LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

It is with pleasure that I welcome you to this newsletter. It is our way of keeping you informed about the ‘goings on’ in the department. For three years, Tom Lovik, provided leadership to the department. I and the rest of the department are grateful that he took on this leadership role and sincerely thank him for the three years he served as Chair. He had the pleasurable task of overseeing the move into our impressive new quarters on central campus. For those of you who have not had the opportunity to see our new home, I extend to you a hearty welcome. Any one of us would be happy to give you a building tour.

I assumed the role of Chair in Fall of 2013 and I am now approaching the end of my first academic year. Even though I have been at MSU since 1987 and in the Department as a faculty member since 2001 (I was previously in the Department of English), seeing the Department from a Chair’s perspective has been a rewarding experience. Charlene Polio (Associate Chair) and Yen-Hwei Lin and Jason Merrill (coordinators) have provided incredible support and much needed assistance.

As you peruse the pages of this newsletter, you will see that we are an active and vibrant department. To our alumni: Please keep in touch. We can be reached at lingnews@msu.edu.

Susan Gass

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GERMAN ALUMNUS VISIT

Tom Mitchell, German alumnus (’93) and President of Messe Düsseldorf in North America, visited the department in November 2013. Messe Düsseldorf is a trade fair company that organizes shows for a variety of industries from around the world. The trade shows are held in a large exhibition space in Dusseldorf, Germany.

During his two day visit, Tom met with German faculty and students, spoke in German classes, explored internship opportunities for MSU students at his company and served on panel discussing languages and careers.

The panel presentation can be viewed at: https://new.livestream.com/msualumni/LanguageCareers.
DEPARTMENT HONORS TWO GERMAN RETIREES

Patricia Paulsell

Patricia (“Pat”) Paulsell received her B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in Germanic Languages and Literatures from The University of Michigan. She was hired into the MSU Department of German and Russian in 1978 to initiate a program in Business German. Prof. Paulsell served as Acting Chair in the Department of Linguistics and Languages for one year as well as Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Letters for seven years. Although Prof. Paulsell’s dissertation was in German literature and her passion includes German theater, most of her effort has gone into the Business German Program. Since 1996 she has served as Co-Director of the Title VI Center for Language Education and Research and Director for Business Languages of the Title VI Center for International Business Education. She is the author of the textbook, *German for Business and Economics*, as well as numerous articles and web publications for business languages. Her national and international reputation has resulted in numerous U. S. Department of Education grants that have supported many graduate students preparing for careers in this field. Prof. Paulsell is a highly effective classroom teacher, who has high standards for her students. A highlight of her teaching career is the German Theatre course she taught, which culminated as recently as 2012 in a German language student “cabaret.”

In retirement, Pat will devote more time to her grandson as well as her husband Don and his work with the Chelsea Players.

Patrick McConeghy

Patrick (“Pat”) McConeghy received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees in German from Stanford University. Before joining MSU in 1977, he served as the Director of the Stanford University Overseas Study Center in West Berlin. Prof. McConeghy served as Associate Dean for over ten years in the College of Arts and Letters and from 2004-2006 he was the Acting Dean in the College. Prof. McConeghy served on the Council to Review Undergraduate Education (CRUE), the Semester Transition Team from 1990-1992, and the University-Wide Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluating Quality Outreach from 1995-1998. His curricular vision led to the reconfiguration of the German undergraduate program, contributing to the program’s designation as a Center of Excellence by the American Association of Teachers of German in 2013.

Although Professor McConeghy wrote his dissertation on the middle high German author Hartmann von Aue, his more recent scholarly work includes publications on the living German author Daniel Kehlmann. Prof. McConeghy has been a highly effective classroom instructor for the German Program as well as Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities. Current and former students praise his compassion for teaching, his continuous efforts to embrace new technology and his balanced approach to learning. In 1998 the Michigan Foreign Language Association awarded him the Teacher of the Year Award.

In retirement, Pat will continue to mentor junior faculty in the Department and serve on graduate committees. In his leisure time he intends to spend summers on Lake Superior and humming “MSU Shadows” on the beach.
Linguistics alumnus, Will Fitzgerald (’78), visited the department in March 2014 to discuss career paths in the field of Linguistics with both undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Fitzgerald earned his M.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language from Southern Illinois University and his Ph.D. in Computer Science from Northwestern University. Dr. Fitzgerald is a Senior Natural Language Processing Engineer at Reverb Technologies in San Mateo, California. He currently works on Reverb’s content- and social-based recommendation engine (he does a great deal of NLP, and machine learning). He has worked on NLP applications for Wordnik, Microsoft’s Bing, NASA, and several start-up companies.

ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL

MSU’s 8th Annual Israeli Film Festival was presented March 17-18, 2013 with attendance close to 550 people. It showcased some of the various faces of Israeli society, and some of Israel’s most outstanding films, including two features and two documentaries. One film was presented by its screenwriter, another by its producer. True to the diversity of Israeli society, Israeli films included multiple languages. The festival aims to spotlight Israel’s thriving film industry and to teach the MSU and surrounding communities about Israeli society and culture. The films have become an integral component of MSU’s Hebrew program and other programs, as well.

The Annual Israeli Film Festival is hosted by the MSU Jewish Studies Program, with support from the Department of Linguistics and Languages and other MSU units and off-campus organizations. The festival and series—now in its 14th year—are coordinated by Ellen Rothfeld, Instructor of Hebrew.

MSU’s Ninth Annual Israeli Film Festival, held March 23-24, 2014, also featured award-winning films and TV episodes.

CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

MSU Chinese language students performed songs in Chinese at the 2014 Greater Lansing Area Chinese New Year celebration event held at the Meridian Mall on February 1, 2014. Students pictured from left to right: Olivia Goethe, Tania Lopez, Christopher Murphy, Chris Hole, Anthony Johnson, Eric Wu, Ashleigh Smith and Conner Hyde.
ON-LINE AND HYBRID COURSES BEING DEVELOPED

New department hires, Adam Gacs (German), Yinfei Chen (Chinese), and Shannon Spasova (Russian), in addition to contributing to their respective language programs, are working under the auspices of CeLTA to develop hybrid and/or online language courses. Shannon will be teaching a new online summer course (in English) titled “Russian and Eastern European Science Fiction” (RUS 242).

Other online courses offered in Summer ‘14 include Elementary German I & II (GRM 101 and 102) and Pedagogical English Grammar for English Teachers (LLT 346) and Introduction to Second and Foreign Language Learning (LLT 361). Additional courses, such as “Language and the Animals: Dr. Dolittle Deluded?” (LIN 291) will be ready for online delivery in Summer, 2015.

CUBE2CUBE: CLASSICAL JAPANESE PROJECT

As an Associate Professor of Japanese Literature and Culture, Catherine Ryu finds that her strengths lie in many places, especially her own educational experiences. Professor Ryu, a former student of classical Japanese, recognized the difficulties her students faced in learning the grammar-laden curriculum and set out to create a program that would allow students to learn the finer rules of classical Japanese in a modern and engaging way. The answer was in a platform called Cube2Cube or “C2C.”

C2C is a system of blocks with color-coordinated geometric patterns. The blocks are laid out in a line to depict the grammatical or sound structure of any piece of classical Japanese prose. By manipulating the blocks, Professor Ryu hopes that C2C will “offer a visual representation of both sound and grammar structure” in language.

Since the fall of 2012, Professor Ryu has involved undergraduate students as research assistants who work on various aspects of the project, including the development of a video game.

C2C was the only College of Arts and Letters showcased project at the 2013 MSU Innovation Celebration.

Original article written by Tracy Reddington and adapted from the MSU Digital Humanities website – www.dh.cal.msu.edu

FLTAs

The 2013-14 Fulbright Foreign Language Teach Assistants (FLTAs) from left to right: Ahmed Al Suleimani, Oman/Arabic; Ayoub Msuya, Tanzania/Swahili; Abdullahi Isa, Nigeria/Hausa; Alexandre Batista, Brazil/Portuguese; Darshini Nadarajan, Malaysia/Malay; Feruza Tadjibaeva, Uzbekistan/Uzbek; Olusesan Ogunyooye, Nigeria/Yoruba.
STUDENT AWARDS AND RESEARCH

2013 CAL and Department Awards
CAL Alumni Award for Undergraduate Excellence
Sae Lom Kim, Chinese major and Japanese minor
Outstanding Graduating Senior in LGSAAL
Patrick Kindig, German major
Evan West, Linguistics major and cognitive science specialization
Wilkins/Rodman Award in Linguistics
Curt Anderson, PhD candidate in Linguistics
Outstanding Teaching Assistant in LGSAAL
Laura Ballard, PhD candidate in Second Language Studies

Additional Awards and Scholarships
Max Bender (German major), Mayen Scholarship for 2013 Mayen summer program
Shannon Chesney (German major), Mayen Scholarship for 2013 Mayen summer program.
Sora Choi (Japanese major), CAL Alumni Endowed Student Book Scholarship and John W. Eadie Scholarship for International Education
Mykala Ford (Arabic major), received the 2013 Sultan Qaboos Scholarship for summer study in Oman
Elena Herfi (Arabic major), 2013 Boren Undergraduate Scholarship for academic year study in Jordan
Carly Lesoski (German major), Gilman Study Abroad Scholarship for study on Academic Year in Freiburg program in Germany
Ayman Mohamad (PhD candidate in Second Language Studies), TOEFL Award for student research at TBLT Conference in Alberta, Canada
Emily Robinson (German major) DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Scholarship for study and research in Germany
Alexis Schumacher (Japanese major) CAL John W. Eadie Scholarship for International Education
John Sheets (German major) Academic Year in Freiburg Scholarship for study in Germany

CAL Undergraduate Research Initiative 2013-14
CAL-URI provides financial support for undergraduate researchers to work with college faculty. Many present their research at MSU’s annual University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF). This year’s faculty grant awardees are:
Peter DeCosta (TESOL) – “Second language identity and ideology”
Goertler, Senta (German) – “Language use and learning in study abroad”
Munn, Alan (Linguistics) – “Acquisitions of synthetic compounds” and “Investigations into participle leveling”
Ryu, Catherine (Japanese) – “Tone Perfect Project- Mandarin Chinese app”
Schmitt, Cristina (Linguistics) – “Acquisition of get-passives by children” and “Predicate nominals in professional description”
Wagner, Suzanne (Linguistics)- “English intensifier adverb use over the lifespan” and “English use of be like for quotes over lifespan”

Conference Presentations
Debra Hardison (Associate Professor in TESOL Program) and Jake Reed.
(M.A. student in TESOL), she gave a presentation at the American Association for Applied Linguistics conference in Dallas in March 2013 entitled ‘Relationships among Gesture Type, Pitch, and Segmental Duration in the Speech of Teachers of Japanese.
Cristina Schmitt (Associate Professor of Linguistics) and Adam Liter
(Linguistics major) presented their talk, “Inclusive plural interpretations depend on grammaticalized number: An argument from artificial language learning” at the Workshop on the Acquisition of Quantification at the University of Massachusetts. Co-authored with Chris Heffner, MSU Linguistics alumnus, now in the PhD program at the University of Maryland.

SPRING ’13 GRADUATES

Inductees into the 2013 German and Russian national honors societies. Ceremony hosted by Profs. David Kim, Tom Lovik, and Jason Merrill.
FACULTY NOTES


Susan Gass (Chair) awarded the Kenneth W. Mildenberger prize for Outstanding Work in the Fields of Language, Culture, Literature or Literacy with a Strong Application to the Teaching of Languages Other Than English as co-editor of The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition.

Sentra Goertler (German) promoted to Associate Professor.

Debra Hardison (Associate Professor in TESOL Program) gave a plenary address on ‘Technology in Second-language Speech Research and Teaching’ at New Sounds: International Symposium on the Acquisition of Second language Speech in Montreal in May, 2013. Debra and Tomoko Okuno (Assistant Professor in Japanese) presented ‘Changes in Second-language Learners’ Oral Skills and Socio-affective Profile following Short-term Study Abroad to Japan’ at the Second Language Research Forum in Provo, Utah in November. The latter paper was based on a project supported by CLEAR.

David Kim (Assistant Professor of German) named a 2013-14 Lilly Teaching Fellow.

Russell Lucas (Associate Professor of Arabic Studies) was interviewed in a variety of local media about current political issues in Syria and Egypt.

Jason Merrill (Associate Professor of Russian Studies) was the recipient of the 2014 College of Arts and Letters Faculty Leadership Award “Enhance and Reward Faculty Distinction”

Alan Munn organized a workshop at the 2013 LSA Linguistic Institute in Ann Arbor entitled “Syntax and Variation: Where are we now and where do we go from here?” The workshop was funded by the National Science Foundation. Among the speakers were Cristina Schmitt, Greg Johnson (Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics) and alumnus J. Daniel Hasty (Ph.D. Linguistics 2012)

Tomoko Okuno (Japanese) received her Ph.D. in Second Language Studies from MSU in Summer 2013. She accepted a Lecturer III position at the University of Michigan and will be head of the residential college intensive Japanese program starting Fall 2014.

George Peters (Professor of German) is serving his consultantship year before retiring in May 2014.

Charlene Polio (TESOL and Associate Chair) promoted to full Professor.

Sean Pue (Assistant Professor of Hindi Studies) was featured in the Chronicle of Higher Education in an article about his research on the computational analysis of Urdu poetry with MSU’s Microbiology Department (http://tinyurl.com/k6i3nwp).

Cristina Schmitt (Associate Professor of Linguistics) recognized with the Distinguished Contributions to Honors College Students Award and the Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor of the Year Award in 2013.

Paula Winke (TESOL) promoted to Associate Professor.
NEW FACULTY

Peter De Costa (TESOL and SLS) comes to us via the Monterey Institute of International Studies with a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His interests are in the role of identity and ideology in SLA, culturally-relevant pedagogy for immigrant ESL learners, critical classroom discourse analysis, transcultural flows, immigration, and the sociolinguistics of globalization.

Matthew Handelman (German) received his Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures from the University of Pennsylvania. His research interests are in the 19th and 20th Century German and Austrian literature, the intersections of literature with mathematics, philosophy, the natural sciences, and the history of science, German-Jewish studies, and film theory and history.

Sadam Issa (Arabic) received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has taught Arabic at UW-Madison and at Middlebury College. His research interests are in discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, the use of technology and anxiety in second language classrooms.

Kathryn McEwen (German) received her Ph.D. from the Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages at Vanderbilt University with a dissertation title of Hand/Arbeit/Buch/Schrift: Approaching the Female Hand.

Wil Rankinen (Linguistics) is a Ph.D. candidate in Linguistics at Indiana University who is writing a dissertation on vowel dynamics of English in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. His research interests are in sociolinguistics and dialectology, and he will be teaching introduction to linguistics and sociolinguistics. It is a ‘welcome back’ to Wil who received his BA in English

Special Faculty Appointments

Three new faculty have joint appointments with CeLTA (Center for Language and Teaching Development). They are part of a cluster hire of individuals with strong language teaching and technology backgrounds. They will be teaching and working on technology projects related to their language curriculum.

Yingfei Chen (Chinese) received her MA in Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has experience teaching Chinese to university-level students as well as to high-school students.

Adam Gacs (German) is a Ph.D. candidate in Germanic studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He has extensive experience working with technology and language teaching.

Shannon Spasova (Russian) comes to us from Dalhousie University in Halifax where she has taught since receiving her Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has presented papers on such areas as folktales as well as areas related to technology. She has taught Russian at the University of Wisconsin, Dalhousie, Oberlin and Middlebury College.
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• Update your email and mailing addresses
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2013 Summer Study Abroad

A) Harbin, China Program - Peking Opera Class

B) Volgograd, Russia Program - Wall of Peter and Paul’s fortress in St. Petersburg

C) Mayen, Germany Program - Brühl’s Terrace in Dresden