

# SCHOOL OF LITERATURES, CULTURES, AND LINGUISTICS

THIS NEWSLETTER COVERS 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.

## LINGUISTICS among fastest-growing departments in burgeoning field of 'computer science +'

*Editor's note: This is an adapted story from an article written by Julie Wurth of The News-Gazette newspaper. The full article appeared in the Dec. 10, 2017 edition.*

**Taylor Erwin** has a unique résumé for a software programmer.

Yes, he has the requisite computer science training from the highly competitive CS program at the U of I. But there's a "plus" to his degree.

Erwin graduated in May with a "CS + Linguistics" BS degree from the UI, the first such group participating in Convocation ceremonies for the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics.

This new degree program is designed for students who want to combine computer science with another field — in his case, linguistics.

A "CS + linguistics" degree makes sense for those interested in artificial intelligence and how computers understand language (think Google searches, Siri or Alexa).

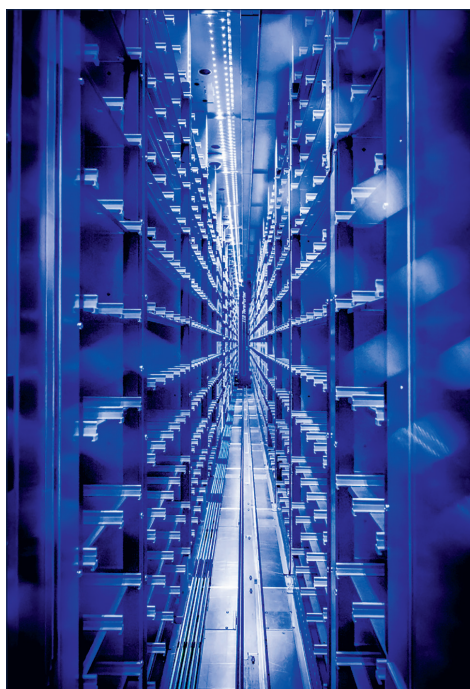
"I think I found something that combines my passions," said Erwin, who says he has always loved languages.

The combined degree also set him apart from other applicants for his job as a software engineer at Qualtrics in Seattle, which designs survey platforms for companies.

"I did my best to try to communicate how the experience I had combining the fields would help me in industry," said Erwin, who grew up in Naperville.

The "CS + X" program grew out of the incredible demand for computer science degrees and the increasingly vital role of data and computing in "just about every area one could imagine," said Lenny Pitt, head of the computer science department. He adds that today "over 13 percent of applications to the university are for the computer science major. That's nuts!"

In 2010, former computer science department head Rob Rutenbar



launched plans to go "wide," offering joint "CS + X" degrees with other departments across campus.

It started with four partnerships within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences — in anthropology, astronomy, chemistry and linguistics. About 200 students have signed on so far, but the number will grow.

There was already a strong link with linguistics, as professors in both departments taught computational linguistics, the foundations of artificial intelligence.


The joint degree in linguistics has been one of the fastest-growing "CS + X" options, with nearly 80 students enrolling thus far, compared to 90 linguistics-only majors, said Roxana Girju, associate professor of linguistics and director of the joint major in computer science and linguistics.

Traditionally, students interested in double-majoring, or combining a linguistics degree with a minor in computer sciences, had trouble

getting the right courses or were left on their own to cobble it together, Girju said.

The joint major solves that problem and addresses "a huge need in the job market for graduates who can work on almost any aspect of artificial intelligence related to language processing," Girju said.

Graduates are courted by large companies, including Apple, Microsoft, Google and Amazon. But in the past, employers weren't always sure students with a minor or concentration in computer science had the requisite expertise, Girju said.

On the flip side, students in computer science will have to develop specialties, Girju said, adding, "Being a software engineer — and that's it — is not good enough anymore." 

# 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://slcl.illinois.edu) to find out what's happening in SLCL.

## SPRING 2018

### School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Director: Jean-Philippe Mathy  
Editor: Rick Partin



The current academic year marks the 10th anniversary of the official creation of the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics at the University of Illinois.

Understandably, the establishment of a unit of that size, made up at the time of 11 departments and programs, and the largest school in the College of Liberal Arts in Sciences, was several years in the making.

A faculty and staff committee devised the initial proposal in 1998-1999, and the first stage of the "co-administration" structure took place in 2003. Two years later, a majority of the faculty agreed to form the School as the result of a referendum, and in the spring of 2006 the Senate Committee on Educational


Policy held a public hearing on the proposed unit.

Then-Dean of LAS, Sarah Mangelsdorf, described the mission of the future School as the development of "new areas of connection" in teaching, research and outreach among the faculty in the Foreign Language Building. Eventually, the approval process would involve the University Senate, the Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

The first Director, Doug Kibbee, conceived of the new unit as much more than an administrative entity, describing SLCL's intellectual mission as cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary, "its primary goal (being) to encourage people with different backgrounds and different interests to talk to each other."

In this view, the School was intended to become greater than the sum of its parts, fostering a spirit of interdepartmental cooperation and collaboration, including with other units in the College and University. The initiatives put in place to fulfill the academic side by funding interdisciplinary conferences and workshops, graduate student fellowships, and undergraduate research projects, have continued to this day, despite severe budgetary cuts in recent years. In 2016-2017, for example, the School provided support for nine interdepartmental conferences and workshops, four faculty-led undergraduate research initiatives, and eight competitive dissertation completion and multi-year graduate admission fellowships.

Over the years, already existing and newly created programs have found a home in our School, from Medieval Studies (formally inaugurated in 2001) and Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education (founded in 2002) to the Center for Translation Studies in 2008. Abbas Benmamoun, the second Director, oversaw the development of several linguistics laboratories devoted to various research areas, from phonetics and discourse analysis to the study of bilingualism. Counting the labs and the recently formed Center for Language Instruction and Coordination, the number of units in SLCL has nearly doubled in ten years.

With the start of a new decade, the School continues to evolve and innovate in response to emerging fields of inquiry and major changes in undergraduate pedagogy and educational technology. Departments increasingly offer online classes in an effort to reach broader, more diverse publics, and to acknowledge developments in student learning interests and forms of knowledge production, while new courses, majors, minors, and certificates explore promising areas of interface among the humanities, the sciences, and the professions. 

Jean-Philippe Mathy

# Writing the first drafts of war

## Degrees in Russian and rhetoric help shape the career of a combat reporter

by Dave Evensen

*For Chad Garland, reporting on the war against ISIS in Iraq requires body armor, bravery, and not a small amount of wits and wisdom—much of which he credits to his days at Illinois as he earned degrees in Russian language and literature and English (rhetoric/creative writing) in 2011.*

*Garland is a Downrange reporter/photographer for Stars and Stripes, a unique U.S. Department of Defense-authorized newspaper for the U.S. military community which is editorially independent from outside interference outside its own editorial chain of command.*

*Dave Evensen, senior editorial specialist for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences administration, interviewed Garland.*

### What's a typical workday for you?

I'm a war correspondent mostly covering Iraq and Afghanistan. Right now (editor's note: Garland wrote this reply in March 2017) I'm covering the battle to retake Mosul from the Islamic State group, which has held Iraq's second largest city since 2014. I often wake up, meet up with my team—a local driver and a translator—and head out to somewhere I think I can get a story. That might mean donning a helmet and body armor to go along with the Iraqi military and tour areas they've retaken (barely, in some cases), visiting an underground ISIS training camp, visiting a camp for families fleeing the violence, or going to an American military base to meet with troops. I interview people, take photos, and record videos. Depending on the story or the news that day, I may spend half the day out collecting information and half the day writing.

I live in Germany but spend much of my time in countries in Asia. I've gotten to see and experience cultures in an intimate way—sitting on the floor of a tent drinking tea with refugees or in an abandoned house eating pomegranates with soldiers, for example. I also think it's cool that I'm writing “the first draft of history” and capturing a visual record for people who can't be here to see it themselves.

### What about college best prepared you for your life and career?

I came to college from a fairly comfortable career because I wasn't satisfied and I wanted to try out new things and find something more rewarding. That was the best thing. I was able to take classes that challenged me and exposed me to new ideas. I enjoyed creative writing classes, but in particular I liked (senior lecturer of English) Julie Price's nonfiction writing class, which is when I knew I wanted to do that for a living.

Chad Garland travels to some of the most dangerous spots in the world, including Iraq, to report on conflicts involving the U.S. military.

### How did your major prepare you for your career?

Learning about language, literature, and writing was major preparation for a career in writing. Even though Russian in particular is less useful in the Middle East than Arabic would have been, I have had a few opportunities to use the language. Some Afghans trained by the Soviets during the



*Chad Garland is a war correspondent for the Stars and Stripes. (Image courtesy of Chad Garland.)*

occupation there in the 1980s still speak Russian. In Iraq, Quran verses and Muslim prayers were scrawled in Cyrillic script on the walls of homes liberated from ISIS, where Russian-speaking women were rumored to have been held captive. Just last night I was drinking tea and eating kunafa (a desert made of cheese and shredded wheat) at a bakery run by a Syrian here when a group of aid workers walked in, including a Ukrainian doctor with whom I was able to converse in Russian. On top of that, employers have been impressed that I speak a foreign language, even if it hasn't been directly useful in my work. It shows them you're a well-rounded person with a variety of interests and skills, and it sets you apart from the crowd.

### What's your proudest achievement?

I'm proudest I went to college at 30. I had a few circumstances (including the GI Bill from my service in the Marines) that made college and a career change an easier choice than for (others), but it was still a risk and in a lot of ways a giant step backward not only in my career, but in my life. I like to think of it like a mountain climbing expedition. I could be a lot further up the mountain slope I was on in 2008, had I stuck with (my pre-college career) for the last nine years, but I'd be that much further from doing the fulfilling work I'm doing now. I may never reach the top of this mountain—it's certainly harder and more fraught with peril—but it's a much more enjoyable climb.

*Editor's note: Chad urges readers to ask him anything on Twitter (@chadgarland) “if you're interested in Middle East conflict reporting and the errata of a life lived out of a suitcase in a war zone.”* 🐦



# Grand Challenge Learning lets students out of the classroom

*Editor's note: This is an adapted story from an article written by Dominic Rose, contributing writer to the Daily Illini newspaper. The article appeared in the Oct. 25, 2017 edition.*



Clara Bosak-Schroeder, Classics, combines community service with critical thinking in gen-ed fiction course

**Clara Bosak-Schroeder**, Assistant Professor of Classics, who taught the Sustainability in Fiction course during fall term, organized her lessons around community service.

"In the classroom, we read ancient texts and we write about them,

Regardless of major, choosing general education classes can prove to be a challenge for students. They may feel they are choosing general education classes to satisfy major requirements without looking into courses that are interesting to them.

Grand Challenge Learning classes provide an interesting alternative: they are experiential, meaning that students often get to go outside of the classroom.

GCL 128 is a course that focuses on sustainability in fiction. It explores how narrative fiction focuses on sustainability, such as dystopian fiction about climate change and shaping the relationship that students have with the natural world. Along with other GCL classes, it is meant for first- and second-year students.

but students also compare what they're learning about in the ancient world with their own experiences as volunteers," Bosak-Schroeder said. "Learning how organizations work by volunteering at them is a big benefit."

In place of traditional assignments, she said she centered the coursework on reflective writing to encourage students to develop their own ideas about the environment and sustainability.


She wanted students to describe experiences through other means. While this was a challenge for her, Bosak-Schroeder said she sees teaching the class as an opportunity to grow.

Varying perspectives in the class add detail to class discussions, Bosak-Schroeder said. She also noted it's important for students to think about the challenges society is facing.

"Having rich conversations with their classmates where they can debate is a benefit," Bosak-Schroeder said. "It's important to not just think about (challenges) in a scientific perspective, but to see how environmental problems have changed over time."

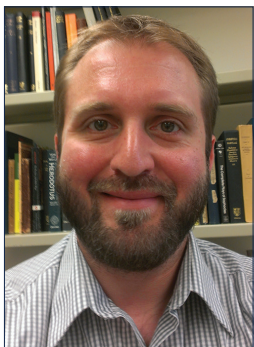
For the career paths of students, she said it's helpful that they learn how to express themselves in writing, a skill that students do not necessarily learn in a typical major. She also said students can build skills through service learning that they can bring to future jobs.

Bosak-Schroeder said in addition to gaining valuable skills, students will have fun in GCL courses—and stretch their comfort zones.

"Prepare to have some of your deeply held assumptions about nature challenged, and your imagination of what it means to be human expanded." 

## Classics professor uses 3-D technology to answer an ancient question

*Editor's note: This is an adapted story from an article written by Samantha Jones Toal of LAS News. The full article appeared in the Sept. 19, 2017 edition.*



Daniel Leon specializes in Greek and Roman historical writing. (Image courtesy of Daniel Leon.)

For **Daniel Leon**, assistant professor of classics, a discovery about ancient life in Athens occurred because of what he calls "serendipity"—and a bit of 21st century technology.

Leon went to Athens to examine two transcriptions when he learned that his colleague, Professor K.A.

unique opportunity. "Because I was doing inscriptions, and she hasn't worked much with inscriptions, it was a good chance to try something new," Leon said.

Using reflectance transformation imaging and 3D scanning technology, Leon was able to look closer at the past as he examined ancient Greek inscriptions related to Arrian of Nicomedia, a prominent figure who lived in the second century and was known for his historical record of Alexander the Great.

Alongside Rask, Leon used the new technology to view with new clarity an inscription and the base of a statue dating to the second century.


"This technology is something that I think could be really helpful for recording large amounts of information that can be easily shared in a way that doesn't hurt anything," Leon said. "Now that I know how it works (3D scanning uses lasers that are run over the text), I wouldn't hesitate to do it again in a circumstance where the text was a little harder to read."

While examining the base of a statue with this 3D technology Leon solved part of a centuries-old mystery — Arrian's first name.

"There is one particular inscription that is mostly clear, but has one letter that's very difficult to read and it's a key letter," Leon said. "It gives us part of Arrian's first name, which is otherwise unknown."

While Leon didn't find the entirety of Arrian's first name, he determined it to start with an "A" or an "L" as was carved on the base of the statue (that was missing its figure).

"Arrian's first name is abbreviated as a single letter, either an L or an A, which tells us a little something about his family's history and how they gained Roman citizenship," Leon said.

Leon is currently working on a book focused on Arrian's theoretical approach on how to interpret Greek history. And 3D scanning, which he believes will inspire a new research method, has played a key part in his own research for the book. "What I did get for certain is a huge number of great photographs that I can use for further research as I pull this book together." 

Rask of Duquesne University, was heading there separately to work on a project involving 3D scanning of archeological contacts.

And just like that, Leon stumbled into a

# Religion recognizes its rich history and accomplishments

The Department of Religion held an open house in the Foreign Languages Building on Oct. 13 to mark its history and achievements since its inception in 1971.

Festivities included book and poster displays of current and emeriti professors, and an audio-visual show that captured current or past professors and students situated in various countries.

The department traces its roots to the foundation of a Program in Religious Studies in 1971 under the leadership of William R. Schoedel, a specialist in early Christianity who had a joint appointment in the Department of Classics.

Other early members of the Program's faculty

also had joint appointments in other units. Gary Porton, a specialist in Rabbinic Judaism, joined in 1973 as the first faculty member whose line was entirely in religious studies.

In the 1980s and early '90s topics covered by the Program expanded with new faculty: Rajeshwari Pandharipande (Hinduism, 1981), Robert McKim (Philosophy of Religion, 1983—see story on this page about his new book), Wayne Pitard (Hebrew Bible, 1983), Valerie Hoffman (Islam, 1983 and current head of the department), and Peter Gregory (Buddhism, 1990–99). All but Gregory spent their careers at the University. Robert Alun Jones, professor of sociology, became affiliated with the Program in 1981 and later moved entirely into the Program

for the Study of Religion.

Faculty members hired since then include Richard Layton (Christianity, 1996), Alexander Mayer (Buddhism, 2000), Jonathan Ebel (Religion in America, 2005), James Treat (Native American Religion, 2005), Bruce Rosenstock (Modern Jewish Thought, 2009), Dov Weiss (The History of Jewish Theology and Jewish Biblical interpretation, 2011), Rini Bhattacharya Mehta (Religion and Culture in India, 2012), Jessica Birkenholtz (Hinduism, 2013), and Michael Dann (Islam, 2015).

For more information about Religion, visit: [religion.illinois.edu](http://religion.illinois.edu) 

## Religious studies graduate donates Anchor Bible Series to Department of Religion

**Douglas Hoffman**, Religion '75, has donated the Anchor Bible Commentary Series—the world's leading academic resource for biblical studies—to the Department of Religion.

With more than 120 published and more on the way, the Series provides an annotated translation, verse by verse commentary, extensive bibliographies, and larger themed essays on each book of the Hebrew Bible, the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the New Testament, and other important works not included in the Bible.

Originally published by Doubleday under the editorship of David Noel Freedman, the series continues to publish updated volumes with Yale University Press. Contributors to the Series identify with a wide array of traditions, including Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, and secular.


Hoffman graduated from the (then) Program in Religious Studies in 1975 and has long retained a keen interest in the study of religion, even as he worked at the Chicago Board Options Exchange (Cboe). At Cboe, his success as a self-employed market maker and senior employee of the Exchange allowed him, as he says, “the great pleasure of supporting Religious Studies at Illinois, because what greater purpose could there be for a public university than to teach students critically about their religions and the faiths of others?”

Doug started collecting the Anchor Bible Series soon after he graduated from Illinois. Now that he and his wife have retired and are downsizing in preparation for a move, Doug decided to donate the entire series to the Department of Religion library.



*(from left to right): Professor Richard Layton, Douglas Hoffman '75, Professor Valerie Hoffman, and Professor Wayne Pitard all hold books from the Anchor Bible Commentary Series, donated to the Department of Religion by Douglas Hoffman.*

He and his wife Rebecca have also established the Hoffman Family Endowment Fund to enable the department to purchase new publications in the Anchor Bible series, and fund the Hoffman Family Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of Religion, awarded annually to an outstanding graduating senior in the department.

In addition to all this, Doug is chair of the Advisory Council of the Illinois Program in Jewish Culture and Society and a member of the Board of Overseers for the Cincinnati campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the largest Jewish seminary in North America for Jewish studies. 

## New book offers perspective on how followers of one faith view those of another


Followers of a particular religion may believe its teachings are indisputable. So what do they think of people of other religions who believe likewise about their own faiths?

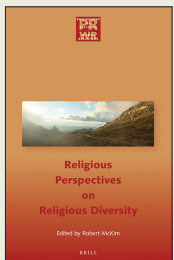
**Robert McKim**, Professor of Religion, has edited a new book, “Religious Perspectives on Religious Diversity,” that explores how members of various religions view those outside of their faiths, through nine essays written by scholars of religion. McKim contributed one of the essays.

The questions addressed in the essays are: what members of a particular religion think of those outside of the religion; whether they believe the outsiders can achieve salvation; if they see other religious traditions as legitimate or useful; and how people think of themselves in light of what they think about those outside their religious traditions.

McKim said the issues presented in the book are hotly debated and highly controversial,

and there is no consensus among various religions on how to view those outside of those faiths. He said his goal is to promote greater understanding and provide a way to help people think about the philosophical and theological questions.

For more about the book: [www.brill.com/products/book/religious-perspectives-religious-diversity](http://www.brill.com/products/book/religious-perspectives-religious-diversity) 



# NEWS BRIEFS

## CWL@50: Program in Comparative and World Literature celebrates its 50th anniversary with special symposium

The Program in Comparative and World Literature (CWL) celebrated its 50th anniversary in September with a two-day symposium titled “CWL@50: Comparative and World Literature in Historical Perspective.”

Founded in 1967, the UIUC Program in Comparative & World Literature in 1985 became one of the first to offer non-Western and cross-cultural studies, and world literature is an area in which it continues to excel.

The symposium joined alumni, students, and faculty from CWL with specializations in Arabic, Bulgarian, Classics, Chinese, English, French, German, Israeli, Italian, Japanese, Russian, South Asian, and Spanish literatures and cultures, as well as expertise in Jewish Studies, film studies, cultural studies, religion, and post-colonial theory. Eighteen campus units co-sponsored the event.

It coincided with the 150th anniversary of the founding of the University. “We wanted to recognize these important historical milestones and the wide ranging contribution that CWL has made to the School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and to the University of Illinois,” said **Lilya Kaganovsky**, Director and Professor of Comparative and World Literature.

The symposium featured keynote speaker Haun Saussey of the University of Chicago. Saussey also conducted a graduate workshop on critical theory and the idea of authorship. CWL alumna Beth Benedix (DePauw University) led a second graduate workshop on professionalization outside the university.

Professor Emeritus Michael Palencia Roth, one of the founders of CWL at Illinois, offered welcome remarks.

On day two, CWL faculty and alumni presented current research and debated future directions in the field, including moving beyond the East/West divide to mine intellectual affinities and cross-cultural relations across the globe. ✎

## Craig Williams, Classics, one of six UI faculty awarded NEH Fellowships for 2018



**Craig Williams**, Professor of Classics, is one of six U of I faculty members awarded National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowships for 2018. It is the third year in the last four that the Urbana campus has garnered more fellowship awards than any other single institution.

Williams’ project is titled, “Orpheus Crosses the Atlantic: Native American Knowledge of Ancient Greece and Rome.” His book will reveal the untold story of the ways in which Native American writers have displayed their knowledge of the languages, literatures and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome as they write about themselves and their people.

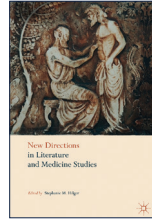
Other U of I fellowship recipients include Donna Buchanan (Music), Elizabeth Hoiem (Information Sciences), Candice Jenkins (English), Paul Kapp (Architecture), and D. Fairchild Ruggles (Landscape Architecture).

The highly competitive fellowship program (only 7% of applicants receive funding) supports advanced research in the humanities, and the recipients produce articles, books, digital materials or other scholarly resources. ✎

## Stephanie Hilger publishes edited volume on literature and medicine Also named CAS Fellow for 2018-19

**Stephanie Hilger**, Professor of Comparative and World Literature, has edited a new volume titled, “New Directions in Literature and Medicine Studies” (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017).

The book pertains to the field of medical humanities, and the articles



continue the dialogue between the disciplines of literature and medicine that was initiated in the 1970s and has continued with ebbs and flows since then.

This volume presents the latest research by scholars intent on enlivening that dialogue. They come from a variety of cultural, academic, and disciplinary backgrounds. Essays are organized in four thematic clusters: pedagogy, the mind-body connection, alterity, and medical practice.

For more about the book, including ordering information: [www.springer.com/us/book/9781137519870#otherversion=9781137519887](http://www.springer.com/us/book/9781137519870#otherversion=9781137519887)

In addition to publishing a new book, Hilger has also been recommended by the selection committee of the Center for Advanced Study to be an Associate in the Center during 2018-2019, with one semester of release time (pending approval of the Board of Trustees in late January). ✎

## Eric Calderwood chosen Lincoln Scholar for 2017-19



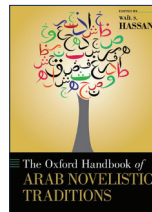
**Eric Calderwood**, Assistant Professor of Comparative and World Literature, is one of four recipients of a LEAP Award (Lincoln Excellence for Assistant Professors) from the Illinois College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS).

The competitive LEAP award was created as a way to foster excellence and recognize the impact assistant professors have in LAS.

The LEAP Scholars will retain the award for two years, receiving discretionary research funding each year. A committee of senior distinguished faculty selected recipients from a pool of nominees.

Calderwood joined Illinois in 2014 after earning his doctoral degree from Harvard University. His research interests include North African literature and film, modern Spanish literature and film, al-Andalus (medieval Muslim Iberia), modern Arabic literature, Mediterranean studies, colonial and postcolonial studies, historiography, Catalan literature and culture, and travel writing. He has a book on Spain and the making of modern Moroccan culture scheduled for 2018. ✎

## Wail Hassan edits new book on Arab novelistic traditions



**Wail Hassan**, Professor of Comparative and World Literature, is the editor of a newly-published book, *The Oxford Handbook of Arab Novelistic Traditions*.

This new work shares latest scholarship on the Arabic novel from its earliest phase to the present and provides a new theoretical framework for the study of the Arabic novel.

The book also emphasizes the development of the novel in every Arabic-speaking country and includes Arab Diasporic novel traditions in 13 countries.

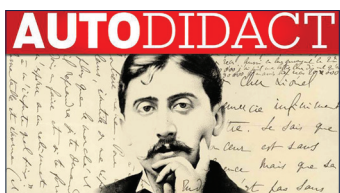
Hassan contributed two chapters of his own and co-wrote two others with Barbara Michalak-Pikulski, Professor of Arabic Literature, University of Cracow.

Professor Hassan is a specialist in modern Arabic literature and intellectual history. He is the author of *Tayeb Salih: Ideology and the Craft of Fiction* (2003) and *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (OUP, 2011).

For more about *The Oxford Handbook of Arab Novelistic Traditions*, visit: [global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-arab-novelistic-traditions-9780199349791?cc=us&lang=en&#](http://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-arab-novelistic-traditions-9780199349791?cc=us&lang=en&#). ✎



## U of I digitizing collection of Proust letters



The nearly 6,000 letters to and from the author of “In Search of Lost Time,” one of the great masterpieces of western literature, are drawn mainly from the work of **Philip Kolb**, a U of I professor.

Kolb (1907-1992) assembled and published all of Proust’s surviving correspondence, some 5,300 letters in 21 volumes between 1970 and 1993. Several hundred more letters have since been identified. Kolb estimated the size of Proust’s correspondence at some 20,000 documents, but most were lost or destroyed.

Illinois has joined with French partners to digitize the collection, with collaboration from the University of Grenoble Alpes and the Institute of Texts and Modern Manuscripts.

The project first focused on 200 letters that Proust wrote related to World War I. Proust, who was frail and of poor health, did not fight during The Great War. However, his younger brother Robert served as a doctor in the French Army, and the two exchanged letters during the conflict. These letters are now posted online.

“It helps decipher Marcel Proust’s writing, which is not always easy to read,” said François Proulx, Assistant Professor of French and Italian.

The goal is to eventually post all of Proust’s correspondence online, and the university will continue to buy Proust letters, budget permitting, Proulx said.

To learn more about the archive: [www.library.illinois.edu/rbx/kolbproust](http://www.library.illinois.edu/rbx/kolbproust). ☞



*The Illini Union shakes as the undergraduate and graduate students of Italian joyfully sing “Volare” with the audience at the end of the Italian Talent Show.*

Italian students from the Department French and Italian put on a talent show at Illini Union on Dec. 8. Thirty-nine performers

delivered 25 separate performances of live piano and guitar music, opera music, poetry, Italian pop music, poetic prose, drama and jokes.

At the end of the program 130 audience members joined with the artists in singing “Volare,” a hit single released in 1958 by Italian singer-songwriter Domenico Modugno.

Eda Derhemi, Lecturer in Italian, wrote to the student performers afterward: “I want to thank for your incredible performances! Everybody in the audience was impressed and very enthusiastic! We are very happy that your classmates, friends, and teachers got to see you do amazing things with Italian outside of class.” ☞

## Mara Wade named Vice President of Renaissance Society of America



**Mara Wade**, Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, has been appointed Vice President of the Renaissance Society of America (RSA).

Pamela Smith, the RSA’s current President, said the committee and board especially took note of Wade’s work in bridging the world of the digital humanities with the world of scholarship on emblems, her broad connections in many fields, the historic depth of her commitment to the RSA, her strong record of receipt of international fellowships, and her dedication to teaching and lecturing widely.

Professor Wade’s term of office begins in March 2018. She will serve two years as the society’s Vice President, followed by two years as President and then two years as Immediate Past President.

The Renaissance Society of America is the largest international learned society, devoted to the study of the era 1300–1700. Founded in 1954, RSA has grown to include more than 5,000 members around the world. ☞

## John Tofik Karam named LAS Conrad Scholar



**John Tofik Karam**, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese and associate director of the Lemann Institute for Brazilian Studies, is one of three professors from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences that have been granted the distinction of a Conrad Humanities Scholar beginning this academic year.

The other two recipients are Soo Ah Kwon, professor of Asian American studies, and Marc Hertzman, professor of history.

For Karam, the borders on maps don’t always lend to the complexities and relationships he studies. As professor and researcher, Karam has come to see the globe in a unique way. With about 20 years of experience studying Brazil and South America, Karam is close to completing a solo book project titled “Manifold Destiny: An Arab Crossroads of the Americas,” which delves into a multitude of unexpected relationships.

The Conrad Humanities Scholar awards are intended to assist and retain promising mid-career faculty.

## Eleonora Stoppino and Ariana Traill named Professorial Scholars by College of LAS



**Eleonora Stoppino**, Professor of French and Italian, and **Ariana Traill**, Professor of the Classics, are among 10 professors named Professorial Scholars by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS).

Stoppino has been named a John A. and Grace W. Nicholson Professorial Scholar. The position is intended to further the study of humanities, with special emphasis and preference given to the study of literature and the history of philosophy.

Traill, along with Dana Rabin, Professor of History, has been named a Lynn M. Martin Professorial Scholar. The position is intended to honor exceptional women teachers.

All of the positions were created through gifts to the College of LAS. ☞



## Florencia Henshaw has productive fall semester as new director of the Center for Language Instruction and Coordination

**Florencia Henshaw**, Director of Advanced Spanish for the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, is also the new Director of the Center for Language Instruction and Coordination (CLIC).

Describing itself as “the hub for language teaching and learning” at the U of I, the center came into existence in fall 2015 as a unit within SLCL. CLIC offers services to all language faculty, teaching assistants and students in areas related to language teaching.

Henshaw said the center had a very productive fall 2017, including interactive panel discussions, the annual Language Teaching Share Fair, and a career workshop for graduate students.

Initiatives planned for Spring 2018 include monthly webinars, awards for graduate students and faculty, and a “Festival of Languages” for high school students to experience the languages and cultures housed within the SLCL. Henshaw also coordinates the School’s bi-annual Intensive Foreign Language Instruction Program (IFLIP) classes.

Follow the Center on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/clic.illinois](http://www.facebook.com/clic.illinois) ☞

## New endowment established for Ukrainian Studies at U of I

Generous gift from family of Dmytro  
Shtohryn allows department to expand  
events in the concentration

In December the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures proudly announced the establishment of the Dmytro Shtohryn Endowment in Ukrainian Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

The fund is intended to benefit the department and will be utilized to support a myriad of events, including lectures, symposia, conferences, or presentations in Ukrainian studies, according to **Valeria Sobol**, Associate Professor and Head of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

This exciting development is made possible by a generous gift from Liuda Shtohryn, the daughter of Library and Slavic Professor Emeritus Dmytro Shtohryn, and is intended to honor her father's legacy and plethora of accomplishments in the field of Ukrainian studies.

"We are extremely grateful to Ms. Liuda Shtohryn for her generosity and are looking forward to organizing Ukraine-related events on this campus," said Sobol.

For more than 40 years, the Ukrainian presence at the U of I has been synonymous with Dmytro Shtohryn, who became integral to the offering of Ukrainian studies at Illinois and expanding the Slavic and East European collection at the University Library, in particular its Ukrainian holdings.

In addition to offering courses in Ukrainian language and literature in the Slavic Department, for a quarter of a century Professor Shtohryn chaired the Illinois' Ukrainian research program. This program organized and sponsored an annual summer conference on Ukrainian subjects at Illinois that, for more than twenty years, brought together scholars from all over the world.



*Professor Shtohryn with his wife Eustachia after receiving the community service award from the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America-Illinois Division, in August of 2009. For more than 40 years, Professor Shtohryn spearheaded the Ukrainian studies program at U of I, and built upon the Slavic and East European collection at the University Library, with particular emphasis on its Ukrainian collection. This new endowment will honor his legacy while allowing the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures to expand its programming for events in the coming academic year and beyond.*

"This new endowment will allow the Slavic Department to continue this long-standing tradition of commitment to Ukrainian Studies on this campus," commented Sobol.

At the U of I, students can pursue a major or minor in Slavic Studies, with a concentration in Ukrainian Studies, as well as a master's degree or doctoral degree in this area. For more about the Ukrainian program and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Illinois, please visit: [www.slavic.illinois.edu/](http://www.slavic.illinois.edu/). 