

中文

italiano

ESPAÑOL

# Modern Languages Messenger

NEWSLETTER OF THE MODERN LANGUAGES &amp; LITERATURES DEPARTMENT

français

العربية

日本語

The sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language. *Ezra Pound*

Spring 2011

## Student's Self-Initiative Results in Great Internship



Senior Lisa Batuski with Professor Lola Peláez

Lisa Batuski is graduating this May with a major in Spanish and minor in Psychology. To complete her Spanish degree, she started her search for an internship by networking with people she knows and simply asking them for their ideas. She received a suggestion to check out the Boston office of the Latino American Health Institute (LHI), a non-profit organization that focuses on getting the Latino population in Massachusetts access to clinical services such as substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling, which fits well with Batuski's academic interests.

To learn more about the internship search process, Batuski made an appointment with the Career Education Center (CEC) at Simmons College. The advice she received was to "google it".

She discovered a link between LHI and Social Work Professor Michael Melendez, who had served as a board member of LHI. Since the CEC and Social Work Department are in the same building, Batuski walked over to Melendez's office. Her initiative paid off because he was in his office and available to talk with her. He offered to email a colleague at LHI on her behalf to inquire about internship opportunities.

Although LHI primarily offers internships to graduate students for clinical experience, Batuski convinced her future supervisor that she had the language and interpersonal skills to be a successful intern. As she explains it, her primary "intention is to speak Spanish," which has been easy to do because all of the LHI staff are bilingual and many come from Latin American nations such as Puerto Rico, Spain, Mexico, and Peru. Working 15 hours per week, Batuski has handled tasks from filing to translating reports from Spanish to English. She reflects on the internship, "my confidence and communication in Spanish have improved to the level they were after I returned from a year of study in Argentina."

After graduation, Batuski plans to join the Peace Corps in June 2011. She has been nominated for a position to teach English in a Latin American country. She will find out the details in April. ¡Buena suerte, Lisa!

## Chair's Corner

热烈欢迎某人, Bienvenue, Benvenuti, 歡迎, Bienvenidos, Welcome to the spring issue of our newsletter, where you will find some of the activities our students have been doing this semester, descriptions of selected courses to be offered next fall, and important dates to remember. As we are entering the last weeks of the academic year, I encourage you all to come and enjoy the film screening on April 8, which will be presented by Professor Alister Inglis and will hopefully close on a happy note the long winter.

My thanks go to all students and faculty for a wonderful work, and to Melissa Campos-Poehnert, our Administrative Assistant, for creating and editing this issue on top of keeping us on track throughout the year.

## SAVE THE DATE

**April 4 – 8, 2011**

Chinese Calligraphy Exhibit,  
MCB corridor

**April 8, 2011**

Amalia Pulgarín from GRIIS  
visiting Simmons

**April 8, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.**

Film screening of *He's a Woman, She's a Man* in C101

## Fall 2011 Modern Languages Course Highlights

### ARAB 101

*Elementary Arabic I*  
MWF 8:00 – 8:50  
Instructor TBA

The Modern Languages department is excited to announce that Arabic is back. ARAB 101 is the introductory course to Modern Standard Arabic. Students develop skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. No prior familiarity with the Arabic language is required. Additional conversation practice plus written, audio, and video assignments required.

### CHIN 260

*Chinese Calligraphy: The Way of the Brush*  
M 3:30 – 6:30  
Alister Inglis

Introduces the art of Chinese brush writing along with the four treasures of the studio. Explores the history and aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy and basic knowledge about Chinese characters. Guides students in the use of the brush through studio work from simple exercises to exhibition pieces. Knowledge of Chinese is not necessary.

### FREN 316

*Outside France: Perspectives from the French-Speaking World*

MWF 12:30 – 1:20  
Florence Ciret-Strecker  
Prereq.: FREN 245 or consent of the instructor. Provides a multimedia study of selected French-speaking cultures of North America, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and Africa. Uses the perspectives on France viewed from outside discovered in a corpus of both literary and sociohistorical texts to approach an understanding of these French cultures.

### JAPN 245

*Composition and Conversation*

MWF 12:30 – 1:20  
Ruihua Sun  
Prereq.: JAPN 202 or consent of the instructor. This is a third-year Japanese course designed for students who have successfully completed JAPN 202 or equivalent. Students will learn how to write notes, announcements, letters, and short essays, while learning the second half of

intermediate grammar. At the same time we work on our conversation skills in Japanese. You are expected to write a play and perform in class. Students will also learn a few more hundred kanji.

### SPAN 265

*The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Hispanic Short Story*

MWF 12:30 – 1:20

Louise Cohen

Prereq.: SPAN 245 or consent of instructor. Introduces students to Spanish American and peninsular short fiction from the 20th century. Explores social, political, and aesthetic issues present in the work of authors, such as Quiroga, Cortazar, Rulfo, Cela, Benet, and Poniadowska. Topics include relationships between artists and society and portrayals of groups in crises.

### SPAN 312

*Politics & Society in Latin America*

MW 1:30 – 2:50

Dánisa Bonacic

Prereq.: SPAN 245 or consent of the instructor.

Studies the political, artistic, and intellectual history of the Spanish-speaking nations of the Western Hemisphere, in particular Mexico, Peru, and Argentina. Topics include the conquests of Mexico and Perú, Bolívar and the fight for independence, the Mexican Revolution, the Cuban Revolution and the dictatorships of the '70s and '80s.

### SPAN 322

*Love, War, and Parody in Medieval and Contemporary Spanish Fiction*

T, Th 2:00 – 3:20

Lola Peláez

Prereq: SPAN 264, 266, 268, or 269 or consent of instructor. Studies war and power and the concept of courtly love both in medieval masterpieces and in contemporary Spanish literature. Readings include the Cantar de Mio Cid (12<sup>th</sup> century), Urraca (1991), Cárcel de amor (1492), La Celestina (1499) and Melibea no quiere ser mujer (1991).

## 2011 Inaugural Exhibition of Student Calligraphy

April 4 – 8, 2011

MCB corridor

Student work from Professor Alister Inglis' Chinese 260 course, *Alternate Body-Building or the Practice and Appreciation of Chinese Calligraphy*, will be on exhibit April 4 - 8 in the MCB corridor. The exhibition includes samples from the final folios that students submit for a grade in the course; as such they are the culmination of an entire semester's work. Written in Japanese calligraphy ink on rice paper, the pieces themselves are poems composed by famous poets of the illustrious Tang Dynasty (618-907). One, entitled "Night Thoughts" by Li Bai, uses the imagery of the full autumn moon to symbolize separation from loved ones. The other, entitled "Deer Fence" by Wang Wei, conveys Buddhist themes through the imagery of sunbeams on a moss-carpeted forest floor. The styles vary from the modern standard script in which Chinese is currently written to one of its archaic forms, the clerical script.

**Student artists:** Stephanie DeMello, Shanice Fountain, Margot Hull-Allen, Rachel Lagasse, Melissa Lever, Ajisa Liti, Jennifer Liu, Madolin Mahoney, Chantell Morris, Victoria Niles, Mika Sato, Michael Vitagliano, Rosanna Wong.

Amalia Pulgarín, Ph.D from the Granada Institute for International Studies will be visiting Simmons on Friday, April 8, 2011.

She will hold an Information and Orientation session from 11:00 – 12:30 p.m. in L004 for students who are interested in taking a short-term course in Granada, Spain.

## Short-Term Courses to Granada, Spain May 26 – June 22, 2011

### SPAN 201M Intermediate Spanish I 40 – 45 contact hours

This course develops communicative skills through a selective grammar review, discussion of topics of interest, and frequent use of audiovisual materials. Expands reading comprehension and cultural awareness through examples of Hispanic prose and poetry.

### SPAN 240M Spoken Spanish 40 – 45 contact hours

This course offers intensive oral-aural practice, with emphasis on the language used in daily life. Serves those who wish to perfect pronunciation and increase fluency in Spanish.

### SPAN 253 Social and Political Issues in Modern Spain 40 – 45 contact hours

This civilization course focuses on 20th-century Spain with special emphasis placed on the Spanish Civil War, the Franco régime, the transition to democracy and Spain today. Areas covered include art and architecture as well as historical, political, cultural, social and economic issues.



## F I L M S C R E E N I N G

### He's a Woman, She's a Man

金枝玉葉 (Jīn Zhī Yù Yè)

Friday, April 8  
4 P.M. – 6 P.M.  
MCB C101

*Sponsored by Modern Languages and Literatures Department, East Asian Studies, Cinema and Media Studies, and the Asian Student Association.*

#### Synopsis

Set in Hong Kong during the '90s, the comedy *He's a Woman, She's a Man* follows the story of Lam Chi-wing (Anita Yuen), an ardent devotee of popular music who dresses up as a man in order to win a talent competition. This enables her to train as a pop star under the tutelage of the famous singer-song writer, Sam Koo (Leslie Cheung). To promote her career, Lam moves in with Sam, which enables her to form a friendship with Sam's pop-star girlfriend, Rose (Carina Lau). Loyalty to Rose, is sorely tested as Lam and Sam find themselves in a vertex of mutual attraction. Directed by Peter Chan (Chan Ho-sun), this light-hearted film subtly questions the norms of gender identity and sexual desire.



## Graduate Student Presents Research in Puerto Rico

Nancy Prieto, dual-degree student in MAT and Spanish, presented her paper, “La importancia del homoerotismo en *Antes que anochezca* de Reinaldo Arenas” (“The Importance of homoeroticism in *Before Night Falls: A Memoir* by Reinaldo Arenas,”) at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Congreso Internacional de Literatura Hispánica, March 2 – 4 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. As the only Master’s student who was selected to present her research to an audience of Ph.D candidates and academics, Prieto reflects on the experience, “I felt really empowered after the conference.” Prieto discovered the autobiography of Arenas, a Cuban born and openly homosexual writer, while taking *Cities of Lights and Shadows: Urban Experiences in Latin America*, a

Spanish course at UMass Boston last summer. She explains, “It interested me because I wanted to know why he wrote about homoeroticism in such graphic detail — explicitly detailing his sexual escapades and that of his friends.”

Prieto interprets the writings of Arenas as an act of rebellion against the Castro regime’s persecution of homosexuals in Cuba. She explains, “by writing his political as well as sexual views and opinions,” he exposed the Cuban government’s campaign of intolerance against homosexuality and forced not only Cuban society but Latin American society in general to engage in a public dialogue about homosexuality. Arenas wrote his autobiography in exile in New York after having fled

Cuba for fear of losing his life and/or being jailed again.

Prieto’s research led her to investigate the theme of sexuality in Latin America, in particular the inability of the Latino male to express his sexuality. She concludes that Arenas’ homosexual literary mechanism has several goals: first, by writing explicitly about his sexual experiences he is able to open the dialogue regarding the Latin American male’s sexuality which is a topic considered taboo in this society, second, to expose the inhumane treatment of homosexuals in Cuba by the communist regime, and third as a method of vengeance against the Castro regime’s authoritative hold on every aspect of the country.

### Mondo Muzika Radio Show with Professor Lylian Bourgois

Tune into the sounds of international music on Simmons Radio with Italian and French Professor Lylian Bourgois, Wednesdays this semester from 2:00 – 4:00 P.M. Each week, he will feature a guest DJ. For more information, email Professor Bourgois at [lylian.bourgois@simmons.edu](mailto:lylian.bourgois@simmons.edu)

- March 30: España
- April 6: Jugoslavija
- April 13: Francophone world
- April 20: Sezen Aksu, the queen of Turkish Pop (Part 1)
- April 27: Scandinavia
- May 4 : Russia

### Need to finish your language requirement in Spanish?

Take SPAN 201 this summer with Professor Tulio Campos.

**Only four weeks!**

May 23 – June 16  
Monday – Thursday  
9 A.M. – 12 P.M.

Registration is open in AARC.

Artwork by  
Lillian Casey,  
student in  
CHIN 102.



### Cartoon Translation

**First girl:** Whose bag is that?

**Second girl:** I don't know.

**First girl:** Let's look.

**Second girl:** It's Chen Xin's.

**First girl:** Chen Xin? I don't know that person.

**Second girl:** I also don't know. Let me see the characters. It looks like a boy's handwriting.

**First girl:** What class is he in?

**Second girl:** Let me see... (middle school) grade 2, section 3.

**First girl:** Oh! I remember, he's male, he's tall, and wears glasses.

**First girl:** This bag must be...

**Second girl:** Let's give it to the teacher...

**First girl:** okay.

The original dialogue comes from *Hanyu For Intermediate Students 1: Student Book* by Peter Chang.

### Congratulations to Japanese Students!

Tara O'Brien, a student from Professor Ruihua Sun's Japanese 202 course, earned an A on level 5 of the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT). The JLPT is a standardized criterion-referenced test which evaluates and certifies the Japanese language proficiency of non-native speakers. It was started in 1984 and is held twice a year. Students from the New England area can take the test on first Sunday of December at Northeastern University. The JLPT has five levels—Level N5 the most basic and Level N1 the most difficult.

Shi Su, also from Professor Sun's Japanese 202 course, received third place in the essay contest of the first annual Japanese Language Contest for New England College Students.