

L i n g u a e

Shippensburg University

Spring 2021

A Message from the Chair

Dear friends and colleagues,

Greetings from Shippensburg! In July 2020 I became department chair, succeeding Dr. José Ricardo. The 2020 Newsletter was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so my first newsletter will contain news since our last newsletter in 2019.

Like everyone else, the COVID-19 outbreak has greatly affected our faculty, both personally and professionally. In March of 2020, we experienced an overnight shift to an entirely online format to complete the spring semester. Like our students, we had to adapt to new circumstances and face unfamiliar challenges, and I am happy to say that both students and faculty rose to the occasion. The fall 2020 semester added some flexibility in how we delivered our coursework, and our hope is that we can all return to campus to teach and mentor our students in the not too distant future.

It is with deep sadness that I report the passing of Dr. Agnès Ragone from cancer. A celebration of her life on September 26, 2020 was well attended, both in person and remotely, with many sharing their fondest memories of this remarkable colleague, friend, professor and scholar. As many know, the *Gros Mangles* project into which she put so much of herself was a focus of her professional life in later years, and those wishing to support this project are encouraged to visit the website (www.projectgrosmandles.com). She continues to be greatly missed in the department.

The Department of Global Languages and Cultures has undergone further change since our last newsletter. Decisions at the PASSHE level have led to a reduction of course offerings, and GLC was forced to discontinue its Chinese and ASL course offerings, which we hope will be temporary. On a more positive note, the university has been reaccredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education from 2020 – 2028, and our Foreign Language Education program continues to be accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) through 2022. Since NCATE no longer exists, we are in the process of obtaining accreditation by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the accrediting agency that replaced NCATE. We are proud to have this national validation of our work.

There were also great accomplishments by our Faculty these last two years. Dr. Blandine Mitaut received the Wood Honors College Outstanding Honors Professor Award in May 2019, and two of her students, Alex Purcell and Joe Ernst received a TAPIF award to teach English in France, and are currently completing their experience in Charolles (Académie de Dijon) and in the Bourges (Académie d'Orléans-Tours), respectively. Dr. José Ricardo was named interim associate Dean in the College of Education and co-chair of the 2021 Strategic Planning (SP) Quality subcommittee. Dr. Rob Lesman was awarded a TIPS teaching award for his course *Spanish for the Professions* and was awarded a fall 2021 sabbatical to work on his new book project: *Cuban Writers in New York 1972-1991*. In August of 2020, Dr. Ana Moraña was interviewed by Radio Uruguay about her work, and was awarded a sabbatical leave in spring 2021 to work on her book project: *Frivolity, Consumption and Events of Everyday Life: Visions of the Press and the Literature in the First Decades of 20th-Century Argentina*. And I returned in July 2020 from a yearlong sabbatical in Germany, where I worked on my book project: *Ordinary Soldiers? A Case Study of the Nazi-Soviet War of Annihilation, 1941-45*, for which I received a grant from The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. It is gratifying for such a small department to receive so many teaching awards and sabbaticals!

While the pandemic does not currently allow for in-person events, we have continued our efforts to offer our students different forums and events to broaden their academic horizons. In October, Dr. Moraña organized a zoom presentation by Dr. Alejandra Aguilar Dornelles, Florida Atlantic University, entitled: “Reclaiming our Heroism: War, Poetry and Racial Identity in Cuba.” Later that month, we organized our first virtual immersion afternoon, offering our students karaoke, Jeopardy! and international foods across our language sections.

As this letter shares, these past two years have been a time of both change and continuity. We will continue to use Facebook to announce departmental events, so please check out our page (and like us!). Also look for an updated departmental website in the near future. I close with the hope that you will stay healthy and connected-

Best wishes,

Dr. David W. Wildermuth
Department Chair
Global Languages & Cultures



Our Faculty and Staff

Robert Lesman, Spanish

I was born and raised in Fairfax, Virginia. I received my PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Texas at Austin in 2005. I specialize in translation and interpreting and have published articles on Cuban literature and culture.

Blandine Mitaut, French

A native from France, I grew up near Dijon in the Burgundy region and did the first part of my studies at the Université de Bourgogne where I got a Maîtrise (MA) in English literature. I subsequently spent some time in Oxford, OH, where I obtained a MA in French from Miami University, and then completed my PhD at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. My research interests are contemporary French and Francophone literature, with an added focus on translation and Haitian writers.

Ana Moraña, Spanish and Ethnic Studies

I was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, where I worked as a Literature and Spanish Grammar instructor. I hold a PhD in Latin American Literatures and Cultures from Ohio State University. My areas of interest are Latin American literatures and cultures (Southern Cone, 19th century and turn-of-the-century) and Latin American cinema. I published several articles in peer reviewed journals. I am also the director of the Ethnic Studies Program at Shippensburg University. In July 2014, I was awarded with participation in the NEH Summer Seminar “Jewish Buenos Aires”, housed in that city.

Courtney Coover, Department Secretary

I was born and raised here in Shippensburg and attended Hagerstown Community College. My husband and I have two boys, and two dogs. My interests include a variety of arts and crafts and reading.

Marcela Pineda-Volk, Spanish

I was born in Colombia and raised in New Jersey. I received my MA in Spanish from Middlebury College and a PhD in Latin American Literature from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. My area of specialization is Contemporary Latin American Literature.

José Ricardo, Spanish and Foreign Language Education

I earned my BA from Universidad del Atlántico in Barranquilla (Colombia) and my MA from the University of Arkansas. My doctorate is from the University of Arkansas too. My research interests include learning outcomes assessment, cognitive psychology in educational reform, teacher professional development and Foreign Language methods.

David Wildermuth, German

I was born and raised on Long Island, NY. I received an MA in German and another in Political Science from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and a Doctor of Modern Languages in German and Russian from Middlebury College. My research interests include the German Army and the Holocaust as well as the contemporary German film scene. I have close ties to Germany and Austria through family and friends and love to share what is vibrant and compelling about the German-speaking world with my students.

Faculty News

Papers Delivered at Conferences & Publications in Scholarly Journals, & Other Faculty News

Dr. Robert Lesman

Conference paper

“Política y poética de las antologías de poesía cubana traducida al inglés.” 66th Annual Meeting, Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies. 29 March 2019. Oaxaca, Mexico.

Forthcoming article

“Real and Unreal Lives: José Rodríguez Feo’s Translation of Stevens’ ‘Attempt to Discover Life.’” *Wallace Stevens Journal*.

Forthcoming book

Translating Cuba: Literature, Music, Film and Politics. Contracted for publication by Routledge.

Forthcoming editorial work

English language editor of Esther Suárez Durán, *Hydrangeas and Violets: Three Plays*, translated by Pennell Somsen.

Award

Shippensburg University Teaching innovations in Pedagogy and Scholarship Award for Spanish 330 (Spanish for the Professions), Fall 2020

Dr. Blandine Mitaut

Conference paper

Presented the paper “Traveling by the Side Roads of History: Vodou Ritual and the Conquest of Time in Haiti Noir” at the 2019 Popular Culture Association/American

Culture Association Conference, Washington, D.C., April 17-20, 2019

Award

Received the Wood Honors College Outstanding Honors Professor Award, 2018-2019

Dr. M. Pineda-Volk

Workshops

Quality Matters, Professional Development workshop, Shippensburg University, PA: 2020 (Consisting of 7 individual workshops designed to train educators deliver

quality online learning). Vista Higher Learning, “You Can Be in Two Places at One Time, Part 2: Multimodality Teaching and Learning-Remote Plus Face-to-Face, 2020

Dr. Ana Moraña

Conference Paper

“The work art by Martín Ramírez: identity in confinement”. Virtual Congress of Latin American Studies Association (LASA) May 26-29, 2021

“Discurso visual, silencio institucional. Cine, telenovela e impunidad en la tardomodernidad argentina”. Congress of Latin American Studies Association (LASA), Boston May 24-27, 2019. “La poética de la espera en *Zama* y *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*”. MACLAS Conference, SUNNY Stony Brook, March 8-9, 2019.

Sabbatical Leave (Spring 2020). Book Project: *Frivolity, Consumption and Events of Everyday Life: Visions of the Press and the Literature in the First Decades of 20th- Century Argentina/ Frivolidad, consumo y avatares de la vida diaria*.

Reviewer

L.A.R.R. *Latin American Research Review*. U of Pittsburgh. (Spring 2020) <http://www.radiouruguay.uy/una-profesora-uruguay-en-pennsylvania>

Dr. David Wildermuth

“*Dieser Krieg hier im Osten hat uns Soldaten alle zu anderen Menschen geformt.*” Wie die 35. Infanteriedivision den Krieg gegen die U.d.S.S.R. führte und erlebte, 1941-42.“ *Workshop des Lehrstuhls für Neuere und Neueste Geschichte*, Universität Freiburg, Germany, June 2020.

2019 Harry Frank Guggenheim *Grant for book project* entitled “*Ordinary Soldiers? A Case Study of the Nazi-Soviet War of Annihilation.*”

2019 *Deutsch Akademischer Austauschdienst* Research Stay for University Academics and Scientists, Freiburg, Germany.

“‘I am fully aware of my guilt . . .’: Insights from a Soviet Military Tribunal’s Investigation of the German Army’s 35th Division, 1946–47,” *Journal of Military History*, October 2019.

“(Re-)searching for results: best practices for your long-term research stay abroad,” keynote address of the DAAD Orientation Meeting for Scholarship Holders from the USA and Canada, October 2019.

Faculty Mentor to students of GER393: The Holocaust and its German Legacy for their presentations at the 2019 Minds@Work Conference, Shippensburg University, Spring 2019

Dr. Ricardo Osorio

Workshop

Quality Matters, Professional Development workshop, Shippensburg University, PA: 2020 (Consisting of 7 individual workshops designed to train educators deliver quality online learning).

Conference Presentation

Assess Smart: Aligning Formative and Summative Performance-Based Assessments. Pennsylvania State Modern Languages Association (PSMLA) Fall Conference, State College, PA, October 25th [Invited Session].

Comparative Analysis of Retention Strategies from Georgia State University (GSU) and Shippensburg University (SU). President’s Leadership Academy Capstone Project. Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, 2019.

Educational Effectiveness Assessment, Standard V. Middle States Self-Study Report. Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, 2019.

Microaggressions. Courageous Conversations Fall Series. Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. November 11, 2019

In Memoriam-Dr. Agnès Ragone

Remembrance by Dr. Blandine Mitaut

For several of us in Global Languages, the first glimpse of Dr. Agnès Ragone was at the Harrisburg airport, where she kindly picked us up for our job interviews at Ship. Thus, the drive to campus turned out to be the corridor to the world of Dr. Ragone, the thrills of which we would be given to experience for the next decade or more, as we worked closely, sharing intense moments, stress, laughter, zany travel experiences, and deep friendships.

The world of Dr. Ragone was exuberant. The combination of her charisma, wit, intellect and explosive temperament brought excitement to the everyday.

Two interwoven images of her stick: the adventurer, the storyteller.

Dr. Ragone the Adventurer lived several lives in one. Inside the respectable Ship professor hid a budding plane pilot (she flew a Jodel aircraft in her youth); an equestrian; a belly dancer who owned a pet *fennec* fox from the Sahara; a Spanish tour guide who once unknowingly participated in the shady transport of 40 Greek passports to be mysteriously stamped in Spain for visas to the Soviet Union...

A gifted polyglot, who knew French, Spanish, English, Latin, Greek, Arabic and German, Dr. Ragone created quirky idioms that dusted up words and gave them new meaning. They helped her transfigure the world. Such was her "*lit-bateau*" -- her "boat-bed" -- to which an ankle broken while in Haiti confined her for weeks. It made the reality of being stuck more bearable for the nomad who had moved through so many places.

The fracture was sustained jumping off a sailboat while on a study abroad trip with Ship students... The water level was low, the sand was hard, the ankle folded. Dr. Ragone, though, did not dwell on the pain. Rather, she proudly recalled that the broken ankle did not keep her from beating a twentysomething young man in a swimming contest before getting back on the boat!

Agnès the Adventurer fueled Agnès the terrific Storyteller who kept us on the edge of our seats. She knew just how to give an air of novelty to tales we had heard many times. No doubt familiar to you was her "Have I told you the story of...?" Oftentimes, she had told us. But her flair for presenting it in a way that made it unrecognizable at first, made you say "no"; and she'd proceed to tell it again. Once you recognized it, it was too late to stop her, and you certainly didn't want to: new hysterical details were sure to surface, keeping you hooked.

Still, the hallways of Rowland Hall echo with Dr. Ragone's jubilant laughter owing to her ability to transform into hilarious episodes the misfortunes and traumatizing events she lived through. Her stories also featured those she loved and missed most: family in France, longtime friends in Spain, and of course so, so, so many stories -- her favorite, it seemed -- of her adored children and their growing pains. Finally, stories about her students, who mattered so very much to her.

It was sometimes difficult to follow her relentless work rhythm. To this day no one knows how she accomplished all that she did. Dr. Ragone's profound faith in humanity, inherited from her idealistic father, nudged her to move mountains in service to others. Her brilliant mind teemed with ideas and each idea spurred her fearlessly forward. 200% full steam ahead, 100% of the time, to make the world a fairer, better place! Dr. Ragone said she was most proud of the medical center that she was instrumental in founding in Gros Mangles, Haiti, and especially of engaging Ship students and the community in the project.

Dr. Ragone, thank you for being such a fabulous traveling companion who made any place come to life. We miss the beautiful colleague, revered teacher, brilliant scholar, dedicated advocate for the voiceless, the fun, loyal and unbelievably generous friend that you were. You were one distinguished, inspiring, and essential member of the Ship family who touched countless lives. We assure you that your moving stories and adventurous spirit live on with us.

Global Languages and Cultures Clubs

The French and Francophone Club



Despite a challenging year for student groups (pandémie oblige), our French Club was exceptionally active in 2019 and 2020. It all started with Lou-Anne Foucault, our stellar Club President, who came all the way from La Rochelle in August 2019! Together with Louis-Michel Monga (Vice President), Meryem Tayoune (Secretary) and Jack Leidemann (Treasurer) the dynamic team put in place several galvanizing initiatives that breathed new life into the club increasing its membership. The Club participated in service activities, engaging in fundraisers to benefit Project Gros Mangles. We danced to Dr. Ricardo's zouk moves and ate beignets at the Mardi Gras Celebration (Feb. 28, 2019), served breakfast at Applebee's in Chambersburg (Apr. 6, 2019), and held a Holiday Bazaar (Dec. 5, 2019). Cultural activities included the production of *Le*

Francophile, a weekly newsletter featuring Francophone artists, recipes, and cities. In addition, we had monthly movie nights and two *soirées crêpes*. On Nov. 6, 2019 we spent the day in Philly, where we visited the Marcel Duchamp collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and toured the Old City. After Lou-Anne went back to France (Spring 2020), we were fortunate that Meryem Tayoune took over as Club President, with Jack Leidemann as Vice-President, Dan Fiscus as Secretary, and Leslie Taylor as Treasurer. The new officers have maintained a high level of energy with a number of virtual activities, such as remote film screenings, a presentation on the history of the French language during International Education Week, the publication of new issues of *Le Francophile*, and regular conversation hours throughout the fall semester.

Pi Delta Phi, the French Honor Society



On May 3, 2019 our French Honor Society chapter Mu Psi inducted James Barciz. James gave an astounding performance of the aria "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle" from George Bizet's *Carmen*, accompanying himself on the cello, which made this particular event very special. The lucky guests included Pi Delta Phi members Marie-Jeanne Haba, Barira Gbaguidi, Halima Gbaguidi, Nicole Hallahan, and Reggie Hefner who were happy to welcome James to the group. Membership rewards academic efforts and contributions to the French-speaking community on campus and beyond. We had no new inductees in fall 2019 but were hoping to induct 7 new members in spring 2020. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to cancel the spring and fall 2020 ceremonies. We look forward to resuming Pi Delta Phi events in 2021.

Student Accomplishments



Student Research

Language students presented their research at the Minds@Work conference:

April 23, 2019

Marleigh Chaney, Nicole Hallahan, Emilyn Labonte, Pierre Médé, and Taren Swartz presented their work at the "Enjeux identitaires et politiques dans la littérature haïtienne (Politics and Identity in Haitian Literature)" roundtable, sponsored by Dr. Mitaut.

Tristan Ambrose, Nikole Botscheller, and Shawn Wolfe presented their work at the "Holocaust and its German Legacy" panel, sponsored by Dr. Wildermuth.

April 2020 (Virtual edition)

Emily Saldaña presented "Why is Bilingualism Decreasing in Latino Families", sponsored by Dr. Lesman.

Student Awards

APSCUF College/Coach Student Award

This award is given to a student majoring or minoring in French, German or Spanish whose talents, academic accomplishments, and service merit recognition.

2020 John Lyons (French)
2019 Tristan Ambrose (German)

Pauline Klaus Award

This award is given to a senior majoring in French or Spanish who excels in the study of the language.

2020 Emily Saldaña (Spanish)
2019 Taren Swartz (French) and Esther Nganinga-Moubandzou (French)

Stay in touch!

If you have any items of interest that you would like to see included in Linguae, please forward them to the following address.

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