

ISSUE 3 · SPRING/SUMMER 2023

NEWSLETTER

University of Akron Modern Languages Department

NEWS TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2023 Issue of the Department of Modern Languages Newsletter!

Before we get started, please note that our Fall semester this year starts a little later than usual. [August 28, 2023 is our start date!](#)

As always, if you have news you'd like to feature in the newsletter, please do not hesitate to share. Details on how to submit materials for the newsletter are found at the end of this publication.

Happy Summer!



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A Letter from the Interim Chair

DR. MARY BIDDINGER

Dear Modern Languages Colleagues,

I hope that you are having a wonderful summer so far. If the break includes travel, best wishes for hassle-free journeys and pleasant adventures. Olin Hall is quiet at the moment, but we are busy preparing for the upcoming academic year, and looking forward to summer recruiting events. This edition of the newsletter contains an abundance of good news. Please take a moment to read about our faculty and student accomplishments, and keep up the excellent work.

Best wishes to our colleague Dr. Parizad Dejbord-Sawan, who has retired from the university this summer. Dr. Dejbord-Sawan, I will miss our conversations, and look forward to staying in touch.

This summer the Department of Modern Languages welcomed Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes to the role of Assistant Chair. Congratulations to Dr. Cruz-Martes, who also recently received the Community Engaged Teaching Recognition from the EX[L] Center.

Finally, I must send kudos to Theresa Procopio not only for creating this handsome and informative newsletter, and going above and beyond in all that she does as Administrative Assistant, but for her commendable efforts with learning the new Workday system. Theresa put in countless hours in trainings, learned to navigate the system, and has even assisted staff in other units as they acclimated themselves with Workday. Thank you, Theresa!

All the best,
Mary B.





Dr. Parizad Dejbord-Sawan Retires after 28 years of service at the University.

Congratulations to Dr. Parizad Dejbord-Sawan on her retirement from the university, and for being awarded Emeritus status. Dr. Dejbord-Sawan joined the faculty of the University of Akron in 1995. Her many accomplishments include the Outstanding Teacher Award for the University of Akron (2008), the Outstanding Teacher Award for the College of Arts and Sciences (2008), and the Chair's Outstanding Achievement Award for Teaching (2006). We wish Dr. Dejbord-Sawan the very best for her retirement, and thank her for being such a wonderful teacher, scholar, mentor, and colleague.

Welcome to our new Assistant Chair, Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes

We are excited to share the news that this summer Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes assumed the role of Assistant Chair of the Department of Modern Languages. Dr. Cruz-Martes is planning for summer recruiting events, as well as the New Roo welcome events for incoming students. We are grateful for her willingness to step into this role.

Many thanks to Dr. Zanetta for her wonderful service as the previous Assistant Chair.





EX[L] AWARD FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

BY DR. CAMELLE CRUZ-MARTES

On April 28th Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes was recognized by the EX[L] Center for the effective use of community-engaged learning. Students from the Department of Modern Languages volunteered in the Spanish Language Enrichment Program starting in March 2022, including the summer of 2022. Sponsored by the Summit County Juvenile Court presided by Judge Linda Tucci Teodosio, the initiative was coordinated by Ms. Ruth Edge (Teacher of Integrated Social Studies, JDC).

Twelve sessions were held with the juvenile participants, and eleven The University of Akron students have participated in the program so far. The students assisted in lesson planning and delivery at the facility. Students at the Center were beginning Spanish students ages 10-18. Classes are taught Fridays, and usually, to two or three groups for an hour or hour and a half.

The University of Akron students are currently taking Spanish courses at the intermediate and advanced levels in the Modern Languages Department. One outcome, according to participants, was awareness-raising about the challenging realities many young people face in Akron. One valuable takeaway for UA students and detainees alike, according to Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes, was participants' recognition of themselves in others despite circumstances and superficial differences. The UA students are now more apt to link Spanish to the helping professions and to the idea of service. Some students are, as a result, considering working in the healthcare professions or as counselors or lawyers.



Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes, Ms. Ruth Edge (Teacher of Integrated Social Studies, JDC in red), at the Summit County Detention Center. UA students that participated in the program (from left to right, T. Harris, Ty Eliss-Clouser, Simara Vines, and Mara Miller)



New Certificate Added to Curriculum!

Dr. Maria A. Zanetta worked diligently to create and propose a new Certificate into the University curriculum. The new certificate, "Certificate of Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures for International Business" prepares students to meet the challenges of doing business in the Spanish-speaking world.

This new program is a great complement to both students pursuing a minor or a major in International Business and to students pursuing a Spanish minor or major.

It is also a great way to foster relationships between students from the College of Arts & Sciences and the College of Business.

Congratulations to Dr. Maria A. Zanetta for her important role in creating this certificate!



You will be able to learn more on our Website this Fall--so keep an eye out for that!





DISSTA: The Spanish Experience!

BY KIRSTIN POLEN DE CAMPI



Spanish students, (left to right), Emma Barna, Emily O'Quin, Lealer Powell, and Olivia Lane, show their Zips pride in Segovia, Spain.

DISSTA: The Spanish Experience returned to Valladolid, Spain this summer with another successful trip. Our students worked on their Spanish minor or major by taking a culture class and a language class Monday to Friday from 9:30 to 2:00pm. They were accompanied by other students from California, Tennessee, Iowa, Colorado, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, and England to name a few. Our weekend excursions with UVa introduced us to the castle in Segovia with amazing views as well as the famous Cathedrals (yes, there are two) and historic University of Salamanca. Additionally, we visited the walled city of Avila and Burgos with its Gothic cathedral.

(Continued on PAGE 07)





DISSTA: The Spanish Experience (cont'd)

We even got the chance to visit the mayor's office in the Ayuntamiento. Students lived with local host families and were able to explore the city of Valladolid and all it has to offer. During our stay in Valladolid, the city hosted a street theatre & arts festival (TAC), the book fair, a paddle competition and the International Day of Music with 70 concerts across town. A whirlwind of a trip but with memories to last a lifetime! Stay tuned for the new opportunities that we will have next summer.

"Overall, my time in Spain was an amazing and eye opening experience that I won't soon forget! I am excited to travel to Spain again and to visit other Spanish speaking countries!" Emily O'Quin, Junior Spanish Major, writes.

Please look forward to reading more about their experiences on our website coming soon!

“

Learning expressions and emotions in Spanish actually improved my conversational English skills!

”

**-Olivia Lane,
Spanish Minor.**



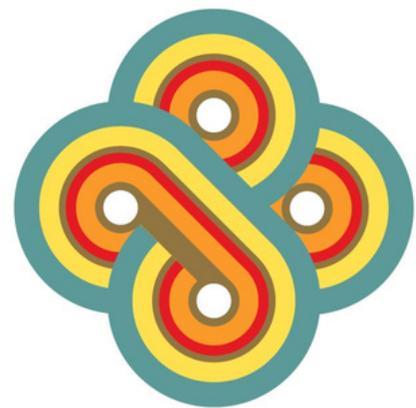
Students visiting the Mayor's Office in Ayuntamiento.

DR. ORTIZ, VISITING SCHOLAR AT UT AUSTIN THIS SUMMER

We are thrilled to announce that our very own Dr. Alexis Ortiz joined the University of Texas at Austin as a LLILAS Benson Visiting Scholar from June 2 to July 1 this summer. This prestigious opportunity allowed Dr. Ortiz to access the Nettie Lee Benson Collection resources and data bases, and further his research on Nineteenth Century Mexican Literature and the Technological Imagination.

The LLILAS Benson archive is known for its comprehensive collections, focusing on history, humanities, social sciences, and more. It provides a unique learning environment, drawing scholars from around the globe. Its unparalleled resources will provide a fertile ground for Dr. Ortiz's work, pushing the boundaries of his research and enabling innovative perspectives.

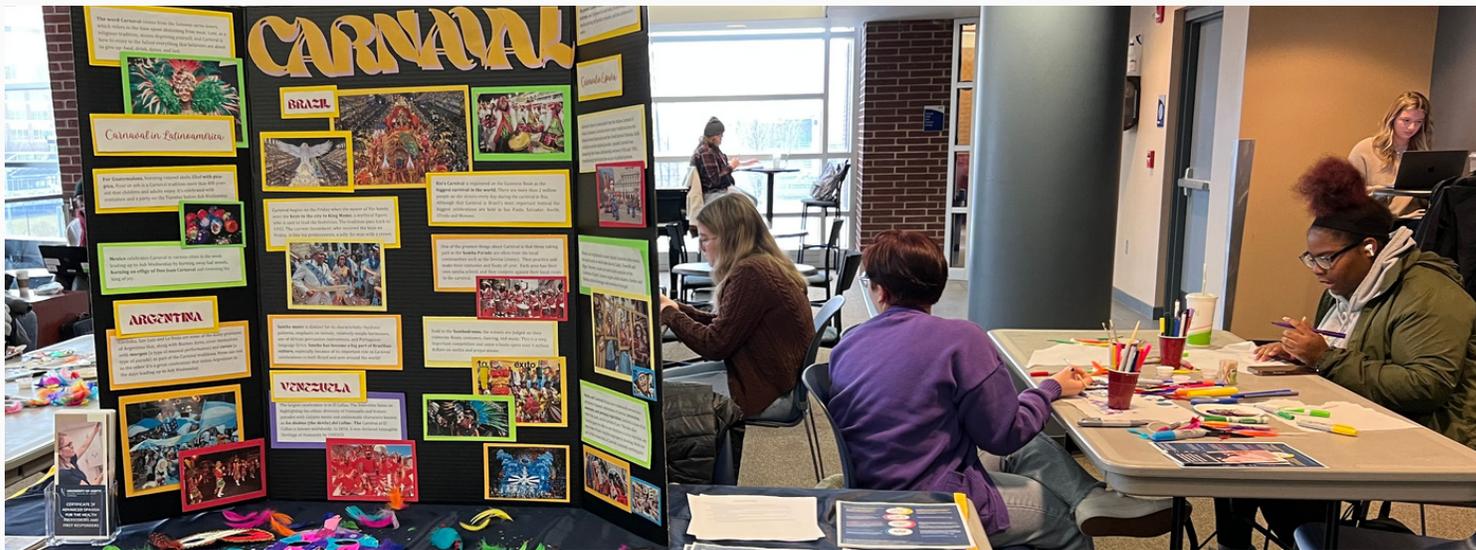
Regarding this opportunity, Dr. Ortiz shared an infectious excitement. "I am truly honored to be welcomed into the UT Austin community for the summer. The chance to further my research at the LLILAS Benson archive is an absolute dream come true. Their extensive collections will significantly bolster my research and facilitate a deeper understanding of nineteenth century Latin American literature."



LLILAS BENSON
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES AND COLLECTIONS



CARNAVAL!



Department of Modern Languages Sponsored Event: CARNAVAL!

On Wednesday, February 22, The Department of Modern Languages conducted a mask making event in order to showcase the celebration of Carnival in Latin America and Spain. Students could choose from a variety of materials to decorate their mask and let their creativity run wild! Thank you to Dr. Zanetta for organizing this event, it would not have been such a success without your hard work and diligence!





Dr. Ortiz Chairs Panel on Nineteenth Century Mexican Literature

BY DR. ALEXIS ORTIZ

The recent 2023 Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies (SECOLAS) conference celebrated in Antigua, Guatemala, during the month of March, facilitated the discussion and exploration of Latin American studies. The conference, celebrated every year in different parts of the USA and the Americas, attracts scholars and specialists in Latin American Studies to share their findings in their areas of expertise.

The panel entitled Reassessing the Mexican Archive: War, the Immorality of Tradition and Indigeneity brought to the fore the necessity of engaging with Mexico's rich literary and historical archives critically. The participants elucidated on the theme, examining the impact of war, the implications of tradition, and the role of indigenous people in shaping 19th-century Mexican literature. They also underscored the importance of research on the topic gaining a nuanced understanding of Mexico's cultural landscape during this period.

Overall, the panel offered opportunities to engage in the exploration and complexities inherent in 19th-century Mexican literature. It provided a fresh, compelling perspective on a subject that is often seen through a limited lens. It was a reminder of the importance of constantly reassessing our understanding of history, literature, and culture to gain a more holistic understanding of our shared past.



FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Maria A. Zanetta has recently published an article titled "El mensaje ecofeminista en 'Tierra Finita' (2021), de Isidro Jiménez Gómez y Mariola Olcina Alvarado" in the peer reviewed journal *Área Abierta* Vol. 23 Núm. 1 (2023) published by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain.

Dr. Ortiz publishes an article on distinguished Colimense writer, Gregorio Torres Quintero. We're excited to spotlight a piece recently published by Dr. Alexis Ortiz. His article, titled "Entre siglos y movimientos, Gregorio Torres Quintero y La Vaquera", was published earlier during the spring semester in *Revista Connotas*.

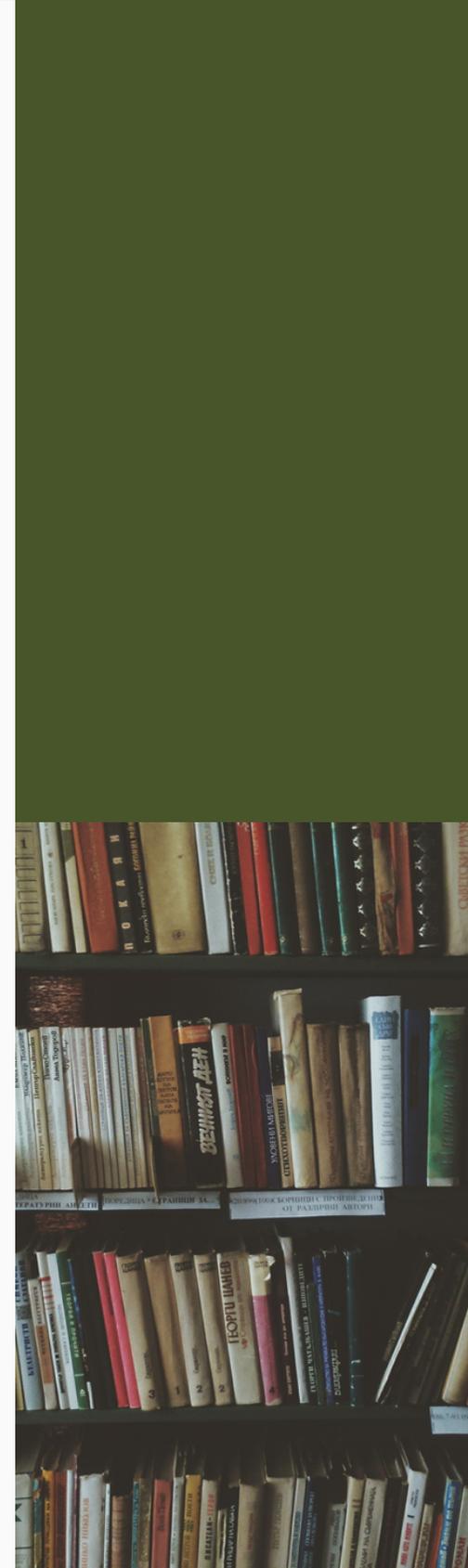
The article establishes a profound connection between Professor Gregorio Torres Quintero's literature and the aesthetics and philosophies of the nineteenth century German Romantic movement. Notably, Dr. Ortiz deftly explores how this influence coexists in a state of tension with the rapidly modernizing forces of late 19th-century Mexico.

We are delighted to recommend "Entre siglos y movimientos, Gregorio Torres Quintero y La Vaquera" to all those interested in a unique intersection of literature, history, and cultural aesthetics. Follow this link to access the full article:

<https://connotas.unison.mx/index.php/critlit/article/view/425>

Congratulations to Dr. Ortiz for this contribution to the field of Latin American studies and German Romanticism!

Dr. Camelly Cruz-Martes has recently published an article titled, "Text as Haunt: The Spectrality of Translation" (Co-author Kelly Washbourne, Professor of Translation, Kent University) *Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS)*, May 2nd, 2023.





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Shreeya Kaur, French minor and Biomedical Science major, captured the 3rd prize at the French competition for colleges and high schools in Northeast Ohio organized by the Maison Française in Cleveland on April 7, 2023.

The students from the French Section of the DML have been participating in the competition for many years, and from 2003 our students have been consistently winning third, second, first and grand prizes!

Congratulations to Shreeya!

Want to submit material for the Newsletter?

You can do so by scanning the QR code below for the submission form or e-mailing Theresa at tmp77@uakron.edu



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