

Las Coordinadas

News from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Toronto
Fall 2019

In this issue

- COVID-19 announcement
- Department news and activity
- Upcoming events
- Events this past semester
- The Levy-Wasteneys Symposium
- News from LAS and our new Communications and Undergraduate Coordinator, Berenice Villagomez

COVID-19 announcement

As Canada continues to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, at the University of Toronto we endeavour to play our part in ensuring the health and wellbeing of our community. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese is committed to enabling students to complete their current academic term. In our three programs -- Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American Studies -- faculty and instructors are now delivering the remainder of their courses using online platforms. Starting Wednesday, March 18 the Departmental offices in VIC 208 and JHB 535 will be closed until further notice. Our staff will be available to provide services and support to members of our community remotely, through phone and videoconferencing, during regular hours of operation. Should you need to reach us, please e-mail us to book an appointment.

In addition, we are cancelling all academic and community events until June 30.

Keep healthy and safe!

Department news and activity

- May 16, 2019: **Ph.D. candidate Andrew McCandless** successfully defended his dissertation proposal, "Aperceptionandpro- duction training study of L2 Spanish rhotics in learners with L1 Canadian English or Canadian French."
- May 19, 2019: **Prof. Juan Carlos Rocha Osornio** presented the paper "Conocer, reconocer y empoderar: la enseñanza de ELE a través de la experiencia inmigrante a Canadá vista desde las imágenes y la reflexión". XXXI Congreso de la confederación académica nipona, española y latinoamericana (CANELA). University of Shizuoka, Japan.

- June 13, 2019: **Prof. Néstor E. Rodríguez** gave a talk at the Feria del Libro de Madrid on “Literatura dominicana del siglo XXI”.
- Oct. 10, 2019: **Prof. Rocha Osornio** presented the paper “El aprendizaje sostenible en la enseñanza de español como lengua extranjera en Canadá”. II Congreso Internacional de Lenguas y Tecnología (CIL). Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, Pachuca, México.
- November 9, 2019: **Ph.D. candidate Andrew McCandless** presented a paper entitled "Perception and Production Training of L2 Spanish /u/ in Beginner Learners with L1 Canadian English," at Beyond Tradition, the 2019 conference of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese-Ontario Chapter, at the University of Toronto.
- November 12, 2019: **Ph.D. Candidate Alejandro Soifer** published the [following paper](#), “Una economía de la crueldad: Estado, organizaciones sociales marginales y necromercado en Trabajos del reino y La transmigración de los cuerpos de Yuri Herrera.” *Latin American Literary Review*, 46(92)
- Dec. 6, 2019: **Prof. Rocha Osornio** presented the paper “Consideraciones en torno a la enseñanza de ELE a sinohablantes en Canadá: retos y oportunidades”. Congreso Internacional SinoELE 10 Aniversario. National Taiwan University, Taipei.
- **Ph.D. candidate Oliver Velazquez Toledo** published a poem in [Labelme Latina/o Fall 2019 Vol. IX](#) and received a grant from the Toronto Arts Council for the project "noname", short stories on the migration experience and anonymity, to be published as a yellow and black supermarket product.
- **Prof. Rocha Osornio** was one of the 45 selected faculty members to participate in the new Certificate in Effective University Teaching Practice presented in partnership with the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI) and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). Provost Cheryl Regehr shared opening comments with the participants regarding the importance of teaching at the University of Toronto and commending faculty member’s participation in this pilot.
- **Ph.D. candidate Daniela Maldonado** has had a short story ("Piojos") translated to Slovenian and published as part of a selection of Colombian short stories. The book, published at the end of 2019, is called *Zgodbe iz Kolumbije (Stories from Colombia)*. In this publication, she appears side by side with some of the most relevant and best-sold writers in Colombia at the moment, such as Jorge Franco, winner of the Alfaguara prize last 2014.

Upcoming events

- October 4th, 2019: The Department of Spanish & Portuguese, along with the Jackman Humanities Institute hosted the lecture series talk “**Are 2-year-olds copying their parents, or just speaking the same language?**”, given by **Prof. Virginia Valian** from Hunter College/CUNY

- October 18th, 2019: The Department of Spanish & Portuguese hosted the lecture series talk “**La enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera en Asia: Un caso de imperialismo lingüístico**”, given by **Prof. María Eugenia de Luna Villalón** from the University of Hong Kong and organized by Prof. Rocha Osornio.
- November 9th, 2019: The Department of Spanish & Portuguese hosted the **Annual Conference of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish & Portuguese (AATSP)**, Ontario chapter, organized by Profs. Rocha Osornio and Ramírez. This event included paper presentations from the following faculty members and graduate students: Anabela Rato, Luciana Graca, Jesús Porras, Petre Ene, Ailén Cruz, and Andrew McCandless.

Events this past semester

- **September 20th, 2019: Tango Class**
 - Tango class taught by professional dancers Roxana & Fabián Belmonte to our students in SPA100Y, SPA220Y, and SPA320Y.
- **October 28th, 2019: Día de los Muertos Celebration**
 - Our traditional ‘Día de Muertos’ celebration took place on Oct. 28, 2019. Thanks to all the students and members of the local Spanish- speaking community who were in attendance. Our special appreciation goes to visual artist Sergio Zubía, Stuart Graham and his artist incubator program, as well as photographers Gloria and Carlos Castaño from Evoke Photography for contributing to the success of this year’s event.
- **October 31st, 2019: Inês Pedrosa’s visit**
 - We had the privilege of welcoming the Portuguese writer Inês Pedrosa, who engaged us in informal conversation about 'Fazes-me falta – o processo de escrita e aquilo de que mais sentimos falta, nas nossas vidas'. The visit included the following activities: a reading of texts written by the students of the «PRT219: Academic Portuguese» course, taking inspiration from the writer's work, a video viewing of testimonies carried out by the students' families, a conversation with the writer and performance of Luso- Can Tuna, closing this session. This activity was supported by Camões, I.P., whom we also thank very much.

The Levy Wasteneys Symposium

Last September, the University of Toronto’s Spanish and Portuguese Graduate Student Association (SPGSA) successfully celebrated the 35th Levy-Wasteneys Symposium, “Beyond borders: unification and division in language and literature”. We were honoured to have two renowned keynotes in attendance: Prof. Oswaldo Zavala (CUNY) and Prof. Armin Schwegler (UC Irvine), along with graduate speakers from across Canada and the United States. The proceedings kicked off with three excellent literature talks by José Alejandro Londoño (UWO), Bruno Soares dos Santos (Alberta), and Jerikho Ezzekiel Amores (McGill) on the topics of

transnationalism in Brazil's new novel, the Amazon ethnoscape, and the roles of memory and control.

These were followed by a fascinating presentation by our first keynote, Prof. Zavala, on "Mexican Narconarratives after Narcos". A full room of students and faculty listened attentively as Prof. Zavala engaged in debates on state violence, neoliberalism and drug trafficking, and analyzed the proliferation of narconarratives over the last two decades. The lunchtime session brought a wide variety of thought-provoking topics, ranging from a postdoctoral analysis of religious confrontation in medieval comedias by Juan Manuel Carmona Tierno (Montréal) to how triple social rejection affects the marginalized gay writer by Nayid Jesús Contreras (UofT).

Kathryn Houston (UBC) and Roberto Elvira Mathez (CUNY) concluded the graduate line-up for this session, which was then followed by two in-depth syntax talks by Sophie Harrington (UofT) and Gavin Bembridge (YorkU) looking at the often perplexing Spanish subjunctive – specifically, its links to the conditional and how its alternation with indicative may provide clues as to the still elusive underlying structure of embedded clauses.

Our second keynote, Prof. Schwegler, gave the final presentation of the day with a truly engaging talk on "Language, globalization, and the rapid reshaping of local identities". Attendees were moved by the plight of the inhabitants of El Palenque and their journey from an isolated community of runaway slaves to one central to the fabric of contemporary Colombian life. This made for both a thoughtful and uplifting end to an incredible day, where the theme of 'unification' through the sometimes 'divided' fields of language and literature was embodied wholeheartedly by all in attendance.

Latin American Studies joins Spanish & Portuguese

In 2017 / 18, the Latin American Studies program underwent a Quality Assurance Process, as mandated by the Government of Ontario for all academic programs in the province. The external reviewers were impressed by the program (calling it "a small gem"), praising the commitment of the core faculty and staff, the excellence and enthusiasm of the current students, the innovative courses recently developed in the curriculum, the research strengths in the program, and the engagement with the Latino community in Toronto. However, one of the issues that concerned the external reviewers was the institutional organization of the program.

After extensive consultations within the Faculty of Arts & Science on options for the continued development and growth of the program, it was recommended that Latin American Studies be housed at the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. To us, this is exciting news as we will be able to offer our students more options to deepen their study of the regions with a multidisciplinary focus.

Welcome Berenice Villagomez

As part of the LAS team that is now integrating into Spanish & Portuguese, we are pleased to introduce Dr. Berenice Villagomez, our new Communications and Undergraduate Coordinator.

Berenice graduated with a Ph.D. in 2009 from our Department, with a dissertation on the literature that stemmed from the earthquake that nearly destroyed Mexico City in 1985. She has served the university in a variety of roles, including course instructor of language and literature courses at various levels, in our undergraduate program. Most recently, she has focused her commitment at the administrative level, in her role as the coordinator for the Latin American Studies program since 2011. Her contribution to that program was pivotal, and we are fortunate to have her joining our administrative team. As part of her duties, Berenice will be the first point of contact for undergraduate inquiries at the Department. She will also be supporting the organization of events, as well as our general communications, outreach and fundraising efforts.

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