

SCHOOL OF LITERATURES CULTURES AND LINGUISTICS

A NEWSLETTER COVERING THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE CLASSICS
PROGRAM IN COMPARATIVE AND WORLD LITERATURE
DEPARTMENT OF EAST ASIAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES
DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH AND ITALIAN
DEPARTMENT OF GERMANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION
DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE
AND CENTER FOR TRANSLATION STUDIES

SUMMER 2017

THREE SLCL PROFESSORS NAMED AMONG SEVEN IPRH FACULTY FELLOWS FOR 2017-18

Three of this year's seven Faculty Fellowships from the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) on campus have been awarded to SLCL professors. The three SLCL recipients are Eleonora Stoppino (French and Italian), Clara Bosak-Schroeder (Classics), and George Gasyna (Slavic Languages and Literatures).

The IPRH theme for 2017-2018 is "Paradigm Shifts." IPRH grants fellowships to Illinois faculty and graduate students, who spend the year engaged in research and writing. Faculty Fellows are provided with one semester of release time plus research funds.



Eleonora Stoppino,

Associate Professor of French and Italian, is pursuing a research project titled, "Ugly Beast, Talking Monkey: Contagion and Education in Medieval and Early Modern Culture."

She also is Undergraduate Advisor in Italian and Director of the Program in Medieval Studies. Her research interests include literature and culture of the Middle Ages and Early Modern period; Dante, Boccaccio, Ariosto, Tasso, the Italian epic tradition, and medieval conduct literature; gender studies; travel literature and Mediterranean studies; philology and semiotics; and animal studies.

Stoppino is the recipient of a Criticism & Interpretive Theory Senior Research Fellowship, 2015-17, and the author of *Genealogies of Fiction: Women Warriors and the Dynastic Imagination in the Orlando furioso* (Fordham University Press, 2011), for which she received the 2012 Book Prize from The American Association for Italian Studies.



Clara Bosak-

Schroeder, Assistant Professor of Classics, is working on a research project titled, "Other Natures: Ecocultural Change in Ancient Greek Historiography."

Bosak-Schroeder joined the Department of the Classics in 2015. She received her PhD in Classical Studies from the University of Michigan, with certificates in Greek and Roman History and Graduate Teaching, and a BA in Classical Languages from the University of California, Berkeley. She studies ancient environmental values in historiography and technical literature, and draws on theoretical work in the environmental humanities, science and technology Studies, and feminism.

Her book project, *Other Natures*, argues that Greek ethnographies criticize Greek environmental practices. A second project traces ancient and early modern receptions of the Periplus of Hanno.



George Gasyna,

Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, will continue work on his project titled, "A Time for the Province: Palimpsest and Contact in Twentieth-Century

Polish Borderland Literature."

Gasyna's major research interests include modern and contemporary Polish literature, exile and emigration practices, modernism and the avant-garde, and Jewish-Polish relations. He currently has a book in progress that is entitled, *A Time for the Province: Twentieth-Century Polish Borderland Literature*.

Gasyna is the author of *Polish, Hybrid, and Otherwise: Exilic Discourse in Joseph Conrad and Witold Gombrowicz* (Continuum, 2011), in which he examines the triple compact made by displaced authors with language, their host country, and the homeland left behind.

"The excellence and innovation of the scholarship produced by our faculty fellows is widely known, as is the reputation for path-breaking scholarship in the humanities at Illinois," said IPRH Director and Professor of History Antoinette Burton.

That the SLCL has three IPRH Faculty Fellows this year is a path-breaking achievement in its own right. ☞

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Give to the School

Please consider investing in the future of the School through a gift designated for either: 1) **the SLCL Annual Fund**, which helps to promote overall excellence in the school; 2) **the Douglas A. Kibbee Prize**, awarded annually to the most outstanding dissertation proposal; or 3) **SLCL departments or programs**. Your gift is most appreciated! Visit our website, slcl.illinois.edu and click "Give to SLCL" in the upper right-hand corner.

Attention, Alumni/ae: We Want to Hear Your Stories

We want to hear from you: what do you do (job title, duties), where do you work, and how has your U of I education prepared you for your success? Please send us your story, 200 words maximum, subject heading "My Alumni/ae story" to: Rick Partin, partin@illinois.edu. You may include a photo of yourself in electronic format (.jpg or .png preferred). We'll publish select ones on our School website: slcl.illinois.edu.

Check out Our Website

Look on our School webpage, which includes a Calendar of Events, Announcements, a Feature News section, and our own Facebook page.

The SLCL Brochure, offers a snapshot of what SLCL is all about. Click on "News and Events" on the main page. Even our graduates may be surprised to see the sheer scope of our School and why we called ourselves the "Gateway to a Global Learning Experience." Please visit us online at slcl.illinois.edu to find out what's happening in SLCL.

SUMMER 2017

School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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4072 Foreign Languages Building
707 South Mathews Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801
(217) 244-3252
Fax: (217) 244-8430
slcl.illinois.edu

Director: Jean-Philippe Mathy
Editor: Rick Partin



Our faculty has been exceptionally successful at receiving competitive research awards in 2016-2017, and this issue of the newsletter provides ample evidence of their accomplishments. More detailed information is available herein, but a simple listing of their accomplishments is quite impressive.

One of our colleagues was awarded a prestigious Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, another was among six new University of Illinois scholars, and a third was the recipient of the Lincoln Excellence scholarship award for outstanding Assistant Professors from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. In addition, three faculty received fellowships from the Center for Advanced Study, three from the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, and two from the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory.

Last fall, the residential study abroad programs in the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics (Barcelona, Kobe, Paris and Vienna) were transferred from campus to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, bringing the administrative side of things closer to the academic and intellectual mission of these programs. International studies and exchange programs in the School are now supported in part by a new position housed in the Foreign Language Building to ensure proximity with department heads, advisors and faculty. In other international news, a delegation from Beihang University's School of Foreign Languages in Beijing, China, visited campus last October and met with several School faculty and Executive Officers to discuss possible teaching, learning, and research exchanges among relevant academic departments.

The School continues to assist departments in their efforts to raise their curricular profile and publicize the value of a liberal arts education. Departments have designed brochures and other informational material describing degrees and courses that can be shared with counselors and students in Illinois and beyond. I recently took part in a visit to two selective College Preparatory High Schools in Chicago. I was impressed with the quality and maturity of the students and their keen interest in languages and cultures, and I look forward to welcoming many of them in our School in the years to come, together with other undergraduates sharing similar interests. *JP*

Jean-Philippe Mathy



ALEX VAN DOREN RECEIVES GRADUATE STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR WORK CO-FOUNDING LOCAL REFUGEE CENTER

By Rick Partin

Spurred into action by the horrors of war in Syria, Alexandra van Doren, a doctoral student in Comparative and World Literatures, decided it was time to act.

With others in the Champaign-Urbana area she co-founded a local refugee welcome center, work for which she earned this year's Graduate Student Leadership Award from the U of I Graduate College.

When Alex became aware of the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, she was "shaken to my core" and realized that she needed to "take action in a more direct way than my previous volunteer efforts."

She explained that she was reading through some news articles online one afternoon and came across a video depicting the stories of children who were trapped in a city under siege outside of Aleppo and had no access to food or water for more than 10 days. "I watched a little boy, probably no more than four, look into the camera and try to explain that he had not eaten in seven days, as if he thought the rest of the world may not believe him. My heart wrenched in my chest."

She began researching rescue and relief efforts in Germany for Syrian refugees. Her initial plan was to start looking for volunteers to house refugees in the Champaign-Urbana area, and start a food and clothing drive in the meantime. She posted a call to action on her social media platforms and invited anyone who was interested to be part of the effort.

"Not one hour later," she noted, "my colleague and now dear friend Meagan sent me a message saying she was up for any idea we could make a reality."

Alex and Meagan met for coffee several days later, and what began as the groundwork for a food drive quickly turned into the idea to start a full-fledged non-profit. Meagan's husband Tim also jumped on board.

"I went home that night," recalled Alex,

"and started the IRS and Attorney General paperwork to get 501(c)3 status, and Tim got to work on the website. Within several months, we were up and running."

By January of 2016 they had founded the non-profit, Three Spinners, Inc. (www.threespinners.org/).

The organization collects clothing donations and transports them to Indianapolis to meet its local refugee needs in tandem with Catholic Charities, and aids refugee home furnishing as well as employment needs in Champaign-Urbana. Three Spinners is also working with other local organizations to establish Champaign-Urbana as a refugee resettlement center.

When asked, "Why Syria?" Alex responded, "This is the largest refugee and migration crisis our generation has ever seen. Those of us with the means to provide aid, in my opinion, absolutely have the responsibility to do so."

Her background in Holocaust studies has influenced her call to action, but Alex also has a family history that heightens her consciousness. "My family came to the US as Jewish refugees from Poland in the early 1900s. Had Ellis Island not welcomed them, I imagine many more of them would have died in the pogroms and concentration and death camps."

Working with a larger group of non-profits and faith-based organizations (CU FAIR Task Force), Three Spinners was able to acquire approval to resettle Syrian refugees in Champaign-Urbana in November 2016. Other refugee populations already had access to the C-U area, but Syrians did not.

"Three Spinners is also proud and excited to announce that we will be opening a refugee and immigrant resource center in the YMCA



Welcome Center in June 2017," Alex said.

The center will offer clothing, furniture, and household items free of charge to incoming individuals and families.

Alex's dissertation focuses on what she terms "oppressive regimes of silence in post-war societies like Poland and Spain at the cultural and legislative levels." She said her background in comparative and world literature gave her the historical foundation to begin to understand the conflict in Syria, while her minor in European Union Studies afforded her the bureaucratic and diplomatic knowledge to co-found a non-profit and collaborate with organizations in the US and abroad.

Alex said that her philosophy is informed by the words of Elie Wiesel in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in 1986:

"We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe." ✎

Arabic Scrabble is one of many language activities that U of I students enjoy as part of the curriculum. Cooking classes, movies, conversation tables, and various social gatherings are other popular Arabic program events that regularly take place on campus.

ARABIC STUDIES GROWS STEADILY AT ILLINOIS By Taylor Hoffman

It's an intriguing success story at Illinois: At a time when many language programs are struggling to maintain enrollments, the Arabic studies minor has been steadily growing since its launch in 2010.

According to the Department of Linguistics, home to the Arabic studies minor, there are 15 students currently pursuing the minor. The number may seem relatively small, but the rate of its increase over the past couple of years has drawn attention.

In February, the Senate of the Urbana-Champaign campus, which approves academic offerings, approved adding six courses to the minor, in topics ranging from literature and culture to history, Arabic-English translation, and Business Arabic. Organizers said the revised course offerings will give students a more in-depth understanding of the region, which they expect will lead to higher enrollments.

An article in the Daily Illini published in February, suggested that the growth in Arabic studies was influenced by conflicts in the Middle East. **Eman Saadah**, however, director and coordinator of the Arabic Language Program and director of the Less Commonly Taught Languages Program (LCTL), attributed the increased enrollment to efforts on campus—namely, language activities, cultural events, and more career-related courses.

The program has also increased its study abroad opportunities through an agreement with a language institute in Jordan that has made the country an attractive option for students seeking an immersive Arabic experience. There are also excellent study abroad options in other areas of

the Arab world, she added.


“Almost all of our students come back from these study abroad trips with better language skills, but above all they are more motivated to learn Arabic further,” Saadah said.

Student William Velez agrees: he enrolled in an Arabic class during the summer after his sophomore year. He thought it would be his only class in the topic, but he eventually added the Arabic studies minor to his majors in political science and Spanish. Now he's a graduate student in Middle Eastern studies.

“I fell in love with it (Arabic),” he told the Daily Illini. “It's a really cool language. I stuck with it because I improved pretty quickly in it and it was still something that could set me apart from other people.”

And, there's Derek Hoot, a senior political science major with a minor in Arabic studies, who has been offered an \$18,500 David L. Boren Scholarship to cover the cost of his 2017-18 study abroad experience at the Qasid Institute for Classical and Modern Standard Arabic in Jordan.

Saadah said the program's faculty members are hopeful and inspired after the recent rise in enrollment. “The impact of this increase in student interest means that we have to find new and creative ways to ensure that our students are learning as much as they can in this time frame,” Saadah said.

To learn more about the Arabic Program at U of I, visit: arabic.linguistics.illinois.edu/ 




SLCL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN ANNUAL UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH WEEK PRESENTATIONS



Students of SLCL 200, “The Human Experience,” are shown listening to a research presentation during Undergraduate Research Week (URW) in the FLB Atrium on April 27. Throughout the day, students in classes taught by Judith Pintar (Slavic Languages and Literatures), Rini Mehta

(Comparative and World Literature) and Tania Ionin (Linguistics) displayed posters of their research and presented details about their work.

Each year URW showcases the best of undergraduate research and creative inquiry at Illinois. Campus events include workshops on getting started in research; special exhibits; and colloquia sponsored by individual academic units, highlighting students' work. The Undergraduate Research Symposium, a day-long signature event, attracts hundreds of students from all academic disciplines to share their research through oral panels, poster presentations, and performances. 


THREE CWL GRAD STUDENTS AWARDED FLAS FELLOWSHIPS

Comparative and World Literature (CWL) graduate students Eva Kuras, Alex van Doren, and Mary Casey have been awarded Summer- or Year-Long Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships.

Eva has a summer FLAS with the EU Center for intensive Italian study at Middlebury Language Schools, and an academic year 2017/18 FLAS with the Center for Global Studies for Persian, where, she says, she expects to be at the University of Chicago. Both are languages she needs for her prospective dissertation research, on medieval Persian/Western European romance literature connections.

Alex's project concerns Spain's attempt at post-war reconciliation with its transition from dictatorship to democracy after Franco's death in 1975.

Mary plans to continue studying Portuguese through FLAS to learn more about Brazilian works and their connection with Spanish-speaking Latin America. Among these works, Mary lists poet Fernando Pessoa, novelist Clarice Lispector, and the Cinema Novo movement in Brazilian film.

FLAS Fellowships, administered by the U of I Area Studies Centers and Programs, support graduate and undergraduate study in modern foreign languages in combination with area studies, international studies, or international or area aspects of professional studies. 

PROFESSOR JONATHAN EBEL, RELIGION, AWARDED GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP



Professor of religion **Jonathan Ebel** is one of 173 scholars, artists and scientists named as 2017 Guggenheim Fellows.

Ebel and the other awardees were chosen from almost 3,000 applicants on the basis of prior achievement and exceptional promise.

Ebel said he will use his fellowship tenure to complete work on a religious history of the Great Depression and the New Deal in agricultural California. He is studying the encounters between Dust Bowl refugees and New Deal officials.

“Destitute ‘Okie’ migrants who found refuge in federally run migratory farm labor camps also found camp managers, nurses and home economists who were eager to modernize the migrants’ lifestyles, including their religious attitudes and behaviors,” Ebel said. “My book tells the story of this decade-long interaction and of the religious conflicts that unfolded between secular reformers and the men and women displaced by the economic and natural catastrophes of the Great Depression.”

Ebel specializes in the religious history of the United States. He is the author of *G.I. Messiahs: Soldiering, War, and American Civil Religion* (Yale University Press, 2015) and *Faith in the Fight: Religion and the American Soldier in the Great War* (Princeton University Press, 2010). He also co-edited, with Professor John Carlson of Arizona State University, *From Jeremiad to Jihad: Religion, Violence, and America* (University of California Press, 2012).

In addition to his Guggenheim project, Ebel is also in the early stages of researching and writing a religious history of American warfare, told by focusing on five specific weapons.

Ebel received a PhD from the University of Chicago in 2004. He served as a naval intelligence officer from 1993-97 and continued in that capacity in the Navy Reserve until 2005. ☞

2017 MARJORIE HALL THULIN LECTURE IN RELIGION: “AN UNCOMMON FAITH: W.E.B. DU BOIS AND AFRICAN AMERICAN RELIGION”



Eddie Glaude, William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African American Studies of Princeton University, gave the annual Marjorie Hall Thulin Lecture in Religion on April 13.

The lecture, sponsored by the U of I Department of Religion, was titled, “An Uncommon Faith: W.E.B. Du Bois and African American Religion.”

In his lecture Glaude outlined Du Bois’s thoughts about religion. “I want to think of him as a figure that represents a third way between William James’s and John Dewey’s view of religion—as someone who enables us to take up the call for a religious ideal and who keeps track of the need for consolation without appealing to metaphysical foundations that provide comfort.”

Glaude added that in Du Bois’s essay, “Of the Passing of the First Born,” the contours of that new religious ideal are given shape “not in the context of grappling with ‘religious disease’ but with confronting his dead son in the coffin.”

“The idea then of Du Bois’s religious naturalism as a kind of third way—what I call an uncommon faith—grows out of his insistence on beginning here, with death, to articulate a practical faith in ideal ends.”

Glaude is a columnist for Time Magazine and regularly provides commentary on radio and television news programs.

Marjorie Hall Thulin (1910-2009), for whom the annual lecture is named, was a 1931 graduate of Illinois. She enjoyed a successful career in advertising and published poetry and children’s literature in addition to editing a book on the history of Glencoe, Ill.

Mrs. Thulin’s desire for students to understand how religion grows and functions in a complex society led her to endow a fund establishing the Marjorie Hall Thulin Scholar of Religion and Contemporary Culture. ☞

(COURSE)SHARING KNOWLEDGE ACROSS THE BIG 10

CourseShare, a shared project of the Big 10 Academic Alliance, has provided students with specialized language courses since its creation in 2005. Now, the program has expanded to include courses in literature and culture.

It enables students at any Big 10 campus to take classes that might not be offered at their home university, at no additional cost. The idea is that each institution will host some courses and receive others.

The project is one feature of the Big 10 Academic Alliance, which is overseen by the provosts of all 14 Big Ten schools, with its headquarters at Illinois. In the fall of 2016, 31 Illinois students took courses at other universities.

The majority of CourseShare classes are less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), which students may need for study abroad or research purposes. Students connect to a classroom on another campus through high-quality video and audio equipment.

Valerie Hoffman, professor and head of the Department of Religion, teaches courses under the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC). Most recently, Hoffman taught “Muslim Ethics in Global Age,” a seminar course taught

A painting depicts a visit by 16th century Ottoman general Lala Mustafa Pasha to the tomb of Rumi in Konya, Turkey. The image was used to help highlight the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum in the CourseShare program. (Image courtesy of Valerie Hoffman.)

face-to-face with U of I students, but through videoconferencing technology to students at the University of Michigan.

“This program gives students the opportunity to study with professors that they may not have ever had the chance to interact with or learn from before,” Hoffman said.

“It was really good for me to meet people at Michigan. I was able to interact with so many great professionals and individuals within academia.”

To learn more about Course Share, visit: www.btaa.org/projects/shared-courses/courseshare/introduction. ☞



NEWS BRIEFS

GRADUATE HONORED BY U OF I FOR WORKING TO BETTER NATION AND WORLD



Brittany Koteles is a recipient of an Illinois' 2016 International Achievement Award, in honor of her efforts to better the nation and the world.

Koteles graduated in nonprofit management and social innovation, with a minor in Spanish. In 2011, she received a Fulbright Fellowship in Barcelona, where she spent three years researching, developing, and implementing social entrepreneurship in Spain. There,

she wrote the book *Stories of Scale: Nine Cases of Growth in Social Enterprises*.

She also taught and discussed social entrepreneurship in public schools and helped form the launch team for the Barcelona Impact Hub, a community space for social innovators from that area. While studying at Illinois, Koteles also conducted the Center for Teaching Excellence's first longitudinal study of service learning in Big Ten schools.

The award winner is active in Washington, D.C., as a facilitator, improviser, activist, and filmmaker. She is currently designing an alternative, secular chaplaincy program to support the inner growth of the world's leading change-makers, in collaboration with the Open Master's network.

Koteles and two other winners were honored at a banquet held April 13 at the Alice Campbell Alumni Center. The trio also participated in a panel discussion titled "Service in a Global Context." ☞

THREE SLCL PROFESSORS NAMED CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY ASSOCIATES FOR 2017-18



Silvina Montrul (pictured top left), Professor of Spanish and Portuguese; **Manuel Rota**, Professor of French and Italian; and **Craig Williams** (pictured bottom left), Professor of Classics, have been named CAS (Center for Advanced Study) Associates for the 2017-18 academic year.

Each year, tenured and untenured U of I faculty are invited to submit scholarly or creative proposals for consideration by the Center's permanent professors. Faculty members with winning proposals are appointed Associates and Fellows and awarded one semester of release time to pursue their projects in the coming academic year.

Associates also are invited to participate in CAS events and have opportunities to present their work to the CAS community.

Montrul's project is entitled, "Native Speakers, Interrupted: Agents of Change in Heritage Languages." Her research interests include second language acquisition, bilingualism, and heritage language acquisition.

Rota's project is entitled, "Before Unemployment: Work, Idleness and the Uber-working class." Rota specializes in intellectual history; his research focuses on the Mediterranean and the South of Europe.

Williams' project is entitled, "Williams' project is entitled 'Orpheus Crosses the Atlantic: Greek and Latin Texts by Native Americans in Colonial New England.'" His research interests include gender and sexuality in Latin literature, Latin epigram, animal studies, translation studies, and Native North American receptions of the Greco-Roman classics. ☞

EDUARDO LEDESMA (SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE) RECEIVES LEAP AWARD



Eduardo Ledesma, Assistant Professor of Spanish and Portuguese, has been named one of four recipients of the LEAP Award (Lincoln Excellence for Assistant Professors). The competitive LEAP award was created as a way to foster excellence and recognize the impact assistant professors have in the College of LAS.

The LEAP Scholars will retain the award for two years, receiving discretionary research funding each of those years. Recipients were selected from a pool of nominees by a committee of senior distinguished faculty.

Since joining the department in 2012, Ledesma has emerged as a leading researcher in 20th and 21st century Latin American cultural and literary studies, with his work appearing some of the top journals in his field. National recognition of Ledesma's research is evidenced by the fact that SUNY offered him an advanced contract for his book in progress: *Cinemas of Marginality: Experimental, Avant-Garde and Documentary Film in Ibero-America*. He has also played a significant role in mapping the future of studies in the department, and has appeared five times in the List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent. ☞

ZONG-QI CAI TO EDIT NEW PROMINENT PUBLICATIONS ON CHINESE LITERATURE



Zong-qi Cai, professor of East Asian Languages and Cultures, is growing in prominence as an expert on understanding Chinese literature. He recently signed an agreement with Columbia University Press to be the general editor of a book series titled "How to Read Chinese Literature."

Also, Cai's journal, *PRISM: Theory and Modern Chinese Literature*, has been formally approved by Duke University Press. Co-sponsored by Lingnan University of Hong Kong and the U of I, the journal—his second Duke journal—is yet another fruit of his endeavors to pursue high-profile collaboration between Illinois and Chinese universities.

The "How to Read Chinese Literature" book series will consist of 10 books that cover fiction, drama, traditional Chinese poetry, prose and literary theory. The post is a prestigious one, as Columbus University Press is the oldest and arguably the most prestigious publisher of translations of Asia classics and literary anthologies.

The series, the most comprehensive project of its kind ever undertaken in the English-speaking world, aims to "revolutionize the teaching and learning of Chinese literature for the 21st century," according to Cai, who added, "I want to establish a forum for scholar exchange."

He hopes that his involvement with the series will increase the interest of students and scholars around the world who are interested in Chinese literature and trans-language courses.

"For the department, I believe the book series and the Duke journal will set Illinois and the East Asian Languages and Cultures Department as one of the most important centers for Chinese literary study," Cai said. ☞

WAIL S. HASSAN ELECTED SECOND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION



Wail S. Hassan, Professor of Comparative & World Literature and English, has been elected as the Second Vice President of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA).

He will serve in that capacity in 2017-18, the first of a three-year term on the Executive Committee. In the second year (2018-19) he will become Vice President, then President in the third year (2019-20). Thereafter, he

will be a member of the Honorary Committee as a past president.

Founded in 1960, the ACLA is the largest professional association representing the discipline in North America, although its membership of over 2,000 includes many who travel to its annual conference from Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America.

The last ACLA President from the U of I was the late A. Owen Aldridge (1915-2005), during the 1970s. Aldridge was the founding editor of *Comparative Literature Studies*, which was published at Illinois and remains among the leading journals in the field.

In 1992, Michael Palencia-Roth (Hassan's graduate mentor at the U of I and now Professor Emeritus of Comparative and World Literature), founded the ACLA's sister organization, the Association of Departments and Programs of Comparative Literature and served as its first president.

"I take great pride in belonging to this distinguished company, especially as Comparative Literature celebrates its 50th anniversary at Illinois this year," said Hassan. ✎

ROBERT RUSHING'S NEW BOOK WINS PRIZE FROM AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ITALIAN STUDIES

Robert Rushing's book, *Descended from Hercules: Biopolitics and the Muscled Male Body On Screen*, won the Film and Media Studies book prize at the AAIS (American Association for Italian Studies).

Published by Indiana University Press in October, *Descended from Hercules* takes an in-depth look at epic Italian cinema of the 1950s and 1960s.

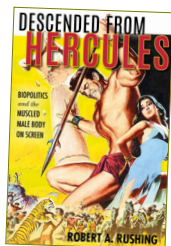
According to the description on the Indiana University Press website: "These 'sword and sandal' films represent a century-long cinematic biopolitical intervention that offers the spectator an imagined form of the male body—one free of illness, degeneracy, and the burdens of poverty—that defends goodness with brute strength and perseverance, and serves as a model of ideal citizenry."

Rushing traces these epic heroes across the history of Italian cinema, from Maciste in "Cabiria" in the early silent era, to contemporary transnational figures like Arnold Schwarzenegger in "Conan the Barbarian," and to films such as Zach Snyder's "300".

Rushing is an associate professor of comparative and world literature.

He is the co-editor, with Laura M.E. Goodlad, professor of English, and Lilya Kaganovsky, associate professor of comparative & world literature and Slavic languages and literatures, of *Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style, and the 1960s* (2013).

For more about *Descended from Hercules*: www.iupress.indiana.edu/product_info.php?cPath=1037_7487&products_id=808083. ✎



LINGUISTICS GRAD STUDENT RECEIVES NSF FELLOWSHIP

Amalia Reyes, a graduate student in Linguistics, is one of 12 students from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who have been offered Graduate Research Fellowships from the National Science Foundation.

Reyes is the only student from the Humanities so honored.

Her advisor is Professor Darren Tanner.

Awardees receive three years of support for their graduate educations. Applications are evaluated according to two criteria: intellectual merit and broader impacts.

Created in 1952, the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) is one of the United States' oldest and most prestigious fellowship programs.

MODERN GREEK STUDIES PROGRAM EVENTS FOR SPRING 2017

Dr. Stefanos Katsikas, Director of the Modern Greek Studies Program at U of I, gave the keynote lecture for the "Hellenic Letters Celebration 2017," held at the Chateau Ritz Banquet Hall in Niles, Ill., on Jan. 29.

The event, attended by 850 people, was organized by the Consulate General of Greece in Chicago and the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago. It celebrates Hellenic Letters and Greek Education with representatives of all Greek Schools in the Midwest.

Additionally, on the U of I campus on March 2, Professor Sakis Gekas of York University, Canada, gave the annual Dr. Arthur G. Nikelly Annual Lecture, titled "State and Economy in the 19th-Century Mediterranean: The Case of Greece." The lecture was established in honor of the memory of the late Dr. Arthur G. Nikelly, a clinical psychologist and associate professor of health sciences who began his career at the U of I in 1959.

On May 1, the program held its annual Houston & Papadimitriou Greek Culture Award ceremony on campus. This scholarship supports undergraduate students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences who have a demonstrated interest in and who are taking elective courses to learn about Greek culture, language, or history. This year's awardees included Derick Fong, Sarah Allen, Agilda Dema, Benjamin Samuel, Dajia Ye, and John Gilletto.

For more about the Modern Greek Studies Program, visit: www.moderngreek.illinois.edu/. ✎



College of
Liberal Arts & Sciences
AT ILLINOIS

SCHOOL OF
LITERATURES
CULTURES AND
LINGUISTICS

2017 SLCL MAY CONVOCATION: 'THE CITY OF IDEAS'

The 2017 graduation ceremony of the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics took place on May 13, in Foellinger Auditorium. One-hundred and fifteen graduates and 34 faculty members participated in the ceremony, which included some 700 guests. The featured speaker was **Antony Augoustakis**, Professor of Classics.

Augoustakis told the audience that in contemplating his speech he felt he might be preaching to the choir, but “upon further reflection, I decided that preaching to the choir is often a good thing, since it makes us understand why we belong in a group of people who value the humanities, that is, understanding things human, studying mechanisms of language, becoming familiar with foreign cultures with an eye towards understanding our own.”

The speaker then drew on his own discipline to share messages for today's graduates. He quoted the lawmaker and poet, Solon, who said, “As I grow old I am always learning many things.”

“What Solon wanted us to remember,” Augoustakis noted, “is that life's lessons, the ‘University of life’ does not stop with college, it is a long process, and sometimes—thankfully—it never stops.”

Augoustakis next quoted Cicero's remark that “history is the teacher of life.” By studying the past, “knowledge allows me to comprehend who I am and by understanding I can define my existence, I can discover the world, I can make my own contribution in whatever way I decide is good, upright, honest, and worthy.”



PhD recipient Ji Young Kim (Spanish) shares a happy moment with friends Sea-Hee Choi and Hannah Kim, both current graduate students in Linguistics. Ji Young, one of 15 PhD candidates, was hooded by Professor José Ignacio Hualde. Sixty-six bachelors candidates and 33 master's candidates also received certificates of graduation. Ji Young, a specialist in heritage language phonology, currently teaches in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at UCLA.

Finally, the speaker quoted the Modern Greek poet Constantine Cavafy, who wrote about a young poet who approached the older poet Theocritus, one of the most famous poets in his day in Alexandria, Egypt, to express his frustration about not being able to become someone important in Alexandria.

Theocritus responded, “Just to be on the first step should make you happy and proud.”

Augoustakis told the graduates, “To have come this far is no small achievement. For sure, you have made it. You have become what Cavafy calls ‘a citizen of the city of ideas.’” ☞