

## The Department of Foreign Languages and Literature welcomes Sedycias on board

[Erin](#) | Aug 22, 2011 | [1 comment](#)



João Sedycias isn't familiar with pleasant, random strangers, such as the cashier at the grocery store who held a conversation with him about peach recipes.

Sedycias, the new chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature who moved from New Jersey recently, said he's not used to the niceness of Midwest people just yet — not that he's complaining.

He said he also notices the difference with his new colleagues at SIUE.

“It extends to how other people on campus relate to you and especially how they make it easier for you to do your job,” Sedycias said. “And when this opportunity came up, I interviewed, liked it very much; they liked me too, so I think that it was a good marriage. And here I am.”

The study of foreign language is what Sedycias said he likes to call home, and he's excited to share his passion with all students of the university. He said he wants to raise the department's profile by continuing the successful improvements it has made over the years and creating new goals that the department can work into the future.

“My main goal is to add to the department, to build on the work that my colleagues in the department have done over the years,” Sedycias said. “There are things that we can do better and there are things that are brand new that we've never tried before.”

Sedycias said he wants to open doors to not just the students at SIUE but to exchange students, especially from his home country of Brazil. He wants to use his experience as an exchange student to promote learning in foreign language. He received his bachelor's degree with two concentrations, Spanish and molecular biology, two master's degrees — in English and Spanish — and his Ph.D. in comparative literature all as an exchange student in the U.S.

Whatever Sedycias strives to improve within the department, he said the bottom line is for the department to serve students to the best of its ability and allow them to obtain the highest quality degree when they leave.

Students can benefit from any sort of foreign language training, whether or not they major in a certain language. Sedycias said any person with a background in foreign language is more marketable for many careers.

“If a student comes into my office to discuss their future, my question is going to be very simple,” he said. “What can I do for you? How can I enhance your degree? How can I add value?”

Sedycias said he enjoyed his studies in molecular biology, but always considered foreign language the dessert in all of his schooling. He would love if all students thought of foreign language studies as a dessert, but said each one should try a foreign language regardless.

“They say find something you like and you will never have to work a day in your life,” Sedycias said. “[Foreign language] is always interesting and it’s a discovery, so my decision to pursue it as a career was fairly simple.”