

# Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

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## Greetings from the Chair

We hope you enjoy reading the first edition of our newsletter. Over the years we have wondered what has happened to our graduates. We do hope that you will go to our website

(<http://www.siu.edu/artsciences/fll>)

and send us a message letting us know about the directions your lives have taken you. In the last three years there have been quite a few changes in the department faculty.

We are sad to report that Professor Rick Morrison died unexpectedly in May, 2007, as did Professor emerita Veronique Zaytzeff in August, 2010. Three very valued and beloved Spanish faculty retired:

Dr. Liz Fonseca, Dr. Julian Bueno, and Dr. Kathy Bueno. They are much missed by the students. We also have some wonderful new faculty members and visiting Fulbright scholars whom you can read about below.

Please let us know what kind of news you would like to hear from us. If you are ever near SIUE, please stop by and visit the department. We would be happy to show you our state of the art language lab and multi media center. There has been a lot of building occurring on campus, including several very modern dormitories. You would be surprised to see how much the campus has developed.




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## New Faces: FLL welcomes new faculty and Fulbright Scholars to the department!

Dr. **Olga Bezhanova** is originally from Ukraine. She got her BA and MA from McGill University in Canada and her Ph.D. from Yale University. After completing her doctoral program, she worked for a year at Cornell University as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish Literature. She has published articles on Benito Perez Galdos, Calderon, Juan

Goytisolo, Rosa Montero, and Ernestina de Champourcin. Her research interests include female Bildungsroman in Spain, the theory of ideology, and collective identities.

Dr. **Joaquín Florido Berrocal** joined the Foreign Languages and Literature Department in the fall of 2009. He got his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University where he specialized in

Contemporary Literature from Spain. His research interests include 20th and 21st century Spanish Literature, film, theory, and politics, especially questions referring to biopolitics and memory. He also brings extensive teaching experience having taught four years of Spanish language, culture, and literature courses at the University of Michigan prior to starting his doctoral

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Olga Bezhanova



Joaquín Florido Berrocal



Ana Romero

## New Faces (Continued from Page 1)

program, where he continued to teach a variety of Spanish language courses.

Dr. **Carolina Rocha** joined the Foreign Languages and Literature Department in the fall of 2008. She holds a Ph.D. in from the University of Texas Austin and has taught at the University of Alberta (Canada) and University of Illinois. She specializes on 20th-Century Latin American literature and cinema and is the coeditor with Hugo Hortiguera of *Argentinian Cultural Production During the Neoliberal Years 1989-2001*.

Professor Rocha is also the recipient of several fellowships, including one from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is the new Spanish Study Abroad advisor and hopes to lead a group of students to Argentina in the Summer of 2010.

A native of Barcelona, Spain, **Ana Romero** received her master's degree in Spanish education as a second language. She worked as instructor of Spanish at Arkansas State University and now she has the same position in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at SIUE. Currently Ana teaches Elementary Spanish I and II.

**Reham Othman**, a Fulbright scholar from Egypt is teaching the first Arabic classes at SIUE. She is a teacher and a student at the same time. She is teaching Arabic language at SIUE, and taking three classes as well. She graduated from Ain Shams University in Egypt. Before coming to SIUE, she was working on her MA in English teaching methodology at Cairo University and at the ministry of Education in the Center of Curriculums and Instructional Material Development (CCIMD) in the English department. The following are her words: "Coming to SIUE is a turning point in my life, as this is my first time to travel alone. I was very excited and worried at the same time. But knowing that this will be a great experience, I keep working on it. It took nine months of paper work , interviews, tests, etc. to be able to have this grant. I believe it is worth it as I have learned a lot of new things and have experienced many new situations. Once I came to SIUE, I was only excited and not worried any more, as I found almost all the people around me are very helpful, especially my supervisors, the head of the department and my two host families. They have helped me a lot!! Teaching Arabic here is the most exciting part of my story. I really love it and feel so proud about teaching my own

language. You can not imagine how happy I am when I found my students learning Arabic, pronouncing words and sentences correctly! I wish that SIUE could continue offering this Arabic course." Reham continues as a Graduate Assistant at SIUE in 2010-11.

**Kolá Tubosun**, the Fulbright Yoruba instructor, is very thrilled to be at the department of Foreign Languages at SIUE. Yoruba is a large language in West Africa of the Niger Congo language family. A Nigerian, Kolá has traveled to Kenya in East Africa on a similar academic program. The Fulbright FLTA program allows scholars from all over the world to come to the United States to teach their language and culture to American students. These scholars also gain a chance to experience the educational system of the United States for the duration of the scholarship. His name means "(He who) brings wealth." He is more than thrilled by his weekly classroom experiences teaching SIUE students. In particular he enjoys learning from his students as well as offering them cultural and linguistic information about Yoruba

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## New Faces (Continued from Page 2)

and Nigeria. Kolá says "Language is a window it into the mindset of a people, and as I have always spoken English in addition to my own first language, I like the idea of being able teach Yoruba to others interested in learning about it. In a constantly changing world, there's always an advantage in what we

know about 'the other people.'"

The Yoruba language course that he teaches now at SIUE is just for one session, but it will continue next year with the next Fulbright scholar. The scope of instruction includes language speaking exercises, discussion of works in Yoruba literature, art,

music and history. What he likes most about the Foreign Languages Department is the way everyone is warm towards him without making him feel like an outsider. Kola continues at SIUE as the Graduate Assistant in the Foreign Language Training Center for 2010-11.



*"Coming to SIUE is a turning point in my life, as this is my first time to travel alone. I was very excited and worried at the same time." – Reham Othman, Fulbright Scholar from Cairo, Egypt*

## Recent Events

On September 16, 2009 the theatrical group *Teatro Milagro*, from Portland, Oregon, presented the original bilingual show "El Ultimo." The themes included ecology, indigenous rights and spiritual beliefs, and sustained forest development in a remote area of the Patagonia (southern Argentina and Chile). The imaginative presentation attracted an audience of more than 250 in the Meridian Ballroom. The event was organized by Professor Mariana Soares and sponsored by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, the Office of Student Affairs, the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity, and Women's Studies.

On October 22, 2009, Anthropology Professor Bret Gustafson from

Washington University, author of *New Languages of the State* (Duke University Press, 2009) visited SIUE. Dr. Gustafson gave a talk entitled "Natural Gas and Poverty in Bolivia: What is Evo Morales Doing with Resource Wealth?" to the IS 326 Modern Latin America class co-taught by Professors Tom Jordan (History) and Carolina Rocha (Foreign Languages). Professor Gustafson examined the challenges of the resource boom that Bolivia is enjoying as well as the redistributive and transformative agenda of the first democratically-elected indigenous president of Latin America, Evo Morales.

Right: Professor Gustafson talking to IS 326 students.

### Berlin Wall

*Freiheit—Freedom.* It's something those of us living in the U.S. take for granted. 20 years ago on November 9, 1989, a major barrier to freedom, the Berlin Wall, came down and gave freedom back to a huge part of Europe. On November 9, 2009, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the tearing down of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the "Iron Curtain," students from



*Kolá Tubosun, Fulbright Scholar from Lagos, Nigeria*

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## Recent Events: (Continued from Page 3)

the SIUE German program and the FLL Department's culture club, S.P.E.A.C., produced a replica of the Berlin Wall in the Quad and set up an exhibition of German culture and heritage in the Goshen Lounge of the MUC. It was an

enlightening and thought-provoking event for SIUE students and staff as well as more than 150 area high school students who came to see the display. In addition, many people were given the opportunity to get involved and add their own graffiti to the replica wall.

Right: *Dirndl-clad Departmental Chair, Belinda Carstens-Wickham, and FLTC Graduate Assistant Catherine Xavier at the Berlin Wall Project*



Left: *Commemoration of Berlin Wall – Students add Graffiti*



Alumnus  
Christopher Stroot  
in Venice

## Alumni

**Christopher Stroot** graduated with majors in Political Science, History, and Spanish Languages and Literature with a German minor. He is currently working on graduate studies at the University of Chicago. A former SIUE Chancellor Scholar, he is also the proud winner of a University Summer Course Grant from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as well as a recipient of a scholarship from the German Federal Foreign Office for studies

at the Free University in Berlin in summer 2009. As a study-abroad student 2008-2009 at the University of Murcia in Spain -- one graciously sponsored through grants from the College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Study Abroad, and the Chancellor Scholarship -- he took classes in fourth and fifth-year Spanish history, European history and political science courses. With the assistance of a URA grant, he completed bachelors theses in these three majors, and elected

to continue his studies in the Division of Social Sciences at the University of Chicago. This past year, he was also the recipient of the SIUE chapter and one of 40 National Graduate Fellowships from the Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society. Upon completion of this Masters program at the University of Chicago, he will be entering a Ph.D. program in History, focusing on 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Spanish and European social history.

## News from the Foreign Language Training Center



During the course of the Fall 2008-Fall 2009 year, the FLTC has added several features to better serve students at SIUE. We are moving to an ever-more automated process, such as real time support from lab assistants via computer, and an electronic catalog system for our foreign language DVDs, videotapes, and associated materials.

Continuing our mission to bring the best of current technology to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature's programs, we have also upgraded our plasma TV lounge with a large 52" television for better visibility. Similarly, we have installed central monitor in the computer lab for more effective instruction when integrating computers and classroom instruction.

We continue to integrate foreign language software such as QUIA online workbooks, and work to integrate more software options to give the potential of several new avenues for instruction. All computers are equipped with sound recording and editing software as well as internet applications to facilitate no-cost communication with others across the world.

### Mini Language-Lessons: 'Long Time No See'

Arabic: لم نرك منذ مدة (lam naraka mundhu muddah)

Chinese (Mandarin): 好久不見 [好久不见] (hǎojiǔ bújiàn)

French: Ça fait longtemps qu'on s'est pas vu!

German: Lange nicht gesehen!

Italian: Quanto tempo!

Spanish: ¡Cuánto tiempo!

Yorùbá: O pẹ ti a ri ara wa o

## Diversifying Language Offerings

### Chinese Classes

Last fall more than 40 students enrolled in Elementary Chinese 101 reflecting a national trend of higher demand for Chinese language classes at colleges and universities in the United States. The class was taught in two sections; one by Assistant Professor Tom Lavalley and one by instructor Xiaoli Loveridge. Second year Chinese language students are actively blogging (in Chinese!) and their work can be seen by clicking on “followers” of: <http://siuezhongwen.blogspot.com/>

祝你好運

## Tom Lavalley co-leads School of Business Travelstudy to China



Since 2001, during the two weeks between the end of the spring semester and the beginning of the first summer semester session, Dr. Tom Lavalley has co-lead a School of Business travel study class to China. During this course, Dr. Lavalley teaches Chinese language and culture and serves as interpreter and

logistics coordinator for students who come from both the School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. In May of 2009, the class visited Shanghai, Suzhou and Xiamen all located on and near the east coast of China. Shown in the photo (left to right) are Richard Luong, Dr. Tom Lavalley, Kyle Marcum and Nick Malone at the Cold Mountain Temple in Suzhou. The 2010 School of Business Travel Study to China course was especially exciting since the class visited Beijing for the first time and had the opportunity to experience a day at the World Expo in Shanghai.

## New Program: Asian Studies Minor

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literature is very happy to announce a **new minor program in Asian Studies**. Drawing on the strengths of faculty in the departments of Anthropology, Foreign Languages and Literature, Geography, Historical Studies, Philosophy, Political Science and the School of Business, the minor is an

interdisciplinary program that introduces students to the diverse cultures, histories and societies of Asia. Assistant Professor Tom Lavalley, who teaches Chinese language and culture, is the coordinator of this new program. For more information about the Asian Studies minor please visit the program's website at:

<http://www.siue.edu/artsandsciences/fll/asianstudies>

We're on the Web!

<http://www.siu.edu/artsandsciences/fll>

## We Would Love to Hear From You!

### Contact Us

Let us know what you have been doing since graduation. Send us a blurb about yourself and what you are doing now, and we would gladly post it in our Alumni Section. Information may be sent to Prof. Douglas Simms at [dsimms@siue.edu](mailto:dsimms@siue.edu)

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