

# SPANISH & PORTUGUESE

University of Florida, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Fall 2010

## Message from the Acting Chair

Dear Friends: What an exciting time to be involved with Spanish and Portuguese Studies! I am thrilled and honored to have the opportunity to tell—or remind—you of some of the changes here in our department.

Perhaps the biggest change is that we are under new leadership. Our former chair, Dr. David Pharies, has been named the new Associate Dean for the Humanities of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. While he still teaches in our department and supervises graduate student committees, his primary function now is to oversee the humanities departments, centers, and programs in the college. We wish Dr. Pharies the best in his new position, and sincerely thank him for his seven years of service as chair of the Departments of Romance Languages and Literatures and later, Spanish and Portuguese Studies. I am honored to serve as Acting Chair for the 2010–2011 academic year, and am confident that our current internal search for a new department chair will result in the best possible leadership for our department in coming years.

Other changes in the department

are evident also, all of which you will read about in separate pieces throughout this newsletter. We were fortunate to be able to hire a new faculty member, Dr. Jason Rothman, who specializes in Hispanic linguistics and second language acquisition. Dr. Rothman's energy, innovation and talent for mentoring graduate students are all assets to our program, and we are lucky to have him on our faculty. There are exciting changes in our undergraduate programs as well. The Lower Division Spanish Program continues to innovate and modify its course offerings and delivery. We are excited to have two new study abroad programs in Latin America, and we continue to expand our curricular offerings.

Thanks to the generosity of anonymous donors, we have been able to help both undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of ways over the past year. We offered 11 undergraduate stu-

dents scholarships to participate in our summer study abroad programs. The students receiving these awards studied in Seville, Spain; Santander, Spain; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Catalonia. At the graduate level, we used some of these funds to attract the best students to our doctoral programs. Two students received additional funds to supplement their graduate assistant (teaching) stipends. We are confident that this opportunity is what led them to choose our program over others. Significantly, we were able to choose eight graduate students to receive summer support to carry out their doctoral research. Six students traveled within the US and abroad (Mexico, Miami, Panama, and Spain) to carry out interviews and/or data collection, while two students used the summer free of teaching responsibilities to write their dissertations—one of whom finished, defended and graduated during that time. Finally, these funds have enabled us to support various colloquia and guest speakers. It goes without saying that this generous support enhances our reputation as a department and increases our opportunities to offer educational activities for our student body at all levels.

We are extremely grateful to all our donors and supporters—like you—who help make these opportunities possible. We know we couldn't maintain our high quality educational and extracurricular offerings without you. As you can tell, these are exciting times in Spanish and Portuguese Studies. I hope you will enjoy reading about our news and updates as you go through this newsletter. We are always eager to hear from you, our friends, supporters, alumni, and students. Please drop us a line to let us know how you're doing and what you're up to these days. If you're in Gainesville stop by our offices at 170 Dauer Hall to say hello!

Saludos,  
Gillian Lord

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# Big Changes!

By Gillian Lord

The Lower Division Spanish Program continues to make curricular and administrative changes in an effort to provide the most comprehensive and beneficial instructional methods to the large number of students who take our classes to fulfill their college language requirements or to prepare for major/minor coursework.

Of greatest note this year is our leap into the 21st century in terms of content delivery. All beginning Spanish courses (1130, 1131, 1134) are now taught in a “hybrid” format. Hybrid courses are defined as classes in which instruction takes place in a traditional classroom setting augmented by computer-based or online activities, which can replace classroom seat time. These types of courses are common in higher education in the United States, and even in language classes. While we maintain that human interaction is absolutely essential in learning and using a language, we also believe that advances in technologies have enabled us to reach a point where students can accomplish a great deal working on their own, reserving class time for true communication and interactive learning. These classes

are 5 credit courses but meet only three days a week, with supplemental instructional activities (tutorials, lessons, mechanical practice) to be done at home to constitute the other two credits.

Although this system has just been implemented, it seems successful so far. It requires a new mindset for our students and our instructors, and we have taken every step to train them accordingly. Under this system, of course, students’ success and learning require substantial commitment and study both in and out of class. The level of proficiency students attain will depend largely on what each individual student puts in to his or her own learning. These courses require self-discipline and time, but we are confident that this transition will ultimately be the best system for our students

and instructors.

The other crucial change we have made to our Lower Division Spanish Program has to do with how we place students in our classes. We now reserve SPN 1130 and SPN 1131 (Beginning Spanish I and II) exclusively for students with no prior instruction in Spanish. For those with some high school coursework—virtually all of our students—but with insufficient knowledge to start in intermediate level classes, we have created a new Accelerated Review course, which covers the same material as the first year of instruction but in a brief, condensed, one-semester class. Our hope is to encourage more students to start their college coursework at higher levels, and in doing so also increase the number of students who go on to take major/minor coursework.

If you would like more information about our Lower Division Spanish Program, we encourage you to explore our mission statement and our syllabi at [www.clas.ufl.edu/users/glord](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/glord).

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## From the Undergraduate Advisor in Spanish: Dr. Greg Moreland

It pleases me to report that we continue to have a large number of Spanish majors and minors. Of particular note are the many students who choose to double major. Three of the most popular combinations are Spanish with Political Science, Spanish with Linguistics, and Spanish with Business. We are also approaching a milestone in terms of Spanish minors. If the current trend continues, we will have more than 200 minors by Spring 2011. (As a point of reference, we had 29 in Spring 1997, then 92 in Spring 2001, then 150 in Spring 2007.) Finally, if you graduated with a major or minor in Spanish from UF, we would truly like to hear from you. Drop me a line ([moreland@ufl.edu](mailto:moreland@ufl.edu)) or stop by and visit us on campus.

## From the Graduate Coordinator of Spanish: Prof. Reynaldo Jiménez

We had another strong graduating class, an excellent recruitment year, and great courses and opportunities for graduate students.

During the AY 2009–2010 the following students obtained graduate degrees:

**Dr. Dania Abreu** (Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas)

**Dr. María Guerrero** (Ph.D., currently teaching in our department)

**Mary Beth Hayes** (M.A.)

**Dr. Alex Quintanilla** (Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Butler University)

**Dr. Juan Pablo Rodríguez**, (Ph.D., Assistant Professor at Ball State University)

**Dr. Verónica Tienza Sánchez** (Ph.D., currently residing in Switzerland)

### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- **Outstanding Graduate Students of the Year 2009**, as voted by the faculty are **Diego Pascual y Cabo** (Ph.D., student), **María Guerrero** (Ph.D.) and **Stephanie Gates** (M.A.).
- Thanks to **Katherine Honea** and **Paola Arboleda** for their excellent participation as instructors in our Santander and Salamanca Study Abroad Programs.
- CLAS and SPS research travel awards were awarded to **Francisco Salgado-Robles**, **María Fionda**, **Herlinda Flores**, **Delano Lamy**, **Alicia Mercado-Harvey**, **Diego Pascual y Cabo**, **Belkis Suárez** and **Verónica Tienza**.
- A **CLAS Dissertation Fellowship** for Summer 2011 has been awarded to **Francisco Salgado-Robles**.

To all our graduate students, we offer our collective thanks and wishes for continuing success.



## The Muses' Corner

### Advertencia al lector

Iguanas. Cientos de miles. Iguanas por las riveras, campos, barrios del sur de La Florida.

Iguanas salvajes, dos tipos verde común y de cola espinosa de La México.

No son nativas de la zona, pero sí lo son las ciudades y los suburbios.

Sus amos las han abandonado nuevamente.

Junto a las iguanas, la serpiente pitón zigzaguea por el lodazal, Everglades a toda marcha.

La poesía es un reptil verde y de espalda espinuda.

La lengua, su lengua mortífera.

Desde el árbol submarino o desde la palmera salvaje, la iguana aguarda

mientras inquilinos y managers de hoteles luxury se ponen el camuflaje tétrico y gritan.

Eso es lo único que saben hacer, lo único que han aprendido.

Por supuesto, la prensa con su cola, la academia

con su tentáculo:

Las iguanas son dañinas, destruyen los jardines y crisantemos de la ciudad, causan enfermedades incurables, son portadoras de salmonela, pueden con su cola lanzar al turista de plomo al suelo, con sus garras rasguñar el corazón de lata, morder de lado como lo hace una Iguana en un suburbio cualquiera?.

¡Iguana!

¡Iguana gigante!

¡Iguana de los caminos de América!

—*Álvaro Leiva (MA 2001)*

### Lake Alice

Verde,

como los camborios

en giros de almendras.

Largo el camino, tan corto el trillo hacia el pobre banco de las libélulas.

Cuatro ardillas regordetas,

juguetonas, todo el viento

seco

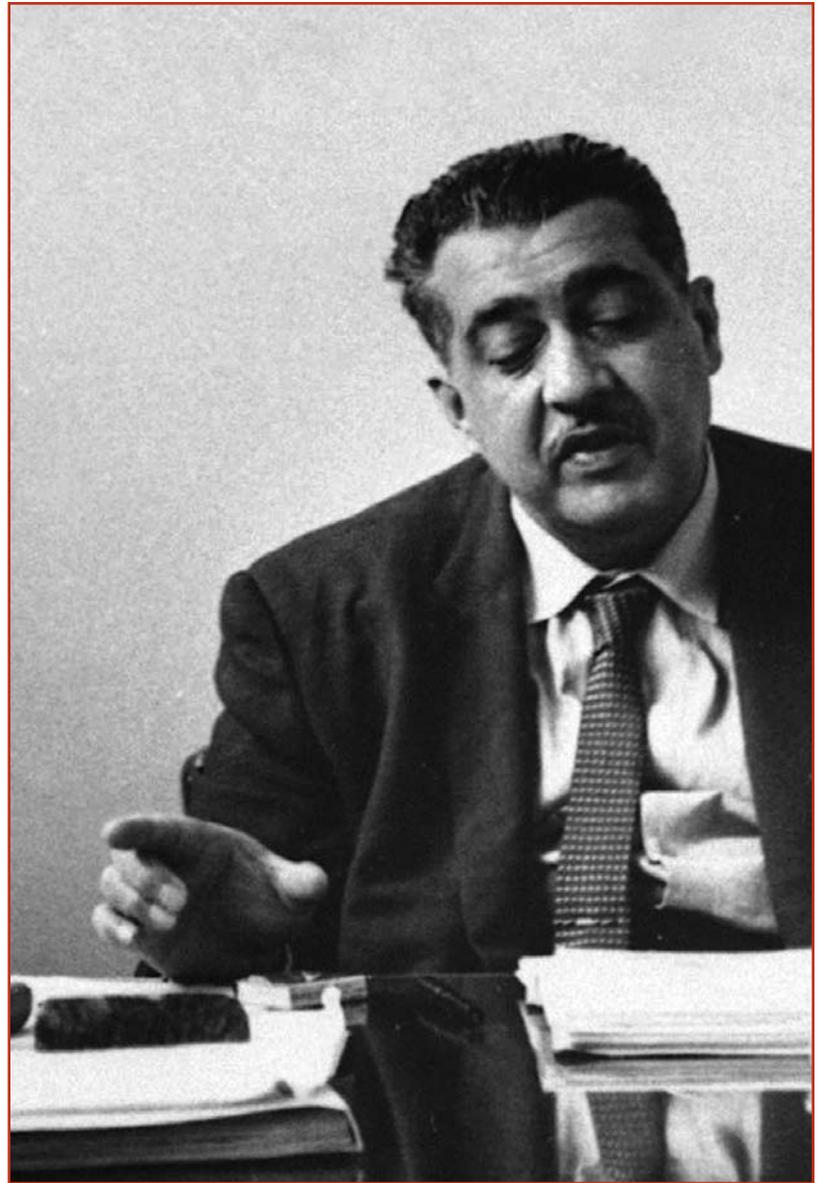
en el rostro, queda la mirada.

Una garza abre sus alas.

“Lake Alice”

(amiga Virginia: “ni parpadeo”)

—*Antonio Sajid López (estudiante graduado actual)*



## ¿Lo sabías?

This is the centenary of the Cuban poet José Lezama Lima (1910–1976), and current graduate student Gerardo Muñoz senses the resonance of a visit from the poet to UF that almost happened. It seems that in the 1930's the Latin American Studies Department at UF extended an invitation to the poet who would become the most important writer in Cuba. In our library on campus you can find the invitation, and in the collected letters of Lezama we can read his response: *Me alegraría en extremo que usted hiciese posible que la universidad me enviase el adelanto del dinero.... (Correspondencias p. 271–272)*. Although Lezama never arrived, Gerardo invites us to imagine the master of the neo-baroque wandering the green paths of our campus. “Recordar no es otra que evocar un espectro que circula entre nosotros. Si dentro del sistema lezamiano, la ausencia es la forma espectral de la presencia, Lezama habita en la fantasmagoría.”

# Study Abroad

## UF in Spain: Santander

By Eileen Cowdery

The night before I was to depart for my study abroad program during the summer of 2010 in Santander, Spain, I was nervous and excited. I woke up in the morning in a panic when I discovered that my flight from Atlanta to Madrid had been cancelled due to volcanic activity in Iceland. Hold on ... volcanic activity? In Iceland? That was definitely not a part of the plan. I took a deep breath and gave into the flow.

After a long flight and finally figuring out how to work those European hotel light switches (you have to put the room key in the slot), I survived my first night in Spain. Our first week was a flurry of guided museum and monastery visits, where we viewed an astonishing collection of Spanish art. Seeing Picasso's *La Guernica* in the Reina Sofia art museum in Madrid was one of the highlights of my trip. Walking the cobblestone streets of Toledo inspired a feeling of awe, as the former capital of Spain boasts buildings over one thousand years old.

Anticipation of our first meeting with our Spanish families was building as we sped through the countryside to our final destination, Santander. When they called my name and my roommate's name, we cautiously stepped off the bus and were greeted by a short and tidy Spanish woman with curly dark hair. I was still a little uncomfortable with my Spanish skills, so I mostly listened as our *señora* gave us a walking tour of the city and the stunning beaches around Santander's famous peninsula that houses a zoo, a royal castle, and one of the city's many lighthouses.

Daily life in Spain was exciting. Class was held from 9 am to 1 pm, after which we'd saunter home, mouths watering for a delicious Spanish meal. Afterwards we took a nap, went to the beach, or explored *el centro*, the metropolitan area of the city bursting with shops and boutiques. Homework consisted of reading news articles or interviewing locals about their customs. I was initially intimidated when I found out that my classes would be completely in Spanish. One of my professors was just learning English! After my first day, my fears were dispelled and I felt comfortable that the classes were on my level.

My favorite part of the study abroad program was the weekend excursions

and the closeness I felt with the friends I made on the trip. We visited cities like Comillas, Santillana del Mar, Salamanca, and Burgos; hiked in the famous mountain range, Picos de Europa; or toured the Altamira caves, which contain the oldest cave drawings on Earth. Even on "free weekends," my friends and I planned trips to Barcelona and Rome, and my roommate and I went on a day-hike with our Spanish family. Since all of our trips were guided, I got a good understanding and background of Spanish history, art, and architecture that I would have missed had I been just another tourist in a crowd.

Cheering on the Spanish soccer team through the World Cup finals to a win was incredible. One night in Madrid some of the main streets were closed because they were flooded with fans! I sported my red and yellow and learned a few of the cheers and songs the Spaniards sing in support of their team.

Studying abroad is one of the best decisions I've made in college. It challenged me to try new things, meet new people and explore new places. The people I met in 6 weeks have become some of my closest friends, and the experiences I had abroad will stay with me for life.

## UF in Buenos Aires

Susana Braylan

In summer 2010 we had the pleasure of introducing a new study abroad program, our first in South America, and the first especially designed for bilingual students. The city of Buenos Aires welcomed 8 curious and bright bilingual students who enrolled in two classes: an Argentinean Culture and Literature class and either the last course in the composition series for Bilinguals or an Individual Study in Translation. Students lived in dorms along with Argentinean students and people from other nations. They visited museums and historical neighborhoods such as La Boca, La Recoleta, and San Telmo, where they learned about Argentinean history, culture, music, and art. Some students visited the famous Iguazú Falls and others went to the city of Córdoba in the interior of the country. All learned to dance tango and experienced Argentinean university life as well as its cuisine and great shopping; they came back home with a new perspective and understanding of what it means to live abroad. And, of course, they made lots of new friends.



Ximea Moors chats with a statue of Gerardo Diego in Santander.

Students do the Gator Chomp on Florida Street, Buenos Aires



## UF in Río de Janeiro

With the upcoming World Cup (2014) and Olympics (2016) to be held in Brazil, the participation in the UF Study Abroad program in Río de Janeiro has been stronger than ever, with 39 students participating from universities all over the country. In 2010, the culture portion of the course had the unifying theme of the *favela*, the low-income communities made famous by the 2002 film *City of God*. The Río summer course, open to graduate and undergraduate students alike, examined these communities through the humanities, the fine arts, music, film, religion, and literature, and through the social sciences, in fields such as anthropology, sociology, economics and urban planning. There was so much interest this year that next year's program will focus on the same theme, sensitizing students to Brazil's urban culture and dismantling myths of poverty.

### What students said...

Words are not enough to describe the incredible experience I had during the six weeks I was in Brazil. Río de Janeiro is a city like no other, with its rich culture, breathtaking scenery and incredible people. My host family was caring and made sure my experience exceeded my expectations. My favorite part was seeing students from all over the U.S. coming together and sharing their unique experiences in a foreign country. The program moved out beyond the classroom, providing us with a closer look at the daily life of the "cariocas" and some of the most famous places in this "Cidade Maravilhosa." Everything from soccer games and trips to nearby cities to mountain hikes broadened our experience. (Luis Roca)

Not only did the 6-week UF in Río program help me improve my Portuguese through language classes with local teachers and living with a host family, but it was also a great introduction to Brazilian culture, food, and music. I got caught up in World Cup soccer fever on Copacabana beach, sampled the national dish *feijoada* (black bean and meat stew) in a former *quilombo* (community of runaway slaves), and attempted to samba along to live bands. The study abroad program also offered great excursions to the statue of Christ, Sugar Loaf mountain, the Sambodromo, and many other beaches and historical sites. I loved my time in the vibrant, unique city of Río de Janeiro and I can't wait for a chance to go back! (Nicole Scholet)

## UF in Guatemala: International Service Learning

By Kathy Dwyer Navajas

Picture a 15-year-old boy living in a cardboard shack near the Guatemala City dump. He was born in the dump, his parents died of cirrhosis, and he works every day alongside other children and families who glean through the garbage for food to eat or something to sell. He's never been to school. He has no dreams beyond survival.

Picture a 20-year-old UF student with a heart for service. She's planning a career in health (or law, or education, or science, or the arts). She plays the piano and volleyball. She speaks some Spanish but would like to be fluent. She wants to see the world before returning to Florida to pursue her career.

**UF in Guatemala: International Service Learning** will bring these two young people together for 6 weeks. She will live with a Guatemalan family and work with him at Safe Passage, helping with homework, sharing her musical and sports talent, studying current issues in Central America, and reflecting on the challenges they both face. She'll return to Florida to work with at-risk Hispanic youths; he will graduate from high school. Their dialogue will continue; it will shape their lives and their countries.

Thanks to Dr. Gillian Lord and graduate student Cindie Moore, SPS will launch UF's first-ever international service learning program in the summer of 2011. "Service learning" combines community service with academic course work. It helps students understand the causes of the problems they are working to address and allows them to reflect on the experience. In Guatemala next summer, UF students will assist doctors and nurses; teach literacy, art, music, sports, dance, and other subjects to children and adults; and help Guatemalan entrepreneurs with marketing plans. Students in many disciplines across campus have expressed enthusiasm about this opportunity to engage a broad spectrum of people and perspectives in Central America. Stay tuned for our report next year!

Nora Archer visits Toledo, Spain (2010 UF in Seville Program)



## Faculty News

**Shifra Armon** took part in a panel on “Nobility and Influence” in September 2010 at the bi-annual conference of GEMELA (*Grupo de Estudios sobre la Mujer en España y las Américas*) held at Mount Holyoke



College and University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Shifra is also pleased to announce that the keynote speaker for the Florida Cervantes Symposium will be the Vice-President of the Cervantes Society of America, Professor Adrienne Martin of UC Davis. The Symposium will be held on April 9, 2011 here at UF.

**Kathy Dwyer Navajas** was promoted to senior lecturer and received a welcome raise. This year she will serve as director of UF in Guatemala: International Service Learning, the department's newest study abroad program and the first program of its kind at UF.

**Elizabeth Ginway** received a Faculty Enhancement Opportunity grant in order to learn more about Spanish American science fiction as part of a project to publish a critical anthology on the genre. She also launched a collection of 14 of her essays about science fiction and fantasy in Portuguese, *Visão alienígena* (São Paulo, Devir, 2010) and published three articles: in *Extrapolation*, *Femspec* and *Luso-Brazilian Review*.

**Gillian Lord** has been involved in many projects lately. In Fall 2009 she taught our first service-learning course in Spanish, which had 30 students doing projects in Gainesville and the surrounding communities, connecting their language skills with the needs of our citizens. Her efforts in starting that class on UF's campus won her the “Service Learning Faculty of the Year” award from the Center for Leadership and Service. In spring 2010 Gillian was elected to the Executive Board for the Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium, and will serve a four-year term

with that organization. Additionally, she published two articles related to second language teaching and acquisition.

**Greg Moreland** offers a reflection on study abroad and lifetime language learning: “One of the most rewarding aspects of serving as the Undergraduate Advisor in Spanish for the past decade has been to witness a veritable explosion in the number of students interested in studying abroad in Spain and/or Latin America. In the mid-1980s I studied abroad as a student, and since 2002 I have participated as a faculty member. So I can attest to the many changes—some for the better, others not so positive—that have occurred in the last 30 years. However, the essence of the experience remains the same: young adults leave their ‘comfort zone’ and engage in the (mostly) enjoyable, yet (sometimes) frustrating task of language acquisition.

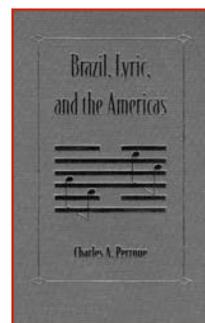
As faculty members, I believe we tend to forget how difficult it is to learn a second language. We have reached the pinnacle of linguistic success, if you will, and sometimes fail to remember that we do not constitute the norm. We empathize with our students—after all, very few of us would be in this profession were it not for our desire to assist in the learning process—but we sometimes hold rather unrealistic expectations for their performance. With this in mind, I have decided to turn back the clock, and re-experience study abroad from a student perspective: I am going to study Portuguese this summer in Florianópolis, Brazil!

I embark on this journey for both academic and personal reasons. With regard to the former, I plan to describe my study abroad experience in formal presentations. On a more personal level, I simply want to put myself in the shoes of the undergraduate student, and re-engage myself with the process of language acquisition in an unfamiliar environment. How will I perform? I'm not sure. However, I will most certainly gain further insight into “millennial” study abroad, and should accumulate some “take back” that may be applied to the classroom setting in Gainesville. I'll

keep you posted...”

**Geraldine Nichols** has been busy this past year, and is especially pleased to report that two of her advisees—María Guerrero and Verónica Tienza Sánchez—defended excellent dissertations and are now preparing for the next steps in their professional lives. Geraldine participated in a weeklong symposium on Miguel Hernández at the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo, in Santander, Spain in late August, held in honor of the poet's centennial. In related outreach, she prepared three graduate students to teach a class on the poet to AP Spanish classes in area high schools. And finally, as academic director of Catalan Studies at UF (since 1994), she attended the ceremony of the Inauguration of the Academic Year in Catalan Studies, held in Lleida, Spain in mid-September. In December, she will give the keynote lecture at a conference (in Palma de Mallorca) honoring the Catalan author Carme Riera, who has been named Writer of the Year in Mallorca.

**Charles A. Perrone** published *Brazil, Lyric, and the Americas* in which he explores how recent Brazilian lyric engages with its counterparts throughout the Western Hemisphere in an increasingly globalized world. He focuses



on poetic output from 1985 to the present and emphasizes five phenomena: the use of the English language and the reception of American poetry in Brazil; representations and engagements with U.S. culture, especially with respect to popular music; epic poems of hemispheric solidarity; contemporary dialogues between Brazilian and Spanish American poets; and the innovative musical, lyrical, and commercially successful work that evolved from the 1960s movement Tropicália.

## Focus on Faculty: Dr. Jessi Elana Aaron

When Dr. Jessi Elana Aaron graduated from high school in Eugene, Oregon, she was given a picture album as a farewell gift, along with a letter in five languages: French, German, Spanish, English, and Japanese. The card, handwritten and signed by her teachers, attested to her talent and love for languages. It became one of her most prized possessions because her first experience with a second language had made her skeptical about her ability to learn one. While taking Hebrew classes at her synagogue, teachers kept switching her from class to class, without telling her why. Jessi concluded that it was because she was doing poorly and that no teacher wanted her so at barely eight years old, she quit. A few years later she discovered the truth: she had been learning so fast that her teachers were trying to keep up by advancing her to ever higher levels!

Born without the use of her arms and legs, Jessi's path has been guided by intellectual pursuits. Spanish, which she began to study in middle school, opened the doors for her first paid job at fourteen. At the Centro Latinoamericano, she helped the children of migrant workers to do their homework and their parents to obtain employment. Here, Jessi began to see the links between social issues and language that inform her research as a sociolinguist today.

Alongside a love for languages, Jessi also developed a taste for art. As a young child, she joined her grandmother, Ellen Gabehart, in her studio. It was there that she learned to paint with her mouth, and she continued to study art through high school and college. Though she is now a very busy Assistant Professor of Spanish here at UF, she still paints whenever the chance arises. Whether portraying flowers, wildlife, her cats, or the human figure, Jessi seeks to capture the pleasure of the beholder. Her work can be seen at [www.jessiaaronart.com](http://www.jessiaaronart.com).

Jessi received her Ph.D. in Spanish and Portuguese, with a specialty in Hispanic Linguistics, from the University of New Mexico in 2006. She holds an MA in Latin American Studies from Stanford Univer-

sity, and a second MA in Anthropology from the University of New Mexico. As an undergraduate at Stanford University, she undertook a double major in Spanish and Political Science, where she wrote an honor's thesis on the social and economic impacts of physical disability in Puebla, Mexico. She notes that what impressed her most about Stanford was the way "academic curiosity and intellectual freedom were encouraged at all levels." Undergraduates could design and implement their own courses, guided by professors, as long as there were clear objectives, a syllabus with bibliography, and a minimum of three students. Teaming with a small group of students with disabilities, she co-created two courses: "Women and disability" and "The social history of disability." This freedom extended beyond the campus, and Jessi participated in two overseas studies programs in Puebla, Mexico. It was this experience that would pave the beginning of her path to the University of Florida.

As a graduate student in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Jessi got her wish to live in a Spanish-speaking community near Mexico, a country that had become very close to her heart. One day, while studying Anthropol-



gy there, she saw an announcement for a course with an intriguing title: *Variación sincrónica y cambio diacrónico en el español*, taught by sociolinguist Rena Torres Cacoulos. Jessi decided to enroll, despite the fact that she had no idea what exactly the course was going to be about. Nor did she know that it was going to be a life-changing experience. By the end of the course, she had discovered linguistics, and she had fallen in love with it! Today, synchronic variation and diachronic change constitute an important part of her research and publications, as well as her teaching.

Jessi moved to Gainesville four years ago. Her students do not mince words in their evaluations: "fantastic teacher," "amazing professor," and "one of my all time favorite teachers." Her classes are considered to be "fun, interesting, and informative" and "her approach to pedagogy both refreshing and pragmatic." Her research interests include sociolinguistics, language variation and change, grammaticalization, and language contact. Her current research focuses on historical morphosyntax in a cross-linguistic usage-based perspective. She has published articles in *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *Language Variation and Change*, and *Journal of English Linguistics*. Some of her other interests include linguistic, cultural and literary representations of gender and disability, as well as the intellectual intersections between usage-based models of language, 20th-century scientific thought, and the Modernist movement.



**¡BIENVENIDO!** Jason Rothman, a native of the suburbs of NYC, is our new Assistant Professor of Spanish and Linguistics. He earned his B.A. from Cornell University in 1999, and his M.A. and PhD from UCLA in 2001 and 2005. From 2005–2010, Prof. Rothman taught at the University of Iowa, where he co-founded and co-directed the SLA (second language acquisition) Lab with Professor Roumyana Slabakova. His research examines cognitive processes of adult second language acquisition, adult multilingual (L3/Ln) acquisition, heritage language bilingual acquisition, child first language acquisition, and comparative SLA theory epistemology. He currently directs the UF Linguistic Development Lab and edits the journal *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* with Professor Slabakova.

In addition to five edited books, his recent articles have appeared in distinguished journals. Professor Rothman is currently working on a co-authored monograph that applies theoretical linguistics and empirical studies on language acquisition to "an informed, practical" pedagogy for teaching Spanish as a foreign language, which will be published in the SLA series of *Multilingual Matters*. Dr. Rothman is excited to be part the UF community and is eager to help train students in the growing graduate program in Hispanic Linguistics.



## QUE DESCANSE EN PAZ

Dr. Montserrat Alás Brun (1963–2010)

A native of Spain, Montserrat Alás-Brun obtained a *Grado de Licenciatura* in Filología Hispánica at the Universidad de Navarra (1986), and a Ph.D. in Spanish at the University of Virginia (1992), writing her dissertation under the direction of Juan Cano Ballesta. After teaching at Bryn Mawr College, Old Dominion University and Louisiana State University, she was welcomed into our department (then Romance Languages and Literatures) as an assistant professor in Fall 2000. In 2004 she was granted tenure and promotion to associate professor. Dr. Alás-Brun wrote and published extensively on Spanish American writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Spanish theater during the pre- and post-Francoist years, and colonial discourses in twentieth-century Spain.

Montse was an energetic, meticulous, and superbly organized teacher of graduate and undergraduate courses. Her commitment was greatly valued by her students, who could not help but be in awe of her encyclopedic knowledge in her field. In her all too brief professional life, she achieved a fine record of publications, presented many papers at national and international professional meetings, and devoted herself generously to her teaching and to collegial and professional duties. In losing her, we lost a friend as well as an excellent researcher and teacher, and an extraordinary colleague. Above all, she was a person of impeccable ethics when it came to defending truth and fairness. After a long illness, Montse died in Pamplona, Spain, on June 5, 2010. Our hearts go out in sympathy to her beloved husband, José (Pubi) Killer and to her parents and family.

—Andrés Avellaneda, Emeritus Professor



From María Guerrero: Montse was one of the most influential people in my life. I think of her with great respect and admiration, but my fondest memories of Montse have to do with her sense of humor and the time we spent together at LSU. Before taking her seminar, my concept of literature was mostly based on painful memories from my high school years, when the nuns made us memorize biographies of authors and long poems. Montse introduced me to a completely different approach to the literary text, and for the first time ever, I began to enjoy Spanish literature. I realized how little I knew about many things, including my own country and myself. I followed Montse to UF and started a PhD, which I had never even considered. Montse was a dedicated professor and advisor, and I will always be most grateful to her for the many things she taught me.

A publication to honor Dr. Alvaro Félix Bolaños (1956–2007) is being planned, in order to recognize the impact he had on his students. Dr. Andrés Avellaneda will supervise the selection of academic articles written in seminars taught by Dr. Bolaños between 2001 and 2007. It is open to all colonial and post-colonial topics in Spanish America literature. Articles will be published in Spanish and English. The deadline for submissions is January 20, 2011. For more details, contact any of the following alumni: Claudia García (csgarcia@mail.unomaha.edu); Grazyna Walczak (gwalczak@fisk.edu); Victor M. Jordán-Orozco (vjordan@ufl.edu); Karina Vázquez (kvazquez@missouriwestern.edu).

## Graduate Students on the Move: Hongos en las palabras

- The Hispanic Linguistics Forum this year in Bloomington, Indiana, in October saw a large contingent of UF faculty and graduate students: Professors Gillian Lord and Ana de Prada Pérez accompanied graduate students Ana María Díaz Collazos, Diego Pascual, Dorian Dorado, Melanie D'Amico, Murielle Joseph, Heather Kaiser, and Carlos Enrique Ibarra. Alumnae Lauel Hodges Abreu, Bradley Hoot and Angelica Montoya were also present.
- Francisco Javier Morales García, graduate student in literature, reports that the great Catalan philologist Joan Sola passed away on October 26 of this year. His work in the field of Catalan Grammar and the social usage of the Catalan language make him an expert at the level of Coromines and Pompeu Fabra.
- Dr. Quinn Hansen, having won the graduate teaching award in Spring 2010, is currently teaching both Spanish and Portuguese for the department, while also acting as faculty advisor for the Brazilian Portuguese Club. He wrote his dissertation on syntax, about patterns of negation in Brazilian Portuguese.
- Jennifer Cabrelli, a Ph.D. candidate in Spanish Linguistics, is teaching first-semester Portuguese. She will be conducting research about students acquiring Portuguese as a third language.
- David Vásquez Hurtado, M.A. student in Literature, published his third book of fantasy in Colombia. This latest, entitled *Anita y las nubes*, is for children, and it's about the power of imagination and creativity.

By Giovanna Rivero

Hace poco estuve en España en el Fét a América, un festival literario que reunió a muchos escritores contemporáneos de América Latina. Mi padre leyó la noticia en un periódico boliviano y se alegró muchísimo –con lo difícil que es hacer camino literario o político o espiritual. “Sin embargo,” dijo mi madre, “tu padre mandó decir que ya no te entiende, que tenés que escribir un diccionario o glosario para leerle.” Busqué la nota y no encontré nada en particular, pero luego, releendo con lupa, las *tecnofrases* como “tiempo-twitter,” “velocidad agresiva,” “no copyright,” “ficción neogótica 9/11” comenzaron a brillar como luces de neón. Mi padre reclama un lenguaje niño, que es el verdadero, el que no se ha contaminado con los códigos del mercado. ¿Qué le he hecho a mi lenguaje?, me pregunté después, un poco asqueada de lo frankensteiniano que se ha puesto mi vocabulario. ¿Será culpa de la academia?, ¿de mis lecturas bizarras?, ¿de los medios?, ¿de la antropofágica ficción que eructa su propia palabra?, ¿de mis tecnosueños? Un poco de todo eso.

En este festival, precisamente, muchos escritores estuvieron de acuerdo en que la erosión de los géneros se producen en dos niveles: en la trama o estructura, y en la piel de la palabra. Hasta mediados del Siglo XX esa erosión comenzaba en la base, es decir, en la forma de concebir una historia; ahora la erosión es epidérmica, primero se fractura el lenguaje y luego lo demás, el pacto con la ficción.

“Lo que tu padre quiere,” lo interpretó mejor mi madre, “es poder saber de tu vida.” Y sí, es justamente eso, el *tiempo-twitter* ya no permite *existir*. Ahí no está la vida.

## Voices of Alumni

**Alicia Genovese** (Ph.D. 1996): Estuve aproximadamente cinco años en UF haciendo los cursos del doctorado hasta fines de los 80. Luego, una vez que obtuve mi Ph.D., regresé dos veces como Profesora visitante. Actualmente me desempeño como Decana del Departamento de Literatura en la Universidad Kennedy en Buenos Aires. Paralelamente, continué dedicándome a la escritura de poesía y he publicado siete libros en ese género.

Pero si de recuerdos se trata tengo que mencionar qué es lo primero que se me aparece como un dibujo en 3D cargado de sensaciones particulares cuando recuerdo mi estadía aquí. Son las caminatas a través del campus o hechas para llegar a él, el fuerte olor de las resinas de los pinos que involuntariamente me he llevado conmigo y he reencontrado como algo familiar cada vez que he vuelto. Ese contacto con la naturaleza después de largas jornadas de estudio o de lectura en la biblioteca, he aprendido a buscarlo en mi vida actual de ciudad.

**Isabel Sans** (M.A. 2003): Yo de UF me fui a Arizona State University, donde hice con David Foster un doctorado en estudios culturales y estuve muy feliz estudiando y haciendo teatro con la compañía bilingüe Teatro Bravo, y luego trabajé dos años en Tulane como profesora visitante. Terminé el contrato en mayo y me vine a Uruguay, donde estoy trabajando en el Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, en la coordinación con UNESCO. Hace dos meses tuvimos la gran alegría de que el candombe y el tango fueran incluidos en la lista de Patrimonio Inmaterial de la Humanidad por UNESCO.

**Liliana Dorado** (M.A. 1998; Ph.D. 2001): was granted tenure at Hope College, Michigan.

**Barret McCormick** (B.A. 2007): I recently read your message in the newsletter and thought I would drop you a line, not asking for a letter of recommendation! To say that my Spanish background has come in useful would be an understatement! In the hospitals and clinics, we routinely run into patients with limited to no English speaking ability, and while translators are available, nothing beats being able to speak to your patient yourself without an intermediary. As students, we also do work in underserved areas on a regular basis where many of our

patients have Hispanic backgrounds, so being able to talk about my experiences abroad helps to build trust and rapport. I would highly recommend foreign language to students interested in pursuing a medical education after college.

The opportunity to participate in the study abroad program in Guanajuato was probably the highlight of my undergrad experience, and I know it additionally helped prepare me for my future career. Since graduating, I've had the chance to go on a couple of medical mission trips—I went to El Salvador during the summer of 2006 and last spring had the chance to go to Bolivia during spring break. I will have a lot of open elective time in my 4th year of school, so I'm trying to find an opportunity to go somewhere for an extended period of time then. Thanks again for the newsletter!

**Clary Loisel** (Ph.D. 1996), who faithfully keeps in touch, reports that his most vivid

memory of his time at UF was watching Adolfo and Negra Prieto dance the tango. He's excited about teaching his new course at the University of Montana called "Consciousness Raising via Global Issues in Contemporary Spanish American Literature."

**Todd Puig** (M.A. 1990) has been a senior sales executive with Oasis Outsourcing in West Palm Beach since 1996 and has also led group trips to Spain for several years.

**Henri Simon-Blanc Hoang** (Ph.D. 2005) reports that since 2007 he's been teaching Spanish and French to the military at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California.

**Brian Stewart** (B.A. 2004) graduated from Tulane Medical School in 2008 and is currently doing a residency in pathology in Houston Texas.



## Sigma Delta Pi

In Fall 2009, Associate Professor Shifra Armon became the new faculty advisor for Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society, replacing Sherrie Nunn, who had faithfully kept our UF "Beta Rho" chapter going for many years. Thank you Sherrie for a job well done!

Eleven new members were inducted in 2009, with the help of out-going president Mary Beth Hayes (M.A. 2009). The same year, members voted to raise the bar for future admission to the UF chapter from 3.0 to 3.2 major/minor GPA. Also during

2009, local member Theresa Standfast won a National Sigma Delta Pi scholarship to study at the University of Alcalá de Henares in summer 2010. Congratulations Theresa!

On October 22 current chapter president Carrie Bramlet presided over the induction ceremony featuring Latin American and Spanish poetry recited by graduate students Meagan Day and Becky Halloran. Fifteen undergraduate students and graduate student Diego Pascual-Cabo were inducted this year.



Above: Alicia Genovese.  
Below: Antonio Sajid López, Clara Sotelo,  
and Alicia Genovese.

## La voz enardecida/ A Voice Impassioned: Miguel Hernández

On November 5, 2010, SPS celebrated a colloquium honoring the centennial of Miguel Hernández (1910–1942), one of the great Spanish poets of the twentieth century. Three faculty members from the University of Florida—Geraldine Nichols and Luis Álvarez Castro of Spanish and Portuguese, and George Esenwein of History, were joined by three outside scholars—Sharon Keefe Ugalde of Texas State University, Luis Martín-Estudillo of the University of Iowa, and Alicia Genovese, of the Universidad Argentina Kennedy—in a day-long assessment of Hernández’s influence and enduring interest. A bilingual reading of his poems, with several set to music, closed the day’s events.

The colloquium was planned to render homage to a man of exceptional integrity and rare poetic brilliance, and to ensure that his name and his work are not forgotten. It was an unqualified success on all counts.





Serving a holiday meal at St. Francis House



Argentine Author Pola Oloixarac, contemporary writer, essayist, and cultural critic, visited the department to deliver the lecture "State of the Code New Military Technologies for Old Literary Problems," which addressed the effects these institutions have on our society and their relation to contemporary literature. Oloixarac has become internationally known for her experimental novel *Las Teorías Salvajes* (2008), which has been described as recklessly intelligent and "without love," crossing disciplines and genres, and intersecting heterogeneous spaces such as video games and the institutionalization of postmodern warfare. Pictured Above: Roberto Weiss, Pola Oloixarac, and Gerrado Muñoz .



## Catalán

Elisabet Liminyana-Vico is generating great interest in Catalan through a number of course-associated cultural activities both in and beyond the classroom, for students, colleagues and the community. Not only are there talks on the history of Catalunya and its language, but students also meet weekly to practice conversation with native speakers, and they visit the Dalí Museum in St Petersburg together. They learn to cook Catalan dishes at Elisabet's house, they celebrate the beginning of autumn with a traditional chestnut roast (behind Dauer Hall!), and they gather to celebrate La Diada, Sant Jordi, and El Tió de Nadal with puppets, song, poetry contests, theater, and food. The Catalan Bulletin Board in Dauer Hall is a must-visit site for viewing students' joyful response to Elisabet's high-energy teaching.

The crowning event of this semester was a visit to Gainesville by popular singer-songwriter Pau Alabajos, who performed for an audience of over 100 at Gainesville's Thomas Center, accompanied by Catalan actress-poet Susana Sebastià reading poems. Alabajos' songs showcased topics ranging from a subway crash in Valencia, to the more lighthearted "Síl·labes de Vidre" about friendship after break-up. There was a lively question-and-answer session between sets, facilitated by the flawless tri-lingual interpreting by fourth-semester student Charlie Pindziak. Earlier in the day, Pau and Susana also visited four classes to talk about their work and the role of "La nova cançó," poetry and theater in Catalunya. They even made the front page of the *Alligator* the morning after the concert!

The poem below, written by Marc Granell and based on a Catalan nursery rhyme, was performed by Susana Sebastià and is here translated by Charlie Pindziak.

### Cançó de bressol per a despertar consciències

La meua xiqueta és l'ama  
de l'asfalt i del carrer.  
No té pares ni té casa,  
només fam i por i fred.

La meua xiqueta es passa  
tot el dia en el taller,  
treballant com una esclava  
per als rics de l'Occident.

La meua xiqueta brama  
fugint sota el sol roent  
-morta d'espant i de gana-  
d'una guerra que no entén.

La meua xiqueta xafa  
jugant i sense voler  
una mina que, amagada,  
li sega de colp els peus.

La meua xiqueta clama  
des de tots els continents  
justícia que acabe amb tanta  
misèria i tant de patiment.

### Nursery Rhyme To Awaken Conscience

My little daughter is the lord  
of asphalt and the road.  
She doesn't have parents or a home;  
she's just hungry, scared, and cold.

My little daughter spends  
all day in the shop,  
working like a slave  
for the rich people of the west.

My little daughter howls  
escaping under the parching sun,  
deathly afraid and hungry  
from a war she doesn't understand.

My little daughter crushes  
while playing and unwitting  
a mine that, hidden,  
suddenly lops off her feet.

My little daughter cries out  
from every continent  
for justice to put an end to so much  
misery and so much suffering.

My little daughter is the lord  
of asphalt and the road.  
She doesn't have parents or a home;  
she's just hungry, scared, and cold.

