



LINGUA FRANCA

A BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT SALEM STATE COLLEGE

<http://www.salemstate.edu/languages/linguafranca.htm>

2005 IS YEAR OF LANGUAGES IN THE UNITED STATES

BY DR. JON ASKE, FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The Year 2005 has been designated as the Year of Languages in the United States, "a nationwide observance designed to focus attention on the critical importance of language learning" (CAL website). Under the leadership of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), schools across the country will observe the year with special cultural and literary events.

The goal of The Year of Languages is to make people aware of the important role that languages play in our lives, in society, in the global economy, and in international relations. Both the US Senate and Massachusetts have issued proclamations making it official.

Foreign Language study in the United States has always lagged behind that of countries where a language of wider communication didn't happen to be spoken. According to the census, 9.3% of Americans can speak a second language fluently,

whereas 52.7% of Europeans can.

In other countries compulsory foreign language study starts at age 11 or 12 and goes on until graduation from high school and



www.yearoflanguages.org

students may even have to take two foreign languages. In the United States foreign language study tends to be less intensive, of a shorter duration, and less of a requirement. According to a 2002 survey by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, in 2000 "almost seven million students in American public secondary schools were enrolled in foreign language courses in grades 7-12," which represents only 33.8% of total enrollment. Of these, 92% are

studying Spanish (68.7%), French (18.3%) or German (4.8%), and 8% are studying other languages, e.g. Italian (1.2%) and Latin (2.7%).

The situation is not much better in US colleges. Most students do not take a foreign language courses. According to a Modern Languages Association 2002 study, of the 15.6 million college students in the US in Fall 2002, 1.35 million (8.6%) were enrolled in foreign language study. By the way, here too Spanish is the main language studied (53.4%), followed by French (14.5%), German (6.5%), Italian (4.6%), and American Sign Language (4.4%). Only 2-4% of students take Japanese, Chinese and Latin courses.

Is this situation something that we should be concerned about? One can always argue that the US is a highly multilingual country, which is true. According to the 2000 census, 176 languages are spoken in the US as mother tongues: For 215 million (82%) it is English, (Continued on page 4)

!CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING SENIORS!

Just as we were starting to think of them as a fixture in our classes and hallways, it turns out it's time for a number of them to leave us. We have been preparing them just for this for years, but it's still hard to see them go. We hope they will keep in touch. We will keep them in our hearts (and their pictures up on our alumni webpage).

This year we are happy to see **ten Spanish majors** graduate, both with Spanish as their main or only major, or with Spanish as a secondary major (which, sadly, won't be reflected in the diplomas they will receive in May).

Primary Spanish majors are Megan Barber, Dinorah Bonifacio, Michael Skorker, and Corey Waters.



Secondary Spanish majors are Graciela Alvarez, Silvia Ines Arata, Luz Brazdaluz, Julia Chuy, Victoria Durán, and Jennifer Enes.

Foreign Language Minor: Carlos Camelo and Jonathan Lemaire; **French Minor:** Rachel Cupka and Michael DuBois; **Spanish Minor:** Danielle Finocchiaro and Yuka Okawara.

Best of luck to all of you. We are very proud of you.

We hope to see you all on graduation day after the ceremony by the tent for last good-byes and pictures (pictures from graduations and other departmental events can be seen at www.salemstate.edu/languages/pictures.htm). ■

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DID YOU KNOW?

There are some issues to keep in mind when considering travel in a developing country. In the article "Travel in the Third World" (*Transitions Abroad*, Vol. 24, No. 3), Julienne Gage offers the following web-savvy tips:

- ◇ Check on health issues, crime, and political situations prior to planning your trip at the U.S. State Department's site travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html
- ◇ Be aware of road problems, night driving and bus hazards by checking with the Association for Safe International Road Travel at www.asirt.org
- ◇ Women should be aware of cultural issues and can get safety tips and apply for travel grants at www.saraswish.org



Talkin' About Talk

At the Year of Languages website you can listen to a collection of short audio clips on languages. "Talkin' About Talk" is a collection of fascinating insights into language: a series of 52 little essays—conversational in tone, light and anecdotal in style—that encourage language study and invite listeners to look further into the subject of each essay. ■



Québec Summer Travel Journal:

A Peek Into the Student Experience of Study Abroad
by Elizabeth Blood

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be a student on a study abroad program? Are you starting to wonder now? If so, there will soon be an answer to your question. Melissa Lanouette, an English major who is planning to minor in French, will attend the five-week French Summer Program at the Université Laval in Québec this summer. As a project for one of her English professors, Melissa will chronicle the events of her international study experience in what she calls a "live journal" online. To follow her travel experiences in the Belle Province this summer, log on to www.livejournal.com/users/melissainquebec. The summer program takes place from July 2-August 5, and Melissa will periodically update her live journal site. ■

¿QUÉ PASA? QUOI DE NEUF? DEPARTMENT NEWS

Here are some of the main newsworthy things that have happened in the last few months.

The Department of Foreign Languages is in the process of a **Self-Study review**. You may have participated in one of the surveys in the fall of 2004, and the site visit will be taking place in the beginning of May. Students were invited to meet the reviewer to share comments and opinions with her.

Dr. **Nicole Sherf** was voted to the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association. Check out the MaFLA website at www.mafla.org for useful and interesting information for foreign language teachers.

The Department has proposed a **professional level licensure** program of studies for elementary and secondary Spanish for the **Master of Arts in Teaching Spanish**. It goes for approval before the Graduate Education Council soon.

The Department of Foreign Languages sponsored an important speaker in its colloquia series. **The Honorable Enrique Iranzo, Consul General of Spain in Boston**, spoke on April 7 to a well-attended house at the Cen-

tral Campus Recital Hall. The title of his talk was **Spain-US: A Complicated Marriage**. In it he reviewed the history of US-Spain relations since before independence. Mr. Iranzo's talk also covered immigration and terrorism issues as they relate to the



Mr. Enrique Iranzo, Consul General of Spain in Boston

post-September 11th international climate and the March 11, 2004 bomb attacks in Madrid. Iranzo has served in diplomatic posts throughout the world since 1970, including as consul to Hong Kong, Munich, Berlin and Santo Domingo. He has been in Boston since 2002.

Worthy of mention too are events that have become

fixtures of our department, such as the **Spanish teacher test preparation workshop** conducted by Dr. Nicole Sherf on April 16 and the **D.E.L.E. exams** (*Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera*) to take place on May 14, coordinated and administered by Dr. Fátima Serra.

Dr. Kristine Doll gave a keynote address at the **Congrés Internacional** hosted by the **Universitat de les Illes Balears**, Palma de Mallorca, Spain, December 2004. Her address dealt with the art of translation.

We had quite a scare this semester when long-time part-time instructor **Ernesto Oregel** was hospitalized after suffering an aneurism. Fortunately he is out of the hospital and out of danger and ready to start teaching again.

Finally, we would like to announce that after July 1, 2005, the Department of Foreign Languages will have a **new chairperson**. After six years of working hard to build the department, Dr. Kristine Doll decided not to run again after completing her second 3-year term. The department has chosen Dr. Jon Aske to replace her, pending approval by college president Harrington. ■

E-ENVIRONMENTALISM: CONNECTING WITH GLOBAL ISSUES VIA THE INTERNET

BY DR. ELIZABETH BLOOD, FOREIGN LANGUAGES

This spring's expanded "Earth Days" events at Salem State, organized by the Peace Institute under the direction of Dr. Echevarria-Morales of the Department of Foreign Languages, raised important global environmental issues. The films, speakers and student presentations sparked a desire in many of us to learn more about these issues. What is really happening with the global environment? Is there really global warming? Are our energy resources being depleted as rapidly as they say? Do our individual recycling or energy conservation efforts really make a difference on a global

scale? For answers to these questions, and many others, you can turn to the Internet, a paperless and environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional sources. Information about global environmental issues, eco-tourism, or the politics of the environment can be found on numerous websites. It is important, however, to separate the reputable sites from those that sensationalize the issues. Here are a few starting points for budding e-environmentalists!

- ◇ The Environmental News Network: www.enn.com
- ◇ United Nations Environment Programme/

Programme de Nations Unies pour l'environnement: www.unep.org.

- ◇ IISD, the International Institute for Sustainable Development: www.iisd.ca
- ◇ The Pesticide Action Network: www.pan-international.org
- ◇ "Planeta" site (Spanish): www.planeta.com
- ◇ Ciudades Verdes (Spanish): www.usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0300/ijgs/ijgs0300.htm

Each of these sites will help give you a better understanding of what the current global issues are and how closely connected we are to these "distant" places. ■

LITERATURE MAKES BETTER CITIZENS

BY DR. FÁTIMA SERRA, FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Learning a foreign language is a journey that opens up new worlds through simple acts of communication and reflection on different cultures. The excitement of every little discovery into the unknown makes the job truly rewarding. Laughter caused by a funny misunderstanding at a makeshift *El Rastro* (flea market in Madrid), the eagerness to eat that food that "I finally learned to pronounce", and yes, the joy of remembering the correct subjunctive form, contribute to enrich students and myself semester after semester. And yet, of all courses, my most cherished ones are the literature classes.

The students' imagination is activated by the vivid account of other people's lives, places and times. They may not re-

member the exact date of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, but they remember the growing pains of *El Lazarillo* as a young boy in a not so golden age in Spain. They establish connections with their own life, their own culture; they gain knowledge and wisdom in their journey. Discussions abound where matters of life, death, love, freedom fighting and injustice occupy the center stage in an effort to find meanings to the world through literary works. As Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, stated, "reading is a highly active enterprise." She also indicates that late research has shown that "literary readers are markedly more civically engaged than non-readers, are more likely to perform charity work,

visit a museum or attend a sporting event" (Boston Globe, April 10, 2005, *Why literature matters*) Every week I have the pleasure of witnessing how my literature class readings and discussions illuminate students' minds into active awareness of the world around us.

Literature is the true memory of our present and past. Students in Spanish Literature classes have already started to become contributing citizens, not only by actively reading and reflecting, but also by writing literature in their own words. The fact that they are doing it in a foreign language makes the process exponentially richer intellectually and more globally valuable. Here are some examples of their work. Enjoy them. ■

Decídete a Amar, Soneto

by Brenna Suslak

De repente la idea de amor,
Cuando creces a una edad lógica,
Se convierte en cosa cósmica,
Y pierde su magia y valor.

Cuando nada queda para sorprendernos
¿en qué podemos creer y desear?
Cuando los sueños se empiezan a parar,
Nuestras mentes nos empujan a olvidarlos.

Claro que una vida triste será
Sin el fuego y pasión de un amor
De donde dicen viene la felicidad.

Pero si alguien quiere cambiarla,
Esta situación de vida menor,
Debe ver el amor como realidad.

Una tarde para mí

By Rachel Smith

El sol rezaba en los pequeñitos espacios alrededor
de las sombras de las ventanas.
Ya en mi cuarto hace calor.
No está bastante oscuro para dormir.
No está bastante alumbrado para trabajar.

La cama de nubes ligeras... me llama.
El pijama salta a mi cuerpo.
El despertador está feliz de ponerse a sonar en
tres horas.
Por eso, en este momento... La vida es bella.

No pienso en nada, nada.
No tengo nada en mi cara salvo una sonrisa.
Ojos cerrados cuerpo en paz.
Todo es maravilloso.

Eso es lo que necesito.
Eso es lo que espero.
Somnolientemente...una tarde para mí.



Caleta

by Angela Chez

Es difícil olvidar
El olor a mar y frío
Que traía el viento al andar
Por caminos de hierba y tierra.

Érase mi bisabuela
Dueña de encantos, mujer serena
Aurora constante
Fruto de alma y madre
De quien fuese que quiera.

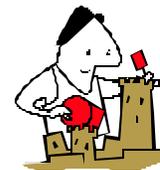
Quedaron atrás los recuerdos
Quebrados por tiempo y distancia
Dejando la pena más honda
Que la que crea la infancia.

Caleta añorada
Campito campeche de frutas y playa
De cocos, chinola
Guayaba y ciruela
De "Abi" querida
De moza adorada.

Sí, fue mi pasado
Eterno de recuerdo, injusta agonía
Jamás volveré y menos olvidaré
Pues mi presente mantiene nutriendo
Raíces de melancolía
Enlace común de los Chez, Prince y Díaz.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER VACATIONS

International service vacations are becoming more and more popular among travelers who want to do something more productive with their vacation time than just sit on a beach. Salem State offers a number of international "travel study" courses and opportunities, but there are many options available today. Whether you are a faculty member, administrator or student, following are some organizations to help you find an international service project right for you:



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity International's "Global Village" volunteer trips offer a unique service experience. Team members work alongside members of the host community, raising awareness of the burden of poverty housing and building decent, affordable housing worldwide. Consult: www.habitat.org/gv/

WORLDTEACH AND GLOBAL ROUTES

These organizations offer **VOLUNTEER** teaching internships ranging from 3 months to 1 year in places like Kenya, Costa Rica, India, Thailand, and China. More info at www.globalroutes.org (short term) or www.worldteach.org (long term).

CROSS-CULTURAL SOLUTIONS

This group places volunteers for 2-week development projects in Peru, Ghana, India, and China. Check out www.crossculturalsolutions.org

COUNCIL EXCHANGES (CIEE)

This well **KNOWN** agency organizes international volunteer projects in a variety of interesting locales. Phone: 1-888-COUNCIL or www.councilexchanges.org.



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Newsletter Editors:

Dr. Jon Aske
Dr. Elizabeth Blood

Salem State College
Department of Foreign Languages
352 Lafayette Street
Salem, MA 01970

Phone: 978-542-6258
Fax: 978-542-2068
jaske@salemstate.edu
eblood@salemstate.edu

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www.salemstate.edu/languages/linguafranca.htm

READ PAST ISSUES ONLINE
SIGN UP TO RECEIVE A NOTICE
WHEN A NEW ISSUE IS OUT

WE ARE THE WORLD Department's International FREE Photo Screensaver!

To show how interconnected the Salem State campus is to the larger global community, the Department of Foreign Languages conducted a foreign photo contest in 2004-2005. From over 60 submissions, 12 photos were selected for a foreign photo calendar (sorry, we're now sold out!) and 30 photos were selected for a free downloadable screensaver. The photos are all visually provocative and attest to the numerous ways in which Salem's students, faculty, administrators and staff are, in a very real way, engaged in the global community. Download your free screensaver from the Department's web page today. ■



STUDENT PROFILE: MICHAEL SKORKER

BY DR. NICOLE SHERF, FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Lingua Franca is profiling a graduating senior, Michael Skorker, a student who has been very involved with the various services and programs of the Department of Foreign Languages. The recipient of the prestigious Paul Tsongas Scholarship, he is an outstanding student of the Department. Check out a sample of his poetry in the last edition of Lingua Franca. He has boundless energy, creativity and enthusiasm, and the Department wishes him much success in all his future endeavors!

What is your background in Spanish?

I started taking Spanish in 8th grade in Malden and went through the AP level. I decided to be a Spanish major at Salem State because I was passionate about it and I had always wanted to be bilingual.

What interesting experiences have you had with Spanish culture/language?

I did an interesting internship at Salem Cyberspace through the Community Placements course, helping mostly Dominican people learn entry-level computer skills. I learned about the idea of transnationalism,

which is when somebody brings their culture to their new place of residence, the Point neighbor-



hood, in this case. And I enjoyed making new friends in the community and learning about the Dominican culture.

Have you ever had a study abroad experience?

I hope to go abroad as part of my future graduate studies at Middlebury College.

What has your experience at Salem State been like?

Phenomenal! I feel that the Department has a very enthusiastic, dedicated faculty that has established its own community within Salem State. I have taken almost every class offered

through the Department, and I feel very prepared to start my teaching career.

What is the best thing that happened to you over the four years you were at Salem State?

Through the Honors Program and the Department, I have been offered so many opportunities that have enriched my undergraduate experience. My advice to future students would be to join a variety of clubs and extracurricular programs, to meet many people, and experience as much as possible. The College Chorus and Chamber Singers have been an uplifting balance to the academic side of my years here.

What are your professional and personal goals?

I am eager to graduate in May. Next fall, I want to teach Spanish full-time at a local high school. In the near future I would like to enroll at Middlebury College for my Masters. I also want to learn to speak French and eventually teach at the college level.

Anything else you want to say?

That I couldn't have done this without the support of my family, the Department and the Honors Program. ■

2005 IS YEAR OF LANGUAGES IN THE UNITED STATES

(Continued from page 1)

but for almost 11% it is Spanish (6.2% in Massachusetts) (all other 174 languages account for the other 7%, with Chinese, French, German, Italian, Tagalog and Vietnamese all having between one and two million speakers). This is due, no doubt, to the high percentage of immigrants in the US. But let's not forget that the children of immigrants tend to lose their language after between one and two generations, even faster now than ever in the past, and that applies to Hispanics too.

But the main reason why we don't study foreign languages as much as other countries is probably that we don't have to, since we happen to speak a language, English, that is the lingua franca of the whole world and the language that most of those students in other countries study. So there's nothing to worry about, right?

Not so fast. We are indeed missing out on something. The US Senate Proclamation tells us, for instance, that there are cognitive advantages to studying a foreign language, for it increases students "cognitive and critical thinking abilities," as well as their ability to "compare and contrast cultural concepts." National security advantages are also often mentioned. Since September 11 that the US has been having a difficult time finding people with language skills for many languages, which has resulted in poor intelligence gathering. But the main thing that can move people to action is economic advantage, and here too there is a strong case to be made for studying foreign languages in this shrinking and rapidly globalizing world. A US Government organization (NVTC) has put it quite well in its website, noting that the language learning is just the beginning, and that it's all about getting to

know different people and different cultures. They write: "foreign language study provides the ability to gain an understanding of the cultures of U.S. trading partners. American multinational corporations and nongovernmental organizations need people with foreign language abilities. U.S. ability to compete effectively in global markets means that more and more businesses deal with companies in other countries. They need employees who can communicate in foreign languages and understand other cultures. An employer will see you as a bridge to new clients if you know their language."

So, if you haven't done so yet, celebrate the Year of Languages and pass on the word. Language study is important!

For more information and links to various YOL sites, visit the Department of Foreign Languages' website. ■