

ENGL'ish News

English Department Newsletter ♦ Fall 2006 ♦ Vol. 5, No. 1

Letter from the Department Chair Dr. David Mead

This December 15th, from 5 to 7 p.m. the English faculty will host the first English Department Reception for our M.A. and B.A. graduates. Such a celebration of success is long-overdue. We expect that some sort of reception for graduates, their families and friends will be held prior to each graduation from now on. An important part of this event will be the 'hooding' of our Master of Arts in English graduates.

So far, at least from my perspective, the Fall semester has gone well for the students and faculty in the department. In October we installed 23 new members of Sigma Tau Delta, the English honorary society. Just last week the Department co-sponsored (with the Clearinghouse for Mexican American Studies) a very successful visit by Dr. Victor Villanueva, a nationally-famous scholar in Rhetoric from Washington State University. Victor met with faculty, visited classes, and gave formal talks twice – to a packed house each time. Dr. Chuck Etheridge's second novel has been accepted for publication, and a grant he wrote for the Food Bank of Corpus Christi was funded for \$160,000. In October Dr. Nancy Sullivan presented papers recently at the Linguistic Association of the Southwest meeting at TAMU-International in Laredo, and today Dr. Kirklighter is at the annual NCTE meeting in Nashville, where she is a member of the Executive Board. Dr. Sharon Talley and Dr. Jan Haswell have just returned from attending a meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council in Philadelphia. And to top it all off, Dr. Talley's *Student Companion to Herman Melville* has just been published by Greenwood Press. We are busy, busy, busy. And productive.

At present we have national searches underway for two faculty positions – in Composition Studies and in British Literature. These are 'replacement' appointments for positions vacated by Dr. Richard Haswell, who retired two years ago, and Dr. Mary Beth Davis, who left us to teach at Fatih University in Turkey. We hope to get permission soon to hire for the tenure-line vacated by Dr. Glenn Blalock when he moved to Baylor University.

I am always impressed by the amazing energy and productivity of our English faculty. It is an honor to work with them.

ON CAMPUS...

Dr. Michelle Kells, a well known scholar in Rhetoric and Composition and graduate of TAMUCC's English B.A. program, visited campus on October 12th to discuss her new book Dr. Hector Garcia: [Everyday Rhetoric and Mexican American Civil Rights](#) which will be published by Southern Illinois Press sometime in December. Victor Villanueva, the author of the award winning [Bootstraps: From an Academic of Color](#) visited campus on November 9th and 10th. The English Department and Clearinghouse for Mexican American Research sponsored his visit. He is the past chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Mr. Villanueva is currently teaches Rhetoric and Composition at Washington State University. He has given more than 35 keynote speeches, and he is one of the leading scholars in Rhetoric and Composition, having been chosen as Rhetorician of the Year in 1999 by the Young Rhetoricians Conference.

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Susan Wolf Murphy recently published an article in *Writing Center Journal*, which is the premier, peer-reviewed journal for writing center folk entitled “‘Just chuck it. I mean, don't get fixed in on it’: Complicating Self-Presentation in Writing Center Discourse.” In addition to her publication, Dr. Wolf Murphy serves as co-PI on a STEP grant for just under \$1M from the National Science Foundation which is designed to help retention & success of minority students in science and math fields.

Drs. Diana Cardenas, Cristina Kirklighter and Susan Wolff-Murphy have coedited a book entitled, Teaching Writing with Latino/a Students: Lessons Learned at Hispanic Serving Institutions, that will be published with State University of New York Press.

Associate professor Dr. Glenn Blalock has left Texas A&M to teach English at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Dr. Cristina Kirklighter was appointed by the chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCCs) to serve on the 2007 CCCCs Book Award Committee. The committee selects the best book was published in the last two years in Rhetoric and Composition.

Infinite Wonderlands, a collection of science fiction short stories, many of which were written by Dr. David Mead in collaboration with CCSU graduate Oscar De Los Santos, was published in June by Fine Tooth Press. Dr. De Los Santos is Professor of English at Western Connecticut State University at Danbury. The stories in *Infinite Wonderlands* appeared originally in three volumes published by the Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Dr. Molly Engelhardt is currently revising her monograph entitled Dancing Out of Line: Ballets, Ballrooms and Victorian Bodies in 19th Century England. This work explores literary and cultural aspects surrounding the popularity of dance in middle class England particularly how the cultural ambivalence surrounding dance actually facilitated new approaches in the arts and medicine.

Dr. Charles Etheridge has recently finished the second book of the Border Cantos trilogy entitled Desert After Rain. This work which continues the story of the Quinonez family is scheduled for publication in early 2007. If all goes well, the final book in the trilogy, as yet untitled, will be published in 2008.

Dr. Janis Haswell spent two weeks researching in the John Gardner archives at the University of Rochester developing several articles which offer a revisionist reading of several of his prose works based on previously unpublished materials. Also Dr. Haswell has been busy editing a volume of selected letters of British novelist Paul Scott.

Dr. Paul Kucera recently presented a paper on the film version of *Two Years Before the Mast* at the College English Association's annual meeting in San Antonio. He also has a review of two works on Route 66 due out soon in *Steinbeck Studies*.

Dr. Mermann-Joziwak along with Nancy Sullivan, recently published “Braiding Languages, Weaving Cultures: An Interview with Diana Montejano” in the *Journal of American Studies in Turkey*.

STUDENT NEWS

Patricia Alonzo presented "Universal Progress: A Hispanic Woman's Rhetoric" at the XVII International Symposium on Spanish: Women Writers of Latin America and the Border conference on April 27, 2006, at the University of Texas-Pan America in Edinburg, TX.

English graduate student Adolfo Butch Cardenás was appointed in August to the editorial board of *Puentes*, this university's bilingual literary publication. Cardenas also contributed to this year's edition that focused on religion in Chicano literature. This year's contributors also included novelist Demetria Martinez and Jeanette Rodriguez, Professor of Theology & Religious Studies and Women's Studies at Seattle University.

Robin Martin's paper "Acquiring a Magical Literacy: Harry Potter Characters' Transition into the Cultural Literacy of the Wizarding World" has been accepted for presentation at the Narrate Conferences' National Conference, "Phoenix Rising," in New Orleans, LA next May. In addition she has been asked to join the Abstract Review Committee for HP Educational Fanon's (HPEF) 2007 international conference in Toronto, Canada.

Adjunct professors, Kristina Nelson, Chelsey Patterson, Nicole Green and student Mark McNamara will attend the Learning Communities conference in Bay City, MI as a panel in early November.

Former student E.E. Charlton-Trujillo who graduated in 1998 with a degree in English has recently published a book through Kirkus Reviews entitled Prizefighter En Mi Casa. The book was released in early August has received great reviews so far.

Lorelei Stenseth presented her paper "Filling in the Blanks: Teaching that Transforms Thinking into Writing" at the 96th Annual National Council of Teachers of English Convention in Nashville, TN. She presented as part of a panel on revising English language arts methods courses with Drs. Cristina Kirklighter and Catherine Quick.

CONGRATS TO THIS YEAR'S ENGLISH GRADUATE CAPSTONE COURSE

Thumbs up for the English Graduate Capstone course for their efforts in writing a grant application to the Kenedy Foundation on behalf of the Food Bank of Corpus Christi. The funds obtained through the Kenedy Foundation will be used to build a kitchen for the Food Bank's "Cocina Alegre" program. The goal of the program is to provide nutrition education to low income families and diabetics by showing ways to prepare healthy meals with limited budgets. Capstone students are:

Vanessa Ballmer, Colin Bohne, Kyung Cho, Chelsey Dalton, Ashleigh Davis, Nicole Green, Breanne Hicks, Heather McDermid, and Laura Wavell. Also special thanks to Bea Hanson, the Executive Director of the Food Bank who assisted project and Dr. Charles Etheridge for his efforts as well.

AND FINALLY...

SAGES is Back....

After taking a brief break last year, SAGES or the Student Association of Graduate English Scholars, is back and in full force. According to Dr. Sharon Talley, who along with SAGES president Anne Riis is responsible for getting the program back on track, the program is important for many reasons. It fosters relations along graduate students and faculty and helps students as they work through the M.A. process. In addition to organizing Banned Book Week with the staff at Bell library, SAGES has already hosted two workshops this fall; the first with the help and expertise of Dr. Cardenas and Dr. Talley was geared toward helping graduate students build a curriculum vita and most recently, thanks to Candace Penick and Dr. Cristina Kirklighter, graduates got helpful information about navigating the application process of post graduate studies. One more workshop is scheduled for the fall session it is entitled Applying for Teaching/Writing Positions and Dr. Chuck Etheridge and Dr. Catherine Quick will discuss how to conduct an effective job search.

SAGES elected its officers at the beginning of the fall 2006 semester they are:

Anne Riis President

Robin Martin Vice President

Brigette Rodriguez Secretary

Sara Slaughter Treasurer

Heather Dorn Grad. Committee Representative

BANNED BOOK WEEK A GREAT SUCCESS

On September 27, 2006 TAMUCC celebrated the 25th anniversary of Banned Book Week by holding a one day exhibit in the Bell Library. This event, which is actually a week long nationwide event, promotes awareness of the most challenged books. Thanks to the efforts of librarian Sue Willman and SAGES, students and faculty had the opportunity to peruse information about the lists of most challenged books etc.

According to Willman, most people were surprised at what book is on the lists. She explained that books are challenged for a number of reasons, including, but certainly not limited to racial issues, politics, and sexual content. The American Library Association, which is also a cosponsor of Banned Book Week, registers the challenges received from parents, school boards and religious and political groups and organize the data into specific lists—Most Frequently Challenged Books Written by Authors of Color 1990-2000, Top Ten Challenged Authors, and a voter response to Controversial Titles— which were available at the event.

Overall the organizers reported a great turn out and are planning on hosting the event again next year.

If you would like the complete lists of challenged books and other information visit the American Library Associations website at www.ala.org