From the Department Head
Barbara K. Altmann, Professor of French

I’m very pleased to be writing from the chair’s office, where I have taken over for a three-year term from our colleague, Juan Epple. From this vantage point, I see even more clearly what I’ve known all along: this is a happening place! We now have over 900 majors and minors. We graduated six new Ph.D.s and fifteen M.A.s this spring, as well as more than 170 undergrads with a degree in one of our four programs. On the faculty side, we are losing, with great regret, David Castillo, associate professor of Spanish, but we are extending a warm welcome to three new colleagues in Spanish, Tania Triana, Cecilia Enjuto Rangel, and Pedro García-Caro. We are also fortunate to have visiting professor Christopher Weimer for the academic year. As always, our vibrant teachers and students have a dazzling array of projects underway. We are sending more than two dozen French graduates to France to work as language assistants in high schools for 2005–6; our new study-abroad program in Granada is up and running; and the university continues to send more students to Italy on study-abroad programs than to anywhere else in the world.

To celebrate our productive and somewhat unusual combination of three Romance languages under the same administrative roof, we have decided to host a meeting of the Romance studies organization here at the university in fall 2006. A number of department members from all sectors are working on the initial plans and the rest of us will get involved as this international meeting takes shape. Watch this space for more details in next year’s letter, and please join us when the conference takes place!

In the meantime, drop by Friendly Hall some time soon to see the renovations that are restoring the original charm of our building. And remember the international community we have working, learning, and teaching in its offices and classrooms. With every conversation that takes place in one of our three target languages, we are living and creating a wider, more tolerant multilingual world.

Williams Grant for Redesigning Italian 150 and French 150

Gina Psaki, Nathalie Hester, Barbara Altmann, and Karen McPherson embarked on an exciting collaboration in summer 2005. This team of RL faculty members has received funding from the Williams Council to redesign two first-year courses taught in English: French 150, Cultural Legacies of France, and Italian 150, Cultural Legacies of Italy. The goal is to increase and enhance our broad-spectrum humanities teaching, to engage a larger cross-section of students (beyond those whom we normally teach in the target languages of RL), and to bring our strengths as specialists in Romance languages and cultures into the general education mission. In order to move into a lecture-discussion format without sacrificing quality or student-teacher contact, the team will explore different approaches to incorporating writing, research, and discussion exercises into the course curriculum. The redesign also includes the use of instructional technologies in the lecture format, the integration of web-based resources, and the creation of a bank of portable curricular materials. Both courses will be team-taught in fall 2005, which will allow the four faculty members to continue to work in close collaboration.
Professional Activities

The Department of Romance Languages is made up of over 100 professors, instructors, and GTFs. At any given time, teachers and scholars are working on a breathtaking variety of literary and cultural studies, original literary production, active classroom research, curriculum development, and innovations in language assessment. The products of our labors are presented and published nationally and internationally. The lists below offer only a sample of activities undertaken during 2004–5.

Books and Articles


David Wacks published the following articles: “Ibn Sahula’s Tale of the Egyptian Sorcerer: A Thirteenth Century Don Yllán,” *eHumanista*; “Reading Jaume Roig’s *Spill* and Juan Ruiz’s *Libro de buen amor* in the Iberian Maqama tradition,” *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*.

Freddy Vilches published “Poesía, mito e historia: Hacia una lectura viquiana de Neruda,” *Magallánica, Revista de la Facultad de Humanidades de la Universidad de Magallanes*. Punta Arenas, Chile.

Lectures and Presentations


“MOSAIC: Content-Based Instruction in Spanish and Japanese” (with Greg Hopper-Moore, UO Center for Applied Second Language Studies), COFLT Fall Conference, Portland, Oregon.


“Focus on Output: Using Assessments to Increase Student Accountability,” workshop at Cornell University.


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“The literature boliviana entre 1850 and 1950,” Museo Nacional de Arte, La Paz, Bolivia.

“Presentación de Memoria solicitada de Blanca Wiethüchter,” Espacio Pátilo, La Paz, Bolivia.

“Resignación masculina y deseo femenino en la La quena de Juana Manuela Gorría y La Chaskañawi de Carlos Medinaceli,” Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, La Paz, Bolivia.

Amalia Gladhart: “Representaciones del espacio en la obra de Estela Leñero,” XIV Seminario Internacional, Dramaturgías Femeninas en la Segunda Mitad del Siglo XX: Espacio y Tiempo. Centro de Investigación SLETEN@T de la Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Madrid, Spain.


“Between the Public and the Private Past: Negotiating the Plot,” VI Congress-Festival on Latin American Theater, University of Connecticut.


“Multicultural Turning Points in European Affairs: From Dreyfus to the Veils,” University of Oregon European studies panel.

Massimo Lollini: “Nuove forme e problemi aperti nell’autobiografia moderna,” annual meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

“Autobiografia e secolarizzazione. Dall’autoagiografia a Cellini,” Round Table: Literature, Religion, and the Sacred, annual meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

“Italo Calvino e l’esperienza della Guerra Civile,” L’ombra della seconda Guerra mondiale sulla letteratura del dopoguerra, Giornata di Studi organizzata dalla Sezione di Filologia Germanica e Lingue e Letterature Germaniche “Riccardo Rizza” in collaborazione con il progetto europeo di Rete Tematica ACUME, Cultural Memory in European Countries: An Interdisciplinary Approach, Università di Bologna, Italy.

“Memorie e scritture della Shoah nell’era della testimonianza,” Università di Bologna, Italy.


“Poesia e autobiografia in Primo Levi,” Forme e storie della poesia italiana, Congresso Annuale ADI, Università di Siena, Italy.


“Padre mito e dispotico,” Riflessioni sull’eredità culturale di Petrarca, annual meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies, University of Ottawa.


Award Recipients

We are very proud of the number of awards received by our faculty this year. Their dedicated work has been recognized by the University of Oregon as well as by other institutions in the fields of Romance languages and cultures.

Barbara Altmann was promoted to professor, May 2005.

Evlyn Gould was awarded a UO Distinguished Professorship, spring 2005.

Karen McPherson was elected president of the Conseil International d’Études Francophones; member of the comité scientifique of the CIÉF’s official journal Nouvelles Études Francophones (NEF).

Leah Middlebrook received a Faculty Research Fellowship, Oregon Humanities Center.

Analisa Taylor received the Center for the Study of Women in Society Faculty Research Award and was one of two UO nominees for the new Summer Research Fellowship.

David Wacks received a Faculty Research Fellowship, Oregon Humanities Center; and a Harry Starr Fellowship in Judaica, Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies.

Freddy Vilches was awarded a UO Doctoral Fellowship.
Meet our Romance Languages Scholarship Winners!

**Roberto Arroyo** was born in Temuco, Chile. He holds a B.A. in painting and drawing from the Universidad Austral de Chile, having studied music pedagogy and violin as well. Roberto has held numerous exhibitions of his artwork in the Americas and Europe, and he has worked as an activist and human rights investigator in Chile, participating as a consultant for a team of forensic anthropologists who searched for the remains of the hundreds of disappeared detainees of the military dictatorship in Chile. He is currently completing his M.A. in Spanish and will continue in the Ph.D. program.

**Heather Daniel** grew up in California before coming to Oregon. She is finishing degrees in journalism and French, with a minor in multimedia design. Her interests in French include Francophone literature and cinema. She was a student in the School of International Studies in Senegal, where she also volunteered with a human rights NGO. Her internship led to fieldwork in seven rural villages in Senegal collecting information for UNICEF and other international foundations.

**Catherine Di Gregorio** is from Lake Oswego, Oregon, and plans to graduate from Oregon with a double major in Romance languages (Italian and Spanish) and art history and a minor in business. She would like to pursue graduate studies in art history or Italian and hopes to intern in the Centro Linguistico Italiano Dante Alighieri in Florence, Italy.

**Kimberly Evans**, born in Montana, says her study in Spain contributed to her love of the language and its people. She has served as volunteer tutor for students from Mexico and Korea. She is currently a student in the Robert D. Clark Honors College at Oregon, planning to graduate in 2006 with a minor in business and a major in Spanish. Kimberly aspires to work as an ESOL or bilingual immersion teacher.

**Janet Gerde** was born and raised in Hood River, Oregon, and entered the UO in 2004 as a sophomore. She is now a senior pursuing a B.A. in Spanish and economics, with a minor in political science. She will study in Quito, Ecuador, before graduating in 2006. She plans to study law and economics in graduate school.

**Adrienne Hamilton** is currently a second year graduate student in the Department of Art History at the University of Oregon, specializing in religious painting of the Italian Renaissance. In fall 2005, she will begin dual enrollment in the master’s program in Italian at the University of Oregon. She will study at the University of Pavia in Italy.

**Jennifer Lee**, originally from Beaverton, Oregon, plans to complete a B.A. in French, philosophy, and political science. The academic year 2005–6 finds her in Lyon, France. Her interests include the intersections of French literature and philosophy, the *philosophes*, and existentialist literature.

**Heather Lellis** hails from Grants Pass, Oregon, and is a double major in Spanish and business. She plans to graduate in 2007, then travel and work in Spain before beginning graduate studies in international marketing. Heather is a first-generation college student and is very excited to have discovered the world of travel and language study.
Amie Leaverton is from Portland, Oregon, and is a student in the Robert D. Clark Honors College. She plans to graduate with a double major in Spanish and political science and a minor in Latin American studies. She is studying Spanish in Valdivia, Chile, and will continue her course work in literature, human rights, race relations, and contemporary politics of Latin America. After graduation, she hopes to join Teach for America, then attend law school.

Chris Picicci, from Spokane, Washington, graduated from Gonzaga University with a double major in Spanish and Italian studies in 1999 and completed his M.A. in Romance languages at Oregon in 2002. He is currently in his third year of the doctoral program, writing his dissertation on sixteenth-century Spanish and Italian epic poetry. Chris has lived and studied in Italy and Spain, and currently he teaches Italian language and cinema classes.

Jasmine Ramig grew up in Portland, Oregon, and will graduate in 2007 with a degree in journalism and a minor in art history. She would like to work in photojournalism, working for a newspaper or travel magazine.

Joy Root was born in California and raised in Oregon. She is planning to pursue graduate studies in Italian language and literature in preparation for a career in teaching Italian.

Kaley Sauer was born in Long Beach, California, and grew up in Rhode Island. Her majors at Oregon are art history and Italian, with a certificate in European studies. She will study in Perugia, Italy, this year, and after graduation, she plans to study architecture and continue her study of Italian.

**SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS continued from page 4**

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**Rippey Innovative Teaching Award Supports New FIG: Antiquité-Modernité**

The French 150 course that Barbara Altmann and Karen McPherson are currently redesigning has also been brought into dialogue with Malcolm Wilson’s Humanities 101 course to create a new FIG called Antiquité-Modernité. Wilson, Altmann, and McPherson are recipients of a 2005–6 Rippey Innovative Teaching Award to develop the intersections and articulations of these two courses within the FIG. Altmann and McPherson have been working with Petar Leonard, the wonderfully energetic and creative TA assigned to the FIG, developing course materials and brainstorming about FIG activities. French 150 will focus on exploring and exploding cultural stereotypes while examining some of the social and cultural phenomena most strongly associated with France.

With the support of the Rippey grant, the three faculty members in Humanities 101 and French 150 are also working on finding creative ways to capitalize on the intersections between the two courses.

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**Siena, Italy**

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**Friendly Hall**
Teaching Italian in the Peace Corps in Post-Communist Societies

Josh O’Donnell ’00 (Italian) won the Dorothy Jane and William Joseph Green Foreign Languages Scholarship from the College of Arts and Sciences. For summer 2004 he won a scholarship to study advanced Italian in Gargnano, on the Lago di Garda in Italy.

I couldn’t tell you how much I have learned in three years as a Peace Corps volunteer: cultural sensitivity, tolerance, community development, being a minority, becoming a teacher—and more about myself than I am prepared to divulge—have all been part of the experience. I have lived and worked with difficult and apathetic communities, built lifelong relationships in different languages, and traveled places I had always or never dreamed of before. This enlightening, sometimes frightening, often frustrating adventure took me to the Republic of Georgia for two years, and then to Bulgaria, where I have lived for the past year.

In May 2001 I arrived with the first Peace Corps volunteers to serve in Bakhvi, a small, remote village at the base of the lower Caucas Mountains in the region of Guria. I was to teach English in the village school. Organized crime blatantly governed and exploited every aspect of people’s lives. We lived without running water or electricity; thievery was rampant and the economic situation desperate. Families survived by subsistence farming and selling what produce they could: my host family sold hazelnuts, lemons, kiwi, and honey.

As a community we had some successes there, though there is still much to be done—mostly in changing mentalities, building the community, and working for transparency against corruption. In Bakhvi our major accomplishments were to build a school English library, build a community bee and kiwi farm for school revenue, and initiate a huge water system rehabilitation project. The library and farm are still running strong and the water project, two years later, is nearing completion. My host brother, who spoke little or no English when I arrived, has won a scholarship to spend his last year of high school in America next year.

Teaching Italian in Georgia

As a Peace Corps volunteer, I benefited from my UO Italian education. I was able to grasp communicative language teaching methodologies more easily than my peers, as I had intensive experience with those methodologies as a student. I still use some exercises from Italian 100- and 200-level classes in teaching English. It has been easier for me to learn new languages as well. Georgian is a complex language with its own alphabet. Bulgarian is easier, and I’m really enjoying learning and speaking it.

In Georgia I taught some Italian, too. Although English is the most important foreign language in both Georgia and Bulgaria, teaching it can be monotonous. By incorporating Italian into my curriculum I could really begin to open up language as a broad concept of study and opportunity for my students. My Bakhvi students of Italian were few; five, in fact. They called themselves “the Jokers” or “Giocherebbi” (in Georgian the suffix -ebbi is the plural marker). The Jokers were the only students who were actively learning at the school, and they were eager for new and interesting subjects to work on. Amazingly, at 7:30 in the morning in the dead of winter, without electricity and with half a meter of snow outside, we were huddled around a wood stove in my classroom studying, of all things, Italian language.

Teaching Italian in Bulgaria

Transferring to Bulgaria last spring [2003] was a big change. At first glance the country seemed a beautiful, developed, and progressive country on the verge of a bright and prosperous future. As you look a little deeper into the politics, infrastructure, and direction of the country, you see that it is bogged down in apathy and stagnancy. However, Sofia—a bustling metropolis with new businesses, qualified young professionals, and great aspirations to join the EU—suggests that better days lie ahead. Nevertheless, Sofia too must shake off its greatest burden from the transformations from communism: its mafia. Throughout Bulgaria are the classic images of organized crime: wealthy “businessmen” with big armed bodyguards in luxury cars. Every few months, in a rash of killings, the mafia families’ quarrels are hashed out in discotheques, cafés, and restaurants around the capital.

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I live half an hour away in Elin Pelin, an industrial town. Teaching in our school is trying. In Georgia, most of the time neither the students nor the teachers came to class, but here in Bulgaria teachers are paid regularly, if very little ($125 per month), and, generally speaking, students and teachers come to school. Yet, disturbingly, among the students there seems to be a defiant spirit of nonlearning. The most disruptive students and general chaos run the school, and discipline does not exist. Teachers are powerless and intimidated by fear of violent retaliation for a poor grade or any act of discipline. Kids sit three to a desk and talk while the teacher presents the lesson. Cell phones ring constantly. On this battlefield I am charged with teaching English, history, and Italian.

Here I teach regular Italian classes, due largely to two Italian factories in town and the prospect of future Italian investment in industry. My English and history classes (taught in English) are only slightly better in terms of student diligence or discipline, students generally “get” the importance of English for their future, and many are progressing fairly well in their English studies. Decent future employment depends on reasonable competence in English and computers. The better students know this and are striving to master them. Those who succeed will probably do well, as they will be the generation to enter the European Union in 2007 and should have opportunities that the present and past generations haven’t had. Disturbing, nevertheless, are the many boys who, rather than study, spend their time cheating and building the networks and attitudes of thugs. We can only hope that they’ll be left without a future in organized crime, even though right now it seems—from the flow of new Mercedes and BMWs through Sofia and Elin Pelin—the most lucrative of endeavors.

Cervantes Colloquium in Honor of Luis Verano

On May 21, 2005, the Department of Romance Languages, with the cosponsorship of the Oregon Humanities Center and the Comparative Literature Program, hosted a colloquium in honor of Luis Verano. The event, titled “Don Quijote 1605–Cervantes 2005,” was held to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first publication of El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha in 1605.

The colloquium was an all-day event featuring keynote participants Anthony Cascardi (University of California, Berkeley), Edward Friedman (Vanderbilt University), and James Iffland (Boston University). By all accounts this was a most successful and engaging enterprise!

Verano was honored for his decades of mentorship and teaching; one of his most popular courses has been SPAN 460, Don Quijote. Juan Epple read a story by Pía Barros from his 2005 anthology Microquijotes about “a man who knew too much about one book,” a clear allusion to Luis’ extensive knowledge of Cervantes’ most famous work.

Colloquium: Theory of the Novel

In winter 2005, graduate students in RL held a symposium, The Theory of the Novel, based on a seminar taught by Gina Herrmann. Students delivered papers on various theoretical approaches, including those of Bakhtin, Lucksas, and Jameson, that help us understand representations of realism in Spanish novels. Herrmann praised the students for their “absolutely nopr notch presentations, easily worthy of a professional literary conference.”
Please Consider Making a Gift to Romance Languages!

Contributions of any size make a real difference. You might wish to contribute to one of our existing named scholarships. Those awards are as follows:

Françoise Calin Scholarship—supports undergrad and grad students in French, with priority for applicants planning to study abroad.

Emmanuel Hatzantonis Scholarship—supports Italian studies in Italy with the university’s study-abroad programs.

Helen Fe Jones Scholarship—supports undergrad and grad students who wish to study Spanish in a Spanish-speaking country.

Perry J. Powers Scholarship—supports undergrads in Romance languages.

Charles H. Stickels Scholarship—supports students intending to become Spanish teachers for study in a Spanish-speaking country.

James T. Wetzel Scholarship—supports grad students with specific research projects.

Other funds make a great difference in helping the department enhance educational opportunities for our students or research and instructional resources for our faculty.

Checks can be made out to UO Foundation, Department of Romance Languages, and mailed to the UO Foundation, PO Box 3346, Eugene OR 97403. Or make a pledge to Romance Languages when you receive a phone call or letter from the UO Annual Giving Program asking you to make a gift to the university. We invite you to browse the website for the College of Arts and Sciences (http://cas.uoregon.edu/index.htm) and at the new and improved site for Romance Languages (http://rl.uoregon.edu). If you have questions or would like more information about any of our programs, feel free to contact Barbara Altmann at (541) 346-0950 (baltmann@uoregon.edu) or Heidi Shuler, director of development for humanities, at (541) 346-0044 (hshuler@cas.uoregon.edu).