Our Department Hosts ALOUD Teacher Conference 2014

Last April, the MLC dept and the Weiss Language Center hosted the Association of Language Teachers of Orange, Ulster, Dutchess and Surrounding Counties (ALOUD) Conference in conjunction with the New York State Association of Teachers of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT) at Marist College. 80 Language educators from the Hudson Valley were invited to attend. Dr. Kevin Gaugler served as one of the plenary speakers with his talk, *By, Buy, Bye the Book: Towards a Self-Organized LOTE Curriculum*. His talk presented a journey away from traditional textbooks and curricula and towards a more differentiated learning model in which technology is leveraged to expand vocabulary and to practice the four skills of language learning: reading, listening, speaking and writing.

Professor Gaugler’s students from SPAN 325 Spanish in the Digital Age presented on integrating 21st Century Skills into language education. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students to participate in undergraduate research. Here’s what Cameron Christoffel ‘16 says of the experience:

“The project itself was enlightening because it forced me to find ways to record and track measurable improvement in language learning, which can sometimes be very subjective.”

At the ALOUD conference I presented on the 21st century learning skill called Initiative and Self-Direction. The project itself was enlightening because it forced me to find ways to record and track measurable improvement in language learning, which can sometimes be very subjective. The conversations I shared with the other language professors about my strategy and self-initiative resources were exciting. All the students got into a pretty cool intellectual groove as we discussed ways to enhance language learning using our 21st century skills. What I took away from the conference was a better understanding of how I should approach my own language learning, and some of the measurement methods I started using during the project have continued with me to the current day.”
May 26, Prof. Romero presented “La grifa negra: Poetic Whitening/Darkening for Afro-Caribbean Solidarity” and moderated a session titled “Color and Ability: Body Policy and Poetics” in the Caribbean Studies Association’s 39th Annual Conference in Merida, Mexico.

May 30, Prof. Romero hosted a book presentation for Emilio Jorge Rodríguez’s Haiti and Trans-Caribbean Literary Identity at the Caribbean Studies Association’s 39th Annual Conference in Merida, Mexico.

June Prof. Gaugler traveled with students to the Dominican Republic where they ran a technology camp for 53 Dominican middle school and high school students.

September Prof. Gaugler presented on service learning and bridging the digital divide at the Educause conference in Orlando, FL.

Oct 2 Prof. Ferrer did a brief presentation for the National English Honors Society titled “La Bordera”.

Nov. 5 Prof. Ferrer presented a lecture at the Hispanic Studies department at Vassar College titled, “Caniba-Cariba: Cannibalism, Ecology and Gender Difference in Early Colonial Latin America.”

November 11, Prof. Gaugler gave a webinar for Pearson Publishing on information literacy for language learners.

November 12, Prof. Romero gave a class lecture titled ‘A Small Place and Life and Debt: Contestatory Positioning and Narrative Tone” at Vassar College.

On November 13, Prof. Ferrer spoke at Marist Sustainability Day on Zombies, an alternate ecology and Latin American Shamanism.

November 19, Prof Gaugler will present more on his research on service learning and bridging the digital divide at the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages Conference in San Antonio, TX.

The Weiss Language Center (WLC) is a place of learning and study, but also a growing community where connections are forged and students can freely explore what today’s highly integrated world has to offer. The Language Center offers language coaching in Spanish and French, an open forum on its Facebook page, free online language learning resources, and a welcoming staff who can help other students practice valuable skills.

The Center hosts a series of on the ground as well as online events. Each semester we host a Spanish Game Night where students play video games in Spanish and at least one or two Share Your Story Events with the co-sponsorship of Marist International Programs (MIP). Featuring some of our most internationally-involved students here at Marist, each event aims to foster the value of a global approach to learning.

The Share Your Story events have been an effective means of connecting students who share similar experiences of reverse culture shock upon returning to campus from lengthy periods abroad. The event allows them to share stories of what they see as pivotal points in both their personal and academic development. Our second Share Your Story event will be held on Wednesday, November 19.

Additionally, students working at the WLC are in charge of developing and maintaining our social media sites in Facebook and Twitter: Languages at Marist and “SpanishAtMarist”. The pages point you to events and resources.

So, come over to the WLC for tutoring, practice, gaming or just for hanging out.

Faculty News

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National Honor Society

Sigma Delta Pi is the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society, and the chapter at Marist College, Phi Pi, recently inducted a class of 10 students in the spring semester of 2014. This academic year, the honor society aims to enact projects, events, and activities campus-wide and locally to celebrate and spread awareness of the Hispanic culture and the Spanish language. In the spring of 2015, the Phi Pi chapter plans to induct a new class. ¡Olé!

Registration info. (Spring 2015)

SPAN 292L111 ST: Spanish for Medical Professions Instructor: TBA TR 3:30-4:45pm

Spanish for Medical Professions is a course designed for high beginner to intermediate level Spanish students who wish to broaden their vocabulary skills while focusing on practical language patterns used in situations related to medical professions which doctors, technicians, nurses, and EMTs may experience in work settings such as hospitals, emergency rooms, laboratories, and clinics. Students will gain knowledge of medical Spanish terms and cultural aspects of medicine. Classes will be conducted mostly in Spanish with emphasis on conversation. Topics of grammar will include (but are not limited to) the present tense (including stem-changing verbs and reflexive verbs), the preterit, object pronouns, constructions with gustar and doler, and the present subjunctive.

Seminar in Francophone studies ST - FREN 392

Against the established background of World Englishes and English as a global Lingua Franca, the course will explore the many varieties of French that are covered by the term Francophonie. More than 200 million people speak French either as a primary language, as an alternate world language or in many localized and indigenized versions, each with their particular expression, history, and politics. From Louisiana’s Cajun French to Mauritius or Haiti’s creoles to the resurgence of regional patois in France, to the lingua Franca of North and West Africa, and to the fast evolving modern Parisian French, we will reflect on the French language as a global tool and commodity and as an important actor in the larger debate on preserving the diversity of World languages.

SPAN 477 Capping will now be on W 6:30-9:15. (Cross listed with SPAN 431) in FN 303. Taught by Dr. Ferrer.

Pending Courses (Fall 2015)

These courses may be offered in the fall semester with sufficient student interest. Please contact the department chair if you would like to take one of these courses.

SPAN 292 ST: Spanish Pronunciation

This course will offer undergraduates a comprehensive introduction to the phonological systems and patterns of Spanish with an emphasis on the improvement of the student’s individual pronunciation. The main objectives are:

1) to examine the articulatory characteristics of Spanish sounds, their phonetic variations, and their phonological distribution;
2) to apply the principles and rules of Spanish pronunciation to the student’s own speech; and
3) to demonstrate effective pronunciation of Spanish through class drills, individual practice, and recordings.

SPAN 293 ST: Spanish for Social Services

This course is designed to serve those in the social work professions who seek basic conversational skills in Spanish. The course will explore practical vocabulary, everyday situations, and cross-cultural perspectives that social workers may encounter when dealing with Spanish-speaking clients, patients, and personnel. It will help students apply basic grammatical structures in a wide variety of practical contexts.
During the month of February the WLC ran a poetry contest. The following poem written by Lizzie Grisafi was found to be the winner by our professor judges. Lizzie won an Echo Smartpen. Here’s Lizzie’s entry.

El lenguaje corporal, by Lizzie Grisafi

Hay muchos niveles de comunicación:
Parlare, studiare, pensare, sognare.
Posso parlare un po’ di italiano.
Puedo estudiar español.
Posso pensare in inglese.
Cuando no puedo usar mis palabras,
Usa mis manos
Y mis ojos.
Posso viaggiare solo con i miei occhi.
En un lugar extranjero,
Puedo parecer perdida,
O posso parere confidente;
Todo solamente con mis ojos.
Lenguaje es una cosa fascinante,
Pero no es la única forma de comunicación.
L’inglese non è la lingua universale:
Es el uso del cuerpo
E gli occhi
Que se entiende en todo el mundo..

Event News

• Nov. 13 Prof. Ferrer will present at Sustainability Day “The Latin American Zombie and Shamanism” @12:30 SC 3101.
• Nov. 19 Share Your Story event @9-10:30pm Hancock 2020.
• Dec. 3 Prof. Ferrer will present at the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Flashe Mobbe @4:30 FN 303.
• French Education major Kendra McKechnie ’14 won a Fulbright scholarship for 2014-15 in Thailand. She is a language specialist who in addition to French also studied Wolof, Arabic and now Thai, and who plans a career in International Study.