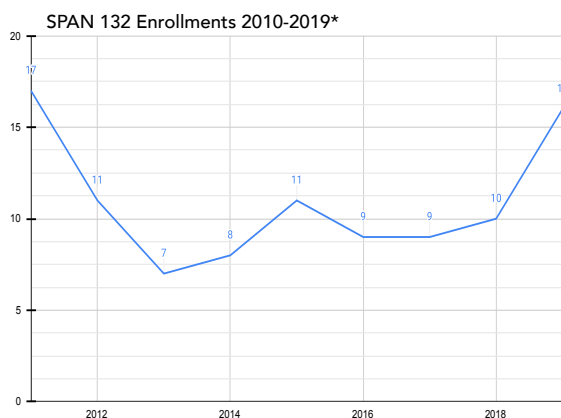
LN: Spanish department university and college ads are increasingly referring to the desirability of training in Spanish for heritage speakers. What advice would you give to graduate students who are interested in teaching Spanish to heritage speakers?

SA: In addition to studying the research, there are numerous online resources. Here are just a few:

- [National Heritage Language Resource Center](#)
- [Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning](#)
- [Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition](#)
- [Heritage Language Xchange](#)
- Various Facebook pages dedicated to Heritage Language teaching.

In addition, attention to the demographics of one's institution is essential. At Yale, the heritage Spanish language class might have students from as many as six different Spanish-speaking countries, each one having linguistic and cultural idiosyncrasies. The variety opens the door to a shared learning environment, where both students and instructor learn from each other. I enjoy thanking my students for teaching me about their particular language and culture.

LN: Thank you, Sybil, for taking the time to respond to these questions!



* Based on Yale's Jaspersoft Database



SPANISH FOR HERITAGE LEARNERS



Spanish heritage language courses are designed for students who have been exposed to Spanish, either at home or by living in a Spanish-speaking country, but who have little or no formal training in the language



SPAN 132 will focus on how identity is formed and manifested through language, culture and place, among other topics.



Together, we will examine a variety of texts to determine effective strategies for all three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational.

Fall 2021 Academic Fair course poster by Sybil Alexandrov

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES: A 2021–2022 RETROSPECTIVE

By Ian Russell, Chair of the Events Committee

The Events Committee is immensely thankful for everyone's engagement and support in the Faculty Development Series and Pedagogy Laboratory. We accomplished several of the goals we set for the committee this year, including: (1) organizing events and workshops with leaders in the field of FL multiliteracies pedagogy, (2) creating dialogue around collective teaching and learning goals, and (3) taking time and creating the space to celebrate our community as a program.

We hosted three renowned leaders in the field of FL and post-communicative pedagogy. The coordination among the speakers created a coherent series around the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogies in FL teaching. Following Stacey Katz Bourns' talk—and in response to faculty feedback—Heather Willis Allen and Kate Paesani both provided hands-on engagement based on their experiences with designing and re-imagining curricula and course-work through multi-literacies. Their workshops generated productive dialogue about assessments, evaluations, and specific text-based and meaning-making activities. We even got a peek into Paesani's forthcoming publication! The feedback we received from you following the event described her talk as "clarifying" and "significant" in "the examples she gave to transform traditional activities of grammar into new and more engaging [ones]." The Faculty Development Speaker

Series dovetailed nicely with the Pedagogy Lab, which served as a space to experiment with new ideas and seek input from fellow colleagues.

We received constructive suggestions from you about the Faculty Development Series that called for more focus on the "value of an eclectic pedagogy that allows instructors to use the most effective teaching method for a particular unit, topic, [or] group." We responded through the creation of the Pedagogy Lab, which moved toward more responsive teaching in the events

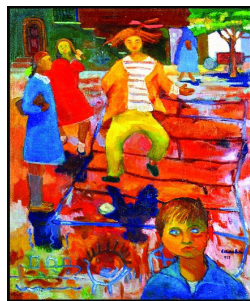
that took place in February and March. Last month, Sarah Glenski described her takeaways from last year's CARLA institute, which encouraged a robust discussion on diversity, accommodation, and inclusion in our classrooms.

The Events Committee will be building on these accomplishments by creating a blueprint for the work of next year's Events Committee. We

will be proposing events that cultivate innovation and collaboration in and out of the classroom. With this in mind, we are curating a list of speakers who can offer culturally-responsive approaches to the selections of texts and objects of study in the teaching of language and culture.

The last Faculty Development Series Event this year is the ACTFL OPI Familiarization Workshop, led by Mary Jo Lubrano.

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE
YALE UNIVERSITY
BACKWARD DESIGN: A HANDS-ON WORKSHOP



El Bacha, Amiri (b. 1932). Hopscotch, 1958. [Artsy](https://www.artsy.net/artwork/el-bacha/hopscotch)

Fall 2021 Workshop
Facilitated by the Events Committee
October 8, 2021
13:30 – 14:30 hrs.
Zoom: <https://yale.zoom.us/j/92579380662>

This workshop builds on the Center for Language Studies journal club discussion on the theme of reverse (backward) design. Following the CLS discussion of Wiggins and McGighe's Understanding by Design on October 7, the Events Committee will facilitate a hands-on workshop that examines and puts into practice insights from the reading and the CLS discussion.

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES

"Effective L2 Pedagogy in the 21st Century"

Stacey Katz Bourns
Professor of Culture, Society, and Global Studies, and Director of the World Languages Center, Northwestern University

What does effective second language pedagogy look like in the 21st century? As our field evolves, how do we determine which approaches – and innovations – are appropriate, pedagogically sound, and exciting for our program? And how do we create a curriculum that aligns with findings in the field of second language acquisition as well as the needs within our particular context?

This presentation, based on *Perspectives on Teaching Language and Content* (Bourns, Krueger, and Mills, Yale UP, 2020), focuses on frameworks and techniques for connecting language and content in the L2 classroom. It also emphasizes the importance of including the expertise of faculty from a variety of backgrounds when engaging in curricular innovation at all levels of curriculum.

Fall 2021
Interactive Talk
December 6
2:30 – 4:00 pm
Zoom

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES

*Finding Common Ground in the Collegiate L2 Curriculum:
Integrating the Study of Language and Culture Through Multiliteracies*

Heather Willis Allen

Assistant Professor of French in the Department of French and Italian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a core faculty member of her university's second language acquisition doctoral program. Her research has appeared in the *ALTE Bulletin*, *CALL*, *Language Acquisition*, *Language Learning*, *Language Teaching*, *Research in Second Language Acquisition*, *Second Language Research*, *Second Language Teaching*, *Second Language Testing*, and *Second Language Use*.

Understanding challenge for many second language programs is the well-documented tension between lower-level language courses and advanced literature and culture courses, which are often characterized by differing aims and pedagogical approaches. This divide can prevent language programs from establishing a common intellectual foundation to frame their curricula and from demonstrating their relevance and intellectual connection to the larger university mission.

In this workshop, we will explore the notion of literacy as a multidimensional framing goal for collegiate language curricula, discuss how curricular objectives can be aligned with a multiliteracies orientation, and consider implications for assessment practices. We will conclude by reflecting on the benefits and challenges of implementing multiliteracies-oriented instruction.

Spring 2022
Interactive Talk
February 21, 2022
2:00 – 3:30 pm
Zoom

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES

*Using Language Forms to Communicate About Texts:
A Multiliteracies Perspective*

Kate Paesani

Director of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) and affiliate Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota, she is currently director of the Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) and affiliate Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on the intersection of multiliteracies pedagogy and second language acquisition, with a particular emphasis on the role of language forms in communication. She is the co-author of the book *Multiliteracies: Perspectives on Language Learning and Teaching* (2019). She is currently co-director of the new research project *Second Language Learning and Teaching*, which addresses contemporary language education from theoretical, empirical, and practical perspectives.

This interactive presentation will challenge the long-held assumption that multiliteracies pedagogy and the instruction of language forms are incompatible. To do so, we will consider grammar and vocabulary as textual resources that support learners to work with texts, help them understand how texts are constructed, and improve their communicative abilities.

Using the four knowledge processes of multiliteracies pedagogy as a framework, we will discuss how to adapt and enhance your existing toolkit of grammar and vocabulary activities to infuse language forms throughout text-based lessons.

Spring 2022
Interactive Talk
March 7, 2022
2:00 – 3:30 pm
Zoom

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES
&
CENTER FOR LANGUAGE STUDY

ACTFL OPI FAMILIARIZATION WORKSHOP

Mary Jo Lubrano

Assistant Professor, Center for Language Study

This workshop aims to familiarize participants with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, ACTFL Rating Scale, and the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

There will be presentations and examples of ACTFL OPIs conducted by certified testers in English, as well as quizzes and activities that will solidify participants' understanding of each major proficiency level. The workshop is intended for all language professionals.

ACTFL requires full attendance to receive a certificate of attendance.

Preregistration is required.

The one-day workshop is offered on two dates:
May 2 & May 16, 2022
CLS Room 100
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

There will be two short breaks and a longer break for lunch. Prepackaged meals and beverages will be available.

Save the date!

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIES
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METHODOLOGIES OF LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR TODAY

By Luna Nájera

When I asked Sarab Al Ani to tell me what inspired her approach to the teaching of [Methodologies of Modern Language Teaching](#) (SPAN 790), she cited Mark Van Doren's view that "The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery." Indeed, the art of teaching is built on continual learning and reflection, which can give way to discovery about the assumptions we bring to our teaching, how think of what we teach, how people learn, our role in the profession, the relationship between pedagogy and scholarship, and the communities to whom we are accountable.

In approaching the task of creating a new methods course, we envisioned the course as a foundational one in graduate students' training in the teaching of foreign languages (FL) and second language acquisition (SLA). In our conversation about the course with Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl, Director of the Center for Language Study (CLS) at Yale, we all agreed that graduate training is an ongoing process that begins with the methods course and continues throughout graduate students' education.

The course offers solid familiarity with the main approaches, methods, and principles that have been widely used to teach second languages in the 20th and 21st centuries. The syllabus includes study of foundational notions in SCT, TBL, CBI, and CLT following the learning of twentieth-century SLA theories, to which the latter pose a reaction. Successful completion of the course prepares students to pursue the CLS Certificate in Second Language Acquisition, which offers instruction in cutting edge pedagogies that include post-communicative and multiliteracies approaches.

The collaborative endeavor of creating a new course was the outcome of Al Ani's extensive knowledge of SLA and my learning and experience with course design. (Thanks to the folks at CLS for this year's amazing Brown-bag series on curriculum design!) Using Backward Design, Al Ani and I began by determining the goals and student learning objectives (SLOs). The latter were informed by research I carried out on methods courses in forward-looking programs at Yale and at peer institutions. Al Ani selected the majority of the readings, and I designed the assessments in alignment with the SLOs.

Among the innovations of the course is a weekly journal, the purpose of which is student development of conceptually coherent notions of teaching and learning. In the course of the semester, students select at least 12 key concepts from the readings, explain them in their own words, and reflect on how they "mesh or clash with their beliefs about and experiences of FL and second-language teaching and learning" (H.W. Allen).¹ After carrying out "fieldwork" – two class observations – students reflect on the ways in which theoretical frameworks and assumption shape the practice of FL teaching. Framing the class observations as "fieldwork" encourages everyone to adopt an anthropological point

of view toward the practices in which we (and soon, they) engage when teaching.

I borrowed the conceptual coherence journal idea from Heather Willis Allen's critical discussion of the disconnect between professional development of FL TAs and the calls for action articulated in the MLA 2007 *Report*. She observes that the *Report* "makes no mention of the need to transform professional development practices or to set new standards for graduate education" (178). Allen identifies a number of challenges in FL TA training. One of them is the narrow focus of methods courses (e.g., focus on the teaching of language, with little attention to the teaching of literacy); a second challenge, which is one we began to tackle, is conceptual confusion about teaching and learning. She attributes the latter to instruction in methods courses informed by "notions of FL learning and teaching based on an amalgam of language-learning and teaching experiences characterized by disparate pedagogical approaches and theoretical concepts" (185). A methods course that consist of sundry approaches, methodologies, principles, and techniques in the absence of a coherent theoretical framework through which to make sense of that knowledge risks confusing our students. Therefore, whenever possible, our discussion of the fundamentals in SLA pedagogy was seen through the lens of multiliteracies.

The challenge was designing a methods course offering knowledge of the fundamental theories in SLA, while creating the conditions for development of conceptual coherence. Allen's work provided direction: have students write weekly journal reflections in which they make sense of the interrelation among concepts and theories in their experience as language learners and teachers. The conceptual coherence journal assignment aligns with SLA Sociocultural Theory (SCT) principles in teacher training in that "Professional development is seen as a conceptual process, wherein teachers' own everyday concepts (their personal notions about what language is, how languages are learned, and how they should be taught based on their own language-learning experiences) encounter scientific concepts (i.e., research and theory encountered in academic coursework and professional settings) about language, learning, and teaching, creating the potential for reorganization of experiential knowledge and formation of new knowledge" (184).

When asked what she had discovered in our class, PhD student Daniela Jara said: "The course has given us the opportunity to create a solid theoretical and methodological toolkit that will inform our pedagogical practice in the near future. I would think of it as a scene of reflection and theorization on L2 learning and teaching, as well as a pedagogical lab within which we became the designers of learning experiences in which language and culture are conceived as a whole."

Thank you, Sarab, for the inspiration and knowledge you generously shared with our program. 🌸

1. Willis Allen, Heather. "Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Professional Development: Challenges and Strategies in Meeting the 2007 MLA Report's Calls for Change." *Transforming Postsecondary Foreign Language Teaching in the United States*. Eds. Janet Swaffar and Per Urlaub. Dordrecht: Springer, 2014.

SPOTLIGHTING TEACHING & RESEARCH

On March 30th, Professor Luna Nájera graciously invited me to lead a class on my area of study as part of her SPAN 228 class, [Borders and Globalization in Hispanophone Cultures](#). As a guest speaker, I led a 40-minute discussion on the origins of the Black populations of Latin America, and how they too can be considered a diaspora that challenges the notions of borders, which have been the focus of many discussions throughout the course. Building on the students' previous class on Afro-Mexican culture, I used video clips and maps of carnival to share with them the concept of diaspora and how Black populations borne out of enslavement in the Americas fit under this concept.

To begin, I presented images of the celebration of carnival in different Afro communities in Latin America, to highlight both the similarities between the celebrations and also stress that this resonance stems from their common West African roots. I emphasized that, relative to the Black population in the United States, the vast majority of the enslaved came to Latin America and the Caribbean, as seen in the rich manifestations of popular culture in the respective regions. I activated students' prior knowledge by asking them their definition and understanding of the word diaspora, getting a number of responses that included the Jewish diaspora, as well as that of different immigrant communities in the United States. To close we discussed how the African diaspora in particular challenges the notion of borders and the association between them and the idea of a common cultural identity.

The students raised a number of questions about the historical context of specific Black diasporic populations, among them, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Brazil. They also had questions about record keeping during the transatlantic slave trade, and how researchers today know about the areas of the enslaved, despite not knowing their names. I was also moved by their interest in the greater Black diaspora,

both during and after the class, and their observations about how certain manifestations are valued more than others, particularly in the elite space of the academy.

Though the format of the class was that of a lecture and discussion, I used many of the same strategies that I employ when teaching language. For example, I gave the students space to review and recall the past class as we moved to new material. I incorporated students' ideas around diaspora to illustrate that the same concept applies to Black populations in the Americas. Beyond these strategies, I always endeavor to include content examples that highlight Black populations in the Hispanophone world, in part because it falls under my research, but also

because expanding notions of representation and what is considered representative of the 'Hispanophone world' is critically important when working with a diverse population of students: they are attuned to the diversity of the world around them and our curriculum, whether in a language or literature course, should reflect that.

Like any teacher, I reflected upon what I could improve upon should I have the

good fortune to present this information, specifically, focusing on how manifestation of Black diasporic cultures illustrate multimodal modes of understanding, and how valid knowledge is not limited to the written word, but can and should expand to include the knowledge that resides within the body, things which I hope to continue to highlight in my own work. Nevertheless, the experience was both a pleasure and a privilege that reminded me of the intimate interconnections between teaching and research.

Karina López
PhD Candidate



Danza de los diablos, Secretaría de Cultura, CDMX, 2019

SPOTLIGHTING TEACHING & RESEARCH

This Spring I had the privilege to be invited by Luna Nájera to visit her course [Borders and Globalization in Hispanophone Cultures](#) (SPAN 228) and teach a class. I had been far from the classroom's joys, enjoying another kind of intellectual pursuit—research at one of Yale's crown jewels, the wonderful Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Only after stepping out of Luna's class, with the undergrads' insightful questions and refreshing comments still buzzing in my head, did I realize how much I had been missing the classroom!

We talked about *pinturas de castas*, a specific and successful 18th-century pictorial genre developed in Colonial Mexico and Peru. These works of art were normally produced as collections of sixteen paintings. They map the intersections between the three main ethnic and social groups in viceregal societies—Europeans, Indigenous people, and people of African descent. In doing so, they also establish a hierarchy, where Europeans are the desirable and superior state of being. These paintings achieved such great popularity that the scholarly community today receives almost too many reports of newly unearthed canvases each year. Charged with questions about ethnicity, race, and globalism in viceregal societies, the *pinturas de castas* offered suggestive and complex reflection points for the class.

After listening to a motet in Nahuatl—Luna encouraged me to be as multimodal as I wished—I could barely deliver my spiel for a few minutes. The undergraduates were brimming with good comments and even better—and difficult! — questions. It's not common to come across a safe space for

sharing thoughts and sustaining intellectual discussions that go beyond the banal. But this class was such a space. Maybe the motet had done its magic. Everyone tried to make use of the hermeneutical and historiographic tools at their disposal. We were candid and sincere in our curiosity, thinking through these issues from different, sometimes opposing, perspectives.

The works of art, musical and pictorial, as well as the

secondary readings helped us perceive the past and make that which is so seemingly far removed from our lives actually present and relevant. We discussed how those paintings were usually painted by *criollos* or mestizos, and commissioned maybe as souvenirs by members of the Spanish metropolitan bureaucracy who had lived in the viceroyalties of New Spain or Peru. A student raised the question about the problems of a privileged group of people looking at representations of minority groups. We then realized that we ourselves were not that different from those Spanish bureaucrats that commissioned the paintings almost three centuries ago. After all, on that luminous morning of March there we were, in a beautiful well-lit, high-

ceiling, wood-paneled room, with no other worry in the world than to reflect upon a group of paintings. But what a serious and exhilarating worry it was.

Esteban Crespo-Jaramillo
PhD Candidate



[Casta painting by unknown author](#). 18th c.

Yale University
Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Photo Contest



Local Manifestations
of Hispanic and/or Portuguese
**LANGUAGE, LIFE AND
CULTURE**

Submission Deadline: April 11

<https://span-port.yale.edu/>



In February, **Sebastián Díaz** launched a Photography Contest for our Spanish and Portuguese students. The theme of the photo contest was interpretation of the definitions of Diversity, Equity, and Equality (contained in the Mission Statement Proposal written by our program mission statement committee in May 2021).

In addition to Díaz, the Organizing Committee of the Photography Contest was comprised of **Terry Seymour**, **Sybil Alexandrov**, and **Rosamaría León**.

The First Annual Department Photo Contest results are in!
The winners will be recognized during our Spring Gathering and Prizes Ceremony on Tuesday, May 3.

Culture



3rd place: Spencer King
Bomba de Puerto Rico



2nd place: Adrián Martínez
Blue



1st place: Jack Fresquez
Ofrenda de New Haven

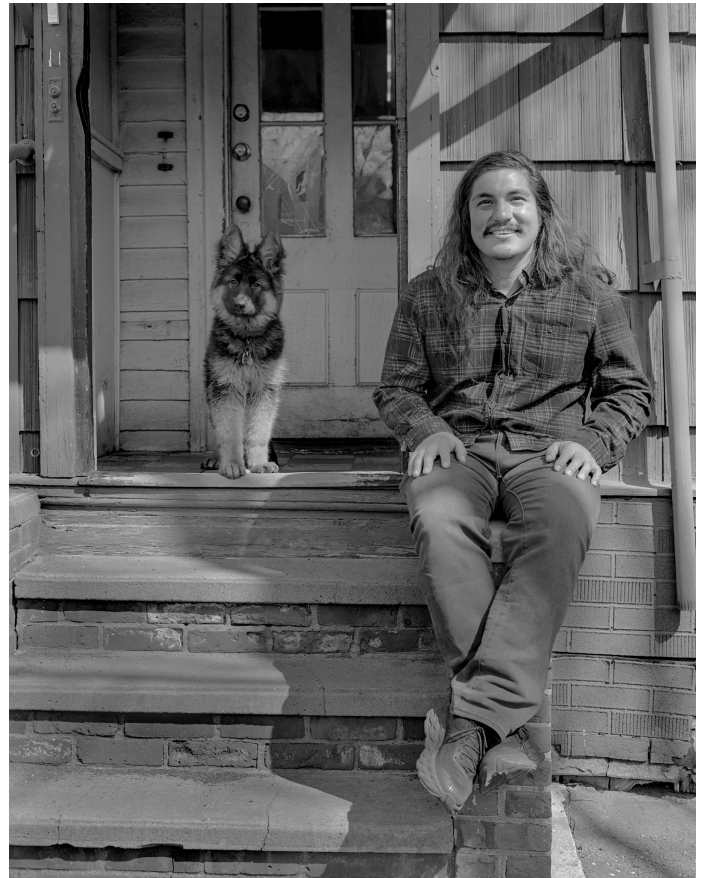
Life



2nd place: Adrián Martínez
Entre amigos



3rd place: Adrián Martínez
Músicos

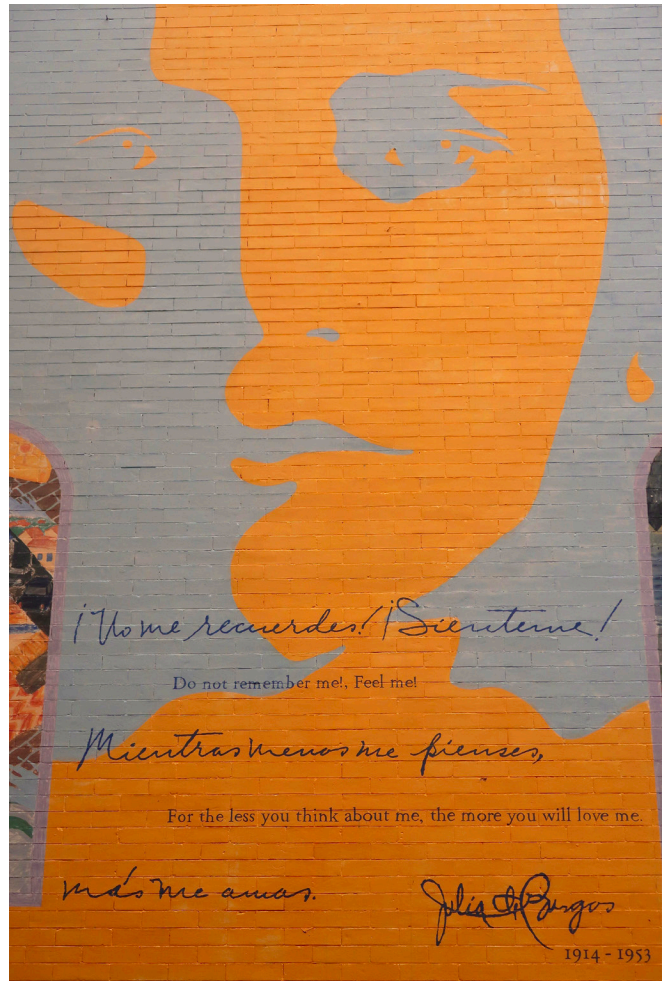


1st place: Alexander Rubalcava
Henry Camarillo

Language



1st place: Eric Jiménez
Homenaje a las hermanas Mirabal



3rd place: Tía Chitty
Más amas



2nd place: Dylan Gerstel
Escuela abandonada