

# ENGL'ish News

English Department Newsletter ♦ Spring 2007 ♦ Vol. 5, No. 2

## *Letter from the Department Chair Dr. David Mead*

The End is Near! The end of the semester, that is, which I am sure we are all anticipating with mingled dread and delight. This time of the semester, and of the academic year, is always frantic for faculty as well as students. Final exams to take or give, portfolios to assemble or collect, research papers to write or read ... everything seems to come at us all at once, sometimes overwhelming what should be a well-deserved sense of achievement.

We have had a fine year – in our teaching, our scholarship, and our service to university and community. By all reports we taught very well this year. I am always gratified (and humbled, too) to see as I write my annual reviews of faculty just how pleased and excited our students are with the learning they have achieved and the help they have received from their teachers. It was also a banner year for faculty scholarship: at least five of our faculty members wrote or edited scholarly books which saw publication here and abroad, a number of us had articles published in juried scholarly publications, and most of the faculty presented their work at least once at professional meetings. And finally, our faculty's engagement in community and university service activities continues to bring the department the praise and respect of our university colleagues as well as the appreciation of the community agencies and organizations we assist.

An important achievement not to be overlooked is our having hired two new tenure-line colleagues, with the search for a third new department member (in American Literature) nearly complete. We are delighted to welcome Dr. William Jones (composition studies) and Dr. Molly Engelhardt (British literature) to our ranks. We are sure they will help keep our programs growing, energetic, and productive. Finally, please join me in congratulating Dr. Susan Wolff-Murphy and Dr. Charles (Chuck) Etheridge on being recommended to the A&M System Regents for tenure and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, and Dr. Cristina Kirklighter, on being awarded tenure. Bravo, and Well Done, All!

### **UNIVERSITY AUTHORS DAY**

Benjamin Alire Saenz was the highlight of University Authors Day held on February 23, 2007. Saenz worked with several students from Miller High School and Moody School, as well as with students from the University in a series of workshops. Saenz teaches creative writing at University of Texas at El Paso. He has received many awards for his work, including the American Book Award and the Southwest Book Award. In addition, he is the author of several children's book including *A Gift From Papa Diego* and *Elegies in Blue*. Mr. Saenz has also written novels, a collection of short stories entitled *Flowers For the Broken*, and several collections of poetry such as *Calendar of Dust*.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS AND WRITING**

Dr. Rosa-Linda Fregoso, chair of the Department of Latin and Latino/a Studies at the University of California at Santa Cruz and author of *The Bronze Screen* and *Mexicana Encounters*, visited campus on February 1. Her presentation "The Turn to Human Rights" discussed the importance of dealing the violence toward women on the Mexican-American border and how her work with "visual culture" can help to end the violence. Dr. Fregoso is the 2004 recipient of the Modern Language Association's prize for literature.

# FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Diana Cardenas has been researching different intercultural communication programs nationwide. Her findings will help the university's technical writing program better prepare students as they enter a multicultural working environment.

Dr. Paul Kucera recently submitted several articles about the works of James Fenimore Cooper and Clifford Simak which are now in the review process for publication.

Dr. Nancy Sullivan will be presenting her latest research on the effects of national identity on attitudes toward learning English in Japan at a conference sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association. She will be presenting her research with former TAMUCC professor Bob Schatz.

Dr. Catherine Quick presented her paper "Why Change? They're Passing the Test," at the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Conference, November 2006, as part of a panel with Cristina Kirklighter and graduate student Lorelei Stenseth. In addition Dr. Quick presented two guest lectures at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette on February 12. The presentation to students was "Representing Identity: Folklore on the Texas-Mexico Border"; the presentation to faculty was "Lessons from the Borderlands: Promoting a Pedagogy of Diversity."

Dr. David Mead has co-edited with Dr. Pawel Frelik a collection of essays entitled "Playing the Universe: Games and Gaming in Science Fiction." Mead's essay on "Games and Gaming in Jack Vance's Science Fiction and Fantasy" is included in the collection, which was published in April by the Maria Curie-Sklowdowska University Press of Lublin, Poland. At press time, he is waiting for word that the Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press of Shanghai, China, has published "Kaleidoscope Future," a volume of science fiction stories he wrote with Oscar De Los Santos.

Dr. Sharon Talley's most recent book -- entitled A Student's Companion to Herman Melville -- was published in December by Greenwood Press.

Dr. Cristina Kirklighter presented a paper "Making a Difference: Revising Teacher Prep Course for a Latino/a Community" in November at the 2006 National Council of Teachers of English held in Nashville. Dr. Catherine Quick and Lorelei Stenseth were members on this panel as well. Also, Dr. Kirklighter presented a paper with Sue Willman entitled "Wikipedia as a Tool for Developing Resource Evaluation Skills" at the Continuing the Conversation: Best Practices in Teaching in Kingsville, Texas.

Dr. Susan Wolf-Murphy, along with Drs. Diana Cardenas, , Cristina Kirklighter will be speaking at a workshop in San Antonio, entitled Teaching Latino Students: Perspectives on Culture and Learning sponsored by Innovative Educators and Excelencia in Education. They will be providing insights from their book Teaching with Latino/a Students: Lessons Learned at Hispanic Serving Institutions which will be out in August 2007 from SUNY Press.

## FUTURE FACULTY?

Congratulations to Olaf Fors and Kristina Gutierrez! Both students were recently accepted in PhD programs. Fors is off to Indiana University of Pennsylvania to further his work in their Composition and TESOL program. Gutierrez was accepted into the Comp/Rhet program at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Best of luck to both of you! And to those of you who were accepted after we went to print!

# STUDENT NEWS

## 11<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL READING CONFERENCE

Graduate Students Adam Webb and Olaf Fors gave a presentation entitled "*Understanding Multiple Literacies*" at 11<sup>th</sup> annual Reading Conference held on campus March 30. The work focused on critical theories of literacy in North American public schools and universities, as well as different forms of literacy: academic, community, family, and sponsors of literacies such as businesses, teachers, and families. In addition Webb presented a portfolio representing forms of learning and writing for college freshmen.

The Reading Conference focuses on a wide range of issues regarding literacy of all ages. The event features two days of reading centered workshops, presentations as well as guest speakers. This year's speakers were children's book author Kathleen Krull and Dr. John Pikulski, professor of education at the University of Delaware.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Recent graduate William Bryan Davis, will be presenting his work at the upcoming Phoenix Rising national conference which will be held in New Orleans in May. This paper is the result of a Directed Independent Study and is entitled "*Scattered Ashes: The Phoenix Falls*". The focus of the conference is works of J.K. Rowling and seeks to create a space for the exchange of ideas as they relate to the concepts and theories of the Harry Potter phenomenon.

## 2007 HAAS AWARDS

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual Haas awards ceremony will be held April 19<sup>th</sup>. These prizes are presented to undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated writing excellence in the following categories; Undergraduate Creative Writing, Graduate Writing, 2000 Level English, 3000 Level English, Technical and Professional Writing, 1302 Research Essay, and 1301 Essay. This year, Dr. Oscar de Los Santos, professor of English at Western Connecticut State University will present some of the awards and will read some of his own work. De Los Santos, a graduate of TAMUCC (when it was CCSU) and a native of Corpus Christi, is the author of several books including *Hardboiled Egg* and *Infinite Wonderlands*, a story collection he co-authored with Dr. David Mead.

## INTERNATIONAL WRITING CENTERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

In April Frances Johnson, Dr. Susan Garza and graduate student Noelle Ballmer are off to the International Writing Centers Association Conference in Houston. They will be presenting a workshop entitled "Extending the Possibilities of the Classroom Space". This presentation reflects the overall mission of TAMUCC's Writing Center by illustrating the value of utilizing various opportunities for supplemental instruction, including expanding classroom and learning opportunities, specialized workshops, "Assignment Reviews", and "Ways to Open the Gate for THEA Students," in an effort meet the goals of both students and instructors.

## 2007 SIGMA TAU DELTA CONVENTION

At the end of March six students, Chelsie Hawkinson, Anne Ries, Sara Slaughter, Erica Rangel, Misty Lassiter and Ginger Plante attended the 2007 Sigma Tau Delta convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The six of them presented a panel on how to effectively teach and combat racism in the literature classroom. Several of the students also presented independent pieces as well. The convention was a chance for the students to meet other English majors and also to let others know about what's going on at TAMUCC.

## Spring Calendar 2007

January 10, 2007-Classes begin

January 15, 2007-Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

January 17, 2007- Last day to register or add a class

January 26, 2007-Last day to apply for May graduation

March 12-16, 2007-Spring Break

March 30, 2007-Last day to drop a class.

May 3-9, 2007-Final Examinations

May 10, 2007-May-mester registration and first day of classes.

May 12, 2007-Spring Commencement.

May 24, 2007-Last day of Maymester

May 25, 2007-Maymester Final Examinations

May 28, 2007-Memorial Day