

Alumni Newsletter

DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES



Summer 2024



Dear Students and Alumni,

We hope our 2024 Newsletter finds you well. This has been an eventful year in the Department of World Languages and Cultures, and for a host of positive reasons. We have continued to welcome new majors and minors to our program, and we have also welcomed the first cohorts of high school students from the Rock Hill School District's Dual Language Immersion program. These students have been taking Spanish or French in an immersion environment since kindergarten and can now enroll in our courses and earn college credit at Winthrop beginning in their sophomore year. We have been impressed by their level of proficiency, and their participation in our courses is a gift to our department and the University.

In addition to our traditional college students and the dual enrollment students, a number of retired community members regularly audit our courses and enrich the classroom environment with their enthusiasm for language learning. One of our regular auditors in French from the Rock Hill community, Stephen Turner, has just established a fund for students planning to study abroad in France. We are so grateful for Stephen's generosity! Contributions like this help ease the burden of foreign travel and would be a fabulous way for any alumni wishing to give back to their alma mater to help our current students!

Our language lab, which underwent an update just before the pandemic, has continued to adapt to the needs of our students with the help of our new Instructor of Spanish, Prof. Narada Diaz de Lang, who oversaw successful tutoring sessions, OPI practices (the oral proficiency exam taken by all our majors), not to mention very well-attended conversation hours for French and Spanish (more on these in the newsletter below).

The 2023-24 academic year was a typically busy one for faculty, who offered courses such as Love and Death in Hispanic Literature (Adam Glover), Paris and the Arts (Anna Igou), La Gran Cocina Latina (Valerie Jepson), Fairy Tales, Songs, and Comics (en français) (Scott Shinabargar), and the Spanish Film (Victoria Uricoechea).

This June, incoming first-year students are participating in orientation sessions and enrolling in language courses for the fall! We are enjoying the slower pace of summer and some summer travels as well, but we look forward to returning in the fall with new courses and energy for a new academic year ahead. To any of you planning to attend Homecoming in November, please come and see us at Slow Play Brewing (details in newsletter)! If you can't make it, please write or give us a call and let us know how you are. We would love to hear from you and to keep in touch.

All the best to each of you and we hope to see you or hear from you soon,

Anna Igou,

Anna Igou,
Associate Professor of French and Alumni Liaison for the Dept. of World Languages and Cultures



DR. ANNA IGOU



DR. VALERIE JEPSON

Faculty Promotions

This academic year, effective August 2023, two faculty members within the department were promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor: Dr. Anna Igou and Dr. Valerie Jepson!



Juramento de ser
BE LOVE!

DR. BERNICE A. KING
DR. KIMBERLY P. JOHNSON
Ilustrado por Zoe Ranucci
Traducido por Victoria Uricoechea

Translation Publication

Spanish Instructor Victoria Uricoechea recently translated the book *It Starts with ME!*, by Drs. Bernice A. King and Kimberly P. Johnson, © 2021.



New Faculty Member

Narada Diaz de Lang officially joined our team as a new Instructor of Spanish and Director of our Language Learning Center.

As a native speaker, with her additional background in K-12 education and her dynamic presence in the classroom, she has proven a valuable asset to the department in our ongoing rollout of the dual credit program.



Language Learning Center Conversation Hours

The Language Learning Center was thriving this year with our weekly conversation hours! Our LLC Assistants were actively engaged with students, hosting events such as a Mardi Gras celebration and a picnic-- in French-- to welcome interested students and practice their languages of choice.



Feria 2024

The WLAC Department happily hosted Feria 2024. French and Spanish students of all levels looking for a language challenge come to Winthrop's campus to participate in various language competitions. Some participate in extemporaneous speaking, others write essays, and the most adventurous compete in a spelling bee open to the public. Of course, the most involved participants do all three!

Feria could not happen without the dedication of its organizer, Dr. Valerie Jepson, the judges (Winthrop professors and community members) who listen, read, and score the language samples, and Winthrop's current language students who proctor the writing competition

and ensure all the speaking contestants are in the right place at the right time, and the French and Spanish teachers who prep and bring the students to campus.

Feria 2025 will be here soon. If you are interested in being a judge (lunch is included) or an audience member, please let us know. We would love to see our alumni at Feria 2025!



Community Involvement: International BMX Championship

This summer, one of our graduating seniors – Caleb Sample, a French/Spanish double major – did all of the written translations requested by local businesses, in both French and Spanish, for the international BMX championship held in Rock Hill for the second time. A number of our advanced Dual Language Immersion students also helped with on-site translation and interpretation.

Study Abroad Highlights



Cody Cook

Cody studied abroad in Dijon, France during the spring of 2023 with CIEF at the Université de Bourgogne as a double major in History and French. He graduated in December 2023.



Sadie Wolfe

Sadie studied abroad in Seville, Spain at the University of Pablo Olavide just outside the city. She graduated this May with a major in Modern Languages - Spanish and a minor in General Psychology.



Amelia Nichols

Amelia studied abroad in Antibes, France over the summer of 2022 with CEA Study Abroad, with a major in interior design. She will now be studying for her masters in Paris, France for the next three years!



Annamarie Yates

Annamarie is a Psychology major (with both French and Child & Youth Well-Being minors) who studied abroad at the Institute for American Universities in Aix-en-Provence, France during the summer after her junior year for three months. She will be graduating in December 2024.



Recent graduates working abroad...

Cody Cook, '23 (French and History double-major) and Caleb Sample, '24 (Spanish and French) will be working as English language assistants abroad during the 2024-25 academic year. Cody will be in Dijon, France, working for TAPIE (the Teaching Assistant Program in France) and Caleb will be in Seville, Spain working for NALCAP (North American Language and Culture Assistants Program). These programs make it possible for majors and minors in French and Spanish to spend time post-graduation being further immersed in the language and culture they love and offer stipends generous enough to pay for lodging and food while there... a wonderful opportunity!

This Fall: Homecoming Alumni Event @ Slow Play Brewing

Homecoming Week will be here before we know it! Join us on Friday, November 8th at 6 PM at Slow Play Brewing (274 Columbia Avenue, Rock Hill, SC) for a Homecoming Happy Hour. Grab a bite to eat from the Twisted Eats food truck from 4-9 p.m.; the brewery will be open until 11 p.m. Mention you are an alumnus to get 15% off your bar tab!

For more information on Homecoming events, visit:
<https://www.winthrop.edu/homecoming/schedule-of-events.aspx>




Alumni Update Request

Please share your own updates with Ms. Krista Scherpf for our next newsletter: scherpfk@winthrop.edu. Whether you graduated recently or decades ago, we would love to hear how you are doing and to know how your foreign language studies have influenced your life and work!

We wish you all a wonderful summer, wherever you may be. If you would like to support our students who wish to study abroad, [click here](#) and designate World Languages and Cultures fund # 1337.

Thank you for reading!

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