The Chairs

Elizabeth Ametsbichler and Jannine Montauban, co-chairs: Welcome back! We trust that everyone had a restful break and a good start to the New Year. As the two of us start our second semester as co-chairs of the department, we would like to thank our colleagues for their support. We would especially like to thank the former chair, Linda Gillison, for her help in a smooth transition. And, we couldn’t do our job without our office staff, Karen Blazevich and Olivia White. We are very pleased to welcome Olivia back into the department after a two-year break. We also welcome our new colleagues, Brian Dowdle and Robert Tuck of the Japanese section and Visiting Assistant Professor Sonia Balasch of the Spanish Section.

During Fall Semester, in addition to all of the diverse activities that MCLL students and faculty engaged in (see sectional news below), we also had an inspiring retreat (September 28-29) with much fruitful discussion. Spring Semester promises to be exciting, as always, with annual events such as Foreign Language Day (March 1st) and Graduation (May 18th). This year, two of our Russian faculty will be part of the Community Lecture Series sponsored by the Alumni Association, “Russia on the Oval.” Professors Ona Renner-Fahey and Clint Walker will both make presentations for this special event. Enjoy the news about the different language sections!

Classics

This year, Professor Hayden Ausland, Professor Linda Gillison, and Associate Professor Matt Semanoff provided a Classics program for an excited and exciting group of students. The section is blessed with the able and generous assistance of Ms. Stacia Graham in the first-year language classes.


The University of Bergen, with which Hayden has a long-standing professional association, has won a three-year grant in which he will participate in spring, 2014.

For the first time since 1996, our campus offered a Wintersession Study Abroad in Greece, directed by Matt Semanoff. His group of 16 students traveled in Greece for three weeks, and, by all reports, the program was a raging success.

Matt was granted a sabbatical leave for next year and will spend it working on his research. Meanwhile, Hayden and Linda will scurry to offer the needed classes, ably assisted by Jim Scott and Stacia Graham.
French

Bénédicte Boisseron, Associate Professor, spent the summer in Berlin on an extended Humboldt Research Fellowship. She gave a talk while in Germany, “The Creole Renegade: Coming Out and Getting Out of the French Antilles,” at the Forschungskolloquium at Leibniz Universität (Hannover). She was recently invited to contribute to a special issue of Yale French Studies, Animots: Post-Animality in French Thought. She also gave a talk in November for the LARC series (Literature and Research Colloquium) in the English Department at UM titled, "After Jacques Derrida (More to Follow): From A-cat-emic to Caliban." She was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in Fall 2012.


German

We are happy to announce that Lindsey Combs (Spring 2012) was awarded a Fulbright TA position in Hamburg Germany for the academic year 2012-2013. Melissa Sheedy, who graduated with an MA in German (spring 2011) also was awarded a Fulbright TA, but instead decided to begin a Ph.D. in German at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Fall 2012.

Elizabeth Ametsbichler, Professor, was appointed in Fall 2011 to be co-editor of the Women in German Yearbook for a four-year term. Volume 28 of the Yearbook was published in December 2012 by the U of Nebraska P. She was elected to the Executive Board of the German Studies Association, an international organization, for a three-year term and attended the annual conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 3-7, 2012. In her capacity as co-editor of the Women in German Yearbook, she attended the annual conference for the Coalition of Women in German in Shawnee on the Delaware, Pennsylvania, October 25-28, 2012. As UM’s campus Fulbright Program Advisor (for students), she participated in an FPA Initiative sponsored by Fulbright in New York City, November 28-30, 2012.

Hiltrud Arens, Professor, attended the annual Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Conference held in Boulder, CO in October and presented “Man glaubt zu finden und verliert im selben Moment – Berlin als Ort vielfältiger Grenzverschiebungen” in the special topics session on Berlin.

In October, the German Section and MCLL co-sponsored a series of events centered on the screening of the classic 1927 documentary Berlin: Symphony of a Great City, which featured a live, original scored performance. The events were organized by Marty Marko, Associate Professor, and the score was composed and played by local musicians John Sporman and Bethany Joyce, also an MCLL student. In connection with the performance, Marty co-presented a lecture with Bradley Naranch of the History Department, “1920’s Berlin: Crescendos of the Modern Metropolis.” Also in October, Marty attended the annual meeting of the Literature/Film Association (LFA) at York College of Pennsylvania where he presented “Dancing and Spelunking in 3D: Stagings of Technical and Aesthetic Exploration in Wim Wenders’ Pina and Werner Herzog’s Cave of Forgotten Dreams.” At the meeting, Marty was elected Vice-President of the LFA, an international organization that supports a variety of approaches to the study of cinema.

Italian

Italian is a two-year language program. Nonetheless, Italian students are very active in Il Circolo Italiano (Italian Club). During Spring
2012, Il Circolo was able to show two recent Italian movies in the UC Theater on campus, thanks to the Italian filmmaker of Hay Fever, Laura Luchetti, who donated her film for projection. The Club also participated in the International Culture and Food Festival, offering a very tasty pasta alla putanesca, thanks to a student who has great talents in Italian language and cuisine. Il Circolo got together again at their annual Christmas dinner, which served a delicious tiramisù, made by an Italian doctoral student in wildlife biology who is also a pastry chef in Veneto.

**Evelina Badery Anderson, instructor** of Italian, contributed to the Web Search activities for Ponti, 3rd edition, a second year Italian language and culture textbook used nationwide.

**Japanese**

The Japanese Section welcomed **Robert Tuck** and **Brian Dowdle, Assistant Professors**, to the faculty this past August, 2012.

**Brian Dowdle** has been actively involved with MCLL’s technological development and has also been serving as faculty advisor for the Japanese Student Association. Recently, he was selected to serve on the Board of the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies and at the annual conference of the WCAAS held in October 2012, he read a paper titled “Judging Books by their Covers: Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) and Literary Form in Early Twentieth-Century Japan.” He is currently developing a digital humanities project using interactive timelines for teaching and research.


**Judith Rabinovitch, Professor**, with **Timothy Bradstock, Professor** of the Chinese section, is completing a second volume of translated Japanese court poetry written in variant Chinese, featuring the works of a number of poets, many of whom have never been previously studied. With Tim Bradstock, Judith has recently completed “Early Edo Kanshi Poetry,” for the new *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Japanese Literature*, 2012. Another article with Tim Bradstock, “The Road Not Taken: A Tenth-Century Kanshi Dialog Between Two Courtiers,” is also in press.

**Russian**

Students in the Russian section have been engaged in a wide variety of activities. Russian Club President Greta Starrett spent Spring 2012 studying at St. Petersburg State University in St. Petersburg, Russia. Russian and German major Taylor Keister received a US State Department Critical Languages scholarship enabling him to spend eight weeks of Summer 2012 in Kazan, Russia. Russian major Justin Trifiro received a Gilman Scholarship for $5000 for Spring Semester 2013, with which he will study at Saint Petersburg State University (SPGU) through the School of Russian and Asian Studies (SRAS). In addition, last year Justin received a bronze medal for non-heritage, level two learners in the ACTR National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest. Only five students in the US had their Russian essays ranked more highly than Justin in this category.

As for faculty news: **Ona Renner-Fahey, Associate Professor**, spent winter session in Russia with ten students on a faculty-led cultural tour. The program was based primarily in St. Petersburg and Moscow. The numerous excursions included The Hermitage Museum, a performance of Swan Lake, a Cold War bunker, and a visit to a traditional Russian bathhouse. The students also engaged in a service-learning project, spending the day volunteering at a women’s shelter.
In terms of research, Ona has an encyclopedia entry on the poet Anna Akhmatova forthcoming in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*. She has also been actively working on UM's partnership with the School of Russian and Asian Studies (SRAS). UM acts as a school of record for this organization that designs and oversees a study-abroad program in Kyrgyzstan.

In November 2012, **Clint Walker, Assistant Professor**, gave a paper titled “Revisiting Crime and Punishment from a Folklore Perspective” at the annual Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies conference in New Orleans, LA. He also chaired a panel on “Embodiment and National Identity in the Soviet Union and Contemporary Russia.” Clint also worked intensively on creating the proposal for a new UM major in International and Global Studies, which is now ready to be reviewed by ASCRC, Faculty Senate, and the Board of Regents.

### Spanish

The Spanish section welcomes **Sonia Balasch, Visiting Assistant Professor**, for the academic year 2012-2013. She teaches Spanish Linguistics. Last semester, Sonia presented “The Structural Integrity of Direct Object Marking in the Spanish of New Mexican Bilinguals” at the 41st Conference of “New Ways of Analyzing Variation” at Indiana University. The Association of the Spanish History from the *Universidad Complutense* published her article “Revision amplia de la variación deber (de) en la diacronía del español” in November 2012.

**Maria Bustos, Professor**, was invited by Departamento de Linguística-Universidade Estadual de Campinas in Brazil to give a talk, titled “Patagonia y Cautivas: un acercamiento desde la ficción” on May 8, 2012.


**Clary Loisel, Professor**, finished his translation of the first Mexican lesbian novel *Amora*, by Rosa María Roffiel and presented “(In)justice in Contemporary Chile: A Discussion of Ariel Dorfman’s Death and the Maiden” for the day of the Dialogue in October. In the area of teaching, he directed Nancy Pinzon’s MA thesis “¿Adónde vamos a parar? La fotografía de un país en tres obras de Laura Restrepo” (defended on December 2012), created a new 300-level class on Chilean Cultural Studies and Human Rights Issues. This semester he is directing the Study Abroad program in *Universidad Mayor in Santiago, Chile*.