

# ILCS News

Department of International Language and Culture Studies  
Purdue University Fort Wayne

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Language and Culture Studies**

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## Message from the Chair.

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family safe and well. 2020 has been an unprecedented year for the country and for the world, and it has equally been unprecedented for our department. Faculty and students were met during Spring Break of 2020 with the requirement to shift to emergency remote learning and worked to convert their classes into a new modality to keep everyone safe. As we finished the semester, the department prepared for a number of changes: a major overhaul of our basic language programs; the shift from Blackboard (our long-time learning management system) to Brightspace; uncertain teaching and learning conditions for the fall; and also, the beginning of my tenure as chair. I succeed Dr. Ana Benito in this position, who

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From left to right: Dr. Laurie Corbin (chair, 2006-2014), Dr. Ana Benito (chair, 2014-2020), Dr. Stephen Buttes (chair, July 2020-present)

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served as chair of the department from 2014-2020. She was the successor to Dr. Laurie Corbin, who served as chair 2006 - 2014. I am honored to have been named chair of the department and take seriously my responsibilities to serve our students, my department colleagues, the university and you, our alumni and community supporters. I am pleased to share with you news from our department.

-Steve Buttes

## ILCS Faculty Face COVID with Innovative Language Teaching.

It's likely that no faculty member ever thought about or trained in graduate school to teach basic language or intermediate language skills (much less literature, film, linguistics or culture) while wearing a cloth face covering.

Nevertheless, ILCS faculty faced the challenge and taught students successfully during the pandemic.



Some faculty taught students using Zoom combined with the chat function or online tools such as Google's Jamboard. Others taught face-to-face while working creatively to enable student small group practice in socially-distanced classrooms. Others juggled streaming their class to quarantined students while also teaching those attending in person. It was a challenging year, but we all had the opportunity to reflect on teaching and learning in new ways.



# Say Hello to COLA.

In 2020 the university began a process of dividing the existing College of Arts and Sciences into two separate colleges: the College of Science and the College of Liberal Arts (COLA). ILCS will join humanities and social science programs along with the Department of Criminal Justice and Public Administration in forming a new academic unit on campus. We are excited to continue to provide students with the opportunity to pursue a liberal arts education while also making new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations. The new college will launch on July 1, 2021!

## New Spanish for the Professions Minor Program Proposed.

As the department completed its recent program review process, faculty identified a minor program with a professional focus as a potential area of future student interest and program growth. Our proposed minor seeks to prepare more students to fill the international language skills gap in the workforce in Northeast Indiana and beyond. We will offer courses such as "Ethics of Language Use in Professional Practice," "Introduction to Translation", "Introduction to Interpretation", "Spanish for Advocacy and Social Service," "Spanish for Hospitality and Tourism," "Spanish for Engineering and Technology" a professional practicum and more!

### The Foreign Language Skills Gap\*



1 in 3

foreign language-dependent U.S. employers reports a **language skills gap**



1 in 4

U.S. employers lost business due to a **lack of foreign language skills**

\*A foreign language skills gap occurs when an employer has foreign language needs that are not currently met by its employees.

**According to a 2019 ACTFL study, 90% of surveyed U.S. employers need a workforce with skills in a language other than English; 70% of those cite "domestic only" needs; and 1 in 4 U.S. employers lost business because their employees lacked the necessary language skills. You can read the full study in the publications list under the [Language Advocacy tab at leadwithlanguages.org](#).**

# Celebrate Student Excellence.

We are proud of our students! They have shown determination and persistence during an extremely difficult three semesters since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We are proud to announce our students awarded for excellence in the study of an international language for 2021.

## German:

Deanne Jensen  
Deborrah Berghoff

## Japanese:

Alex Stocking

## International Studies:

Katelyn Smith

## Arabic:

Michael Shanks  
Michael Price

## Spanish:

Hawkins Ragland  
Nicole Kroetz

## French:

Soufanieh Pierre

## American Association of Teachers of French

### Award:

Katelin Lott  
Karen Chaparro Flores

You can contribute to funds to support future awardees for excellence in language study on PFW's Day of Giving. See page 7 for details!

## Promotions to Senior Lecturer.

In Spring 2020 Farah Combs, Lecturer in Arabic, and Yuriko Ujike, Lecturer in Japanese, were both promoted to Senior Lecturer. Farah and Yuriko joined our department in 2010. They provide numerous opportunities for students to encounter the languages and cultures of the Arabic-speaking and Japanese-speaking world. Congratulations to them both!



From left to right: Farah Combs (Senior Lecturer in Arabic, Director of the Honors Center), Yuriko Ujike (Senior Lecturer in Japanese)

# Faculty Research, Promotions and More!

Despite the challenges and many obstacles we faced in 2020, there are many things to celebrate from 2020! **Dr. Talia Bugel** was promoted to **Professor of Spanish**. Dr. Bugel also published a new co-edited book in 2020 while completing her sabbatical in Uruguay. She continues her work on language attitudes and has expanded into language landscapes, looking at how Spanish and non-Spanish words intermingle in commercial contexts and displays. **Dr. Karla Zepeda** completed work on a co-edited textbook that utilizes plays and acting exercises from dramatic works in Spanish to teach language skills.

**Dr. Jens Clegg** presented research on Spanish in Northeast Indiana. **Dr. Stephen Buttes** published an article on teaching language and literature with digital tools as well as an article on the debt and climate crises in recent Mexican and Puerto Rican novels. **Dr. Suin Roberts** completed a sabbatical project focusing on food and migrant identity in Korean-German and Korean-American narratives. **Dr. Nancy Virtue** is beginning work on the recent French film Les Misérables (2019), and **Dr. Ana Benito** has been re-engaging with Spanish language poetry and women writers.



**Dr. Lee Roberts** has published numerous articles and co-edited volumes that have helped to develop and expand the growing field of German-Asian Studies. His most recent article appeared in a co-edited book published by Routledge. In 2020 he was invited to give a keynote lecture on German reunification as a model for understanding the continuing divide in Korea, and he and his research group were awarded the prestigious Overseas Publishing Grant from Seoul National University.



Source: <https://www.arcosabroad.com/destinations/spain>

# PFW Abroad: Department- Sponsored Program in Spain.

2020 had been planned as the inaugural year for the department's new study abroad program in Granada, Spain. Jamie Fleming, the campus study abroad advisor, working with **Dr. Nancy Virtue** and **Dr. Ana Benito** worked to recruit 16 students from PFW to complete the six-week program. Dr. Benito was completing her site visit to the program when the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns began. After an adventurous return to the U.S. and an unprecedented year teaching language and literature in a pandemic, Dr. Benito is looking forward to launching the program in 2022.

## Alumni, Share Your ILCS Story.

We always love to hear from our alumni and to learn about the many paths our graduates have taken as they've used their language and culture skills after graduation. Has your degree or your language knowledge helped you in your career or your life in ways you did not expect? We'd love to share your story with current and future students! Share with us how international language and culture helped you "make your mark." You can tag us on Facebook with @ilcsatpfw or contact the department office: [ilcs@pfw.edu](mailto:ilcs@pfw.edu)



# You Can Join In. Support International Language Study in Fort Wayne.

**PFW Day of Giving is April 28**

The Department of International Language and Culture Studies has overcome numerous obstacles over the past several years to continue meeting our mission: to provide students and future educators of the state with understanding of cultural interactions, thus expanding their multicultural and global knowledge. Our work can benefit greatly from your financial support.

PFW is sponsoring a "Day of Giving" challenge on April 28, 2021. The university invites alumni, community members and others to "make their mark" so students can make theirs.

ILCS has a unique role to play in helping students make their mark on the region and the world. Students who study with us graduate ready to meet the workplace language skills gap in Northeast Indiana and beyond. They are prepared to think critically, quickly and creatively. They are ready to meet challenges with a globally aware cultural competence. In short, they are Mastodons: ready to build and strengthen the language and culture bridges that connect our region to the world.

You can support our students and our work with them by contributing to the two funds listed below. Your contribution to the **ILCS Fund** can support department activities, award student excellence in language study and assist in department outreach. Your contribution to the **Study Abroad Scholarship Fund** directly supports students headed out to improve their proficiency in their target language and gain a global awareness they can bring back to our campus and our region.

## ***MAKE YOUR MARK.***

On April 28, the Purdue Fort Wayne community will come together to support our students. Our Mastodons are big thinkers and dreamers. They are also doers—turning possibility into reality.

**Make Your Mark so our students can make theirs!**

<https://dayofgiving.pfw.edu/>  
**April 28, 2021**



**ILCS Fund**



**Study Abroad  
Scholarship Fund**