CHAIR’S UPDATE
By Linda B. Bartlett

TO THRIVE:
1) TO GROW VIGOROUSLY, FLOURISH;
2) TO PROSPER;
3) TO PROGRESS TOWARD OR REALIZE A GOAL (FROM WEBSTER’S)
FRENCH: PROSPÉRER
GERMAN: ZU GEDEIHEN
SPANISH: PROSPERAR

No matter the definition or the language, Modern Languages and Literatures is thriving at Furman. With an average 174 declared majors at the end of each of the last two years, our departmental programs are helping transform and equip students to engage the global and local communities in diverse ways. Through faculty-directed projects, in the last couple of years students have compared notes about cultural awareness through a study of their engagement of the Spanish-speaking culture in Greenville and in Madrid; undertaken research on perspectives on bilingualism among Spanish speakers in the Upstate; interpreted attitudes toward migration in contemporary novels written in French; examined the writings of a...continued p. 2
seventeenth-century LGBTQ science fiction author; traveled to Medellín, Colombia to interview retired workers from Greenville textile mills; studied politeness norms in differing Spanish-speaking contexts; researched cultural resistance through song in contemporary Chile; and endeavored to translate German texts, among other things.

These sorts of projects, transformative study away experiences, and engaging coursework prepare our students to take their knowledge out into the Furman and Greenville communities to continue their development and to help others thrive. For example, two French majors spent summer 2019 undertaking internships abroad, thanks to the Childers Award. The classes of 2019 and 2020 were especially successful in garnering highly competitive international fellowships, such as the Fulbright award to teach English abroad and the prestigious Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Fellowship. Two Spanish majors created the “Paladin Language Partners” to connect students and staff to interact in other languages. Other students interned and volunteered at local non-profits like the Hispanic Alliance, Neighborhood Focus, the Free Medical Clinic, and the European American Chamber of Commerce. Three students recently published OpEds in local papers about bilingualism and the education experience of Hispanic youth (part of coursework for their May X course on “The American Experience of Hispanic Youth”). With MLL as their launch pad, our students and graduates continue to “Go Beyond” and use their language skills and global fluency in exciting ways.

We have also begun to interact with some of our thriving alumni in new and instrumental ways. Our new February tradition is a “Life and Languages” program featuring three MLL alumni who share their language pathway with current and prospective MLL majors. Commencement was the cherry on top of the 2018-2019 academic year: not only did Eleanor Beardsley (French and History ’86), NPR’s correspondent to Paris, give the Commencement address, but our own Dr. Ilka Rasch received the Alester G. and Janie Earle Furman Award for Meritorious Advising. Our talented faculty continued to reap recognition in 2019-20. Dr. Angélica Lozano-Alonso has taken on the responsibility as Faculty Director of the Office for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, and Dr. Jeremy Cass was named Dean of the Faculty this past spring.

Certainly, the last two years have been a time of individual and collective accomplishment and deep engagement for MLL students and faculty. Recent months have required us to draw on our creativity and adaptability even more intentionally as the pandemic has transformed the way we do our work. We have pivoted to online/hybrid teaching successfully, continue to attract new majors, and are thinking imaginatively about our programs going forward. Truly, COVID-19 has been a vivid reminder of global interconnectedness, and reinforced our commitment to equip students to navigate the world knowledgeably, confidently, and empathetically. We thank you for your support and hope to see you soon. In the meantime, send us your stories! We love hearing about the pathways our students (present and past) are pursuing—and how language study and cultural engagement (at Furman and beyond) has helped you prosper, flourish, and realize your goals.
We who teach French, Spanish, or German at Furman understand the broad impact of having majored in one of these languages as an undergraduate. This path has allowed us to lead fulfilling professional lives by working to instill in our students a deep appreciation of languages and cultures. Just as important, our personal lives have been enriched: we have connected with a variety of linguistic communities at home and abroad, lived in different countries, and maintained decades-long friendships through knowing these languages. So, when students and parents pose us the question, “What can you do with a [insert language here] major?” often we want to exclaim “anything you want to and more!” but we know this remark, while true, will not suffice. In our advising sessions, often we show students the results of the MLL Alumni Survey, describe what other students have done in similar situations, or work with them so they may trailblaze their own way. Yet, sometimes it helps to hear directly from those who were once in their place.

Therefore, to offer prospective and current MLL majors an additional perspective of what can be accomplished with a language major, the MLL TFA Committee organized the inaugural MLL major night “Life and Languages: Your Career Path at Furman and Beyond.” On February 7, 2019, three Furman MLL alumni returned to campus to discuss with students their professional experiences after majoring in a language. With Department Chair Linda Bartlett moderating the panel, Lindsay Woolf Grainger ’06 (French), Terri Simmons ’83 (German), and Arch Bell ’98 (Spanish) addressed 60 students and faculty on how majoring in their language influenced their professional journeys. Simmons, a practicing immigration and international business attorney in Georgia, shared that her proficiency in German was the distinguishing factor that helped her earn a position upon graduating from law school over other highly qualified candidates. Bell, the U.S. correspondent for the Spanish-language publication Marca, explained that he first worked for 10 years in the tech industry, but made a career change in order to fold his two passions—Spanish and soccer—into his daily professional life. Woolf Grainger, a nurse educator, described that while she does not use French routinely in her line of work, she does rely on the intercultural competence gained from her MLL major to provide compassionate care to patients.

Our second Life and Languages event on February 11, 2020, brought our students into conversation with three additional local alumnae: Christen Cullum Hairston, PhD., a 2001 German and History major who currently serves as Executive Director of Student Affairs Administration at Prisma Health; Maria Johnson ’99, a Spanish and Latin American Studies major who is a medical interpreter with Prisma Health; and Meredith Edwards Green, J.D., a 2005 French and Psychology major who was named Furman’s general counsel in 2017. The wisdom that these accomplished alumni have imparted with our audiences is powerful. It reinforces the notion that majoring in MLL has limitless potential.

If you want to share your story with our students, please contact Chair Linda Bartlett to express your interest. We would love to learn from you.
It’s been another busy couple of years for the French section! One of our most significant developments in 2018-2019 was the implementation of a revision of the B.A. in French. The new model allows students to create their own pathways through the major by choosing freely among more varied higher level course offerings. In spring 2019, Dr. Brown taught our newly introduced “French for the Business World” course which aims to prepare students for potential career plans involving the use of French professionally. Our regular language immersion experiences continued. In fall 2018, Dr. Allen and Dr. Brown co-directed the Versailles program, leading 10 students through transformative learning adventures abroad; another 10 students were accompanied by Dr. Cherie Maiden in fall 2019. Our French House fostered a lively French-speaking community on campus. Three students lived with Laura Craeymeersch—the 2018-2019 French House Assistant—who conducted Cafés français and organized many co-curricular activities such as pétanque matches or crêpes parties. Candice Charron was our assistant in 2019-2020, before COVID-19 closed our campus in March. Our French program has boasted healthy numbers of majors, with the high-water mark over the last couple of years between 30-35. In 2019 we were particularly excited to welcome two alumnae on campus. Lindsay Woolf Grainger ’06 shared professional insights during our departmental-wide major interest night event, “Life and Languages,” in February. National Public Radio Paris correspondent Eleanor Beardsley ’86 was invited to give the main address at the university’s 193rd commencement during which she stressed the importance of French learning in her exciting career path. And Furman General Counsel Meredith Edwards Green ’05 was featured at our annual Life and Languages major recruitment event in 2020. These yearly updates also give us an opportunity to celebrate our French majors’ many accomplishments. The 2019 David Wells Morgan Award in French—presented annually to the French major graduating senior judged to be the most outstanding—was awarded to Catherine McLaughlin; Mary Sloan Morris was similarly honored in 2020. Additionally, Caroline Filston ’20 and Claire Kaplan ’20 received the ninth annual Elaine Duffy Childers Award which offers substantial financial support for a student of French who designs their own summer study abroad experience. Since 2011, 10 students have benefited from the award, completing—like Caroline—internships abroad or enrolling—like Claire—in advanced language courses. Grace Marmaras ’20 also completed a high-impact experience in a French-speaking country. She participated in the Canadian Parliamentary Internship Program from mid-May to mid-June 2019 in Ottawa where she worked with member of parliament Christine Moore, a Francophone from the New Democratic Party representing the riding of Abitibi—Témiscamingue, Quebec. (French/Politics and International Affairs double major Jamal Halley was chosen for this experience in 2020 but unfortunately was not able to participate because of international travel restrictions). Finally, Mary Sloan Morris ’20 was awarded a Summer Research Fellowship and spent eight weeks examining the representation of illegal immigration in contemporary French literature under my mentorship. You can read more about some of these 2018-2020 French section happenings in the contributions below.
Adapting to the challenges created by the current pandemic has led the French section to offer new ways to engage our students outside the classroom. While we were not able to fully make up for the absence of our beloved Language House Assistants—French speakers who act as native informants and provide an immersive residential experience for our students—we made sure that learners of French at the intermediate level and above got to interact with a variety of individuals hailing from different areas of the French-speaking world. In fall 2020, we planned six “A Day in the Life of a French Speaker Guest-Speaker Series” events over Zoom. These biweekly chats with native speakers have been a great success. So far this semester, our students met Malachi St Jean, a fifth-year medical student from Haiti; Sarah Perle Benazera, a French peace activist living in Tel Aviv; and Cheikh Khary Lô, an engineer in food agronomy from Dakar, Senegal. Future events will feature a professor from Switzerland, a French attorney, and a French economist who also acts as spokesperson for the Parti Socialiste. Senior French major Georgie Walker ’21 recently shared her thoughts on the events:

“The French Guest-Speaker series has opened my eyes to the rich cultural universe in which we live. Each event is a cultural journey into a different Francophone country, and through these experiences I have had the opportunity to learn from each speaker about what constitutes their identity: their cultural values such as language, music, and cuisines, as well as their diverse careers.”
Nostalgia. Presently, face to face interactions with students have become less the norm since the pandemic. In this fall of 2020, I am enjoying the option to teach class on campus despite the need to social distance and wear masks. A few days ago, my only male student exclaimed, “Dr. Maiden! Nous étions en France l’automne dernier!” The unexpected yet delightful outburst transported me back to my fall 2019 study away in Versailles, spent with a group of ten students, including my only male. In an instant, a flood of memories emerged of the day when the group gleefully ran to get the train for a Paris visit, herded our way to catch a crowded metro train to visit the Louvre. The students huddled together outside, impatiently answering my questions about French architecture on a cold Paris day. They then stood in a long line that seemed endless, waiting to enter the world’s most visited museum! Back to the future, and here I am coping with a new normal. The pandemic has presented challenges, but I’ve learned ways to keep students engaged. In spring 2020, teaching remotely, I discovered my new favorite “white board,” the Zoom chat, for rapid fire responses in French. While students gave their answers orally, I’d exclaim excitedly, “Écrivez les phrases dans le chat. Corrigez-les! Très bien, classe!” It is great to be in the classroom. However, I wouldn’t mind returning to France to catch a crowded metro train.
When a National Public Radio news segment evokes the latest developments related to COVID-19 in Paris, Marseille and other French-speaking cities, a familiar voice echoes through the airwaves. From reporting on the burning of the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris to offering the latest information on French regional governments’ responses to the pandemic, National Public Radio Paris correspondent Eleanor Beardsley ’86 rarely stays in one place for long. Since this esteemed alumna of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures graduated with majors in history and French, her professional trajectory has unfolded in the least predictable of ways. For many of us, her status as a radio correspondent may appear to have been destined from the start. Yet as she shared on her recent return visit to Furman, she could never have imagined the opportunities that her French proficiency would make possible.

On the evening before our 193rd commencement, at which President Davis awarded Beardsley an honorary doctorate, the journalist gazed over a podium in Hartness Pavilion. Through tortoiseshell-toned, horn-rimmed glasses, she projected polite curiosity and good humor as students and faculty marveled at her tale of how her voice became familiar to so many. Leaning on an elbow and inviting questions with an open-handed gesture of generosity, our alumna recounted the circuitous professional journey that led her to take advantage of her majors in French and History. At many junctures, she recalled, disheartening setbacks blocked her progress before new doors of opportunity opened. From an unsuccessful job interview for a retail salesperson position at K-Mart to being unceremoniously fired from a job, she told students, incidents that may once have seemed like failures enabled her to pursue more fulfilling work later on. She suggested that any of the knowledge gained in Furman Hall, from French political vocabulary to the postcolonial history of Algeria, could one day open a door to extraordinary careers like hers, and chances are that many of our students have not yet envisioned what that day-to-day job will truly look like. That is why staying curious and keeping an open mind is so important.
2019-2020 MLL FACULTY UPDATES

Linda Bartlett was honored to be named as the Carey Shepard Crantford Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures in January 2019. That spring her chapter “Teaching History through Television: Myth and Counter-Myth in Cuéntame cómo pasó” appeared in the edited volume Mito e historia en la televisión y el cine español. This article was the basis for a paper she presented at the Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference (MiFLC) in October 2018 and a roundtable discussion at MiFLC 2019. In summer 2020 she began her second term as chair of the best department at Furman, Modern Languages and Literatures.

Marianne Bessy presented papers at the Université de Picardie Jules Verne’s “Quête et enquête chez Vassilis Alexakis” international colloquium, at the Contemporary French Civilization Conference (University of Arizona), and at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference. She published “Le Paris souterrain de Vassilis Alexakis dans L’Enfant grec: catabase funeste ou lieu de renaissance?” in Dalhousie French Studies (2020) and “Rethinking the Teaching of Culture at the Beginning Level: The Online Francophone Cultures Portfolio Project” in The French Review (2020). Bessy also co-authored “Representing the Twenty-First Century Migrant Experience: Adam and Fleutiaux’s Problematic Empathy” with Mary Sloan Morris ’19 in Alternative Francophone (2020). With Dr. Stephanie Knouse, she presented papers at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) annual convention and at the Southern Conference on Language Teaching, and co-led a workshop for MLL. Their article “Metacognition, metalinguistic awareness, and relevance in language learning: A report on an intervention module project” is forthcoming in the International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. In May 2019, Bessy received certification as an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) tester in French from ACTFL.

Ron Friis’s Furman Standard Research project on Mexican poet Alberto Blanco sent him to Guadalajara to interview the writer at the Feria Internacional del Libro and then to Oaxaca to present at the SECOLAS conference in the company of four of his Furman Latin Americanist colleagues (Cass, Lozano-Alonso, Quintero, and Rojas). In March, he presented on Blanco’s innovative use of ekphrasis at the NEMLA Convention in Boston and this year eight poems that Friis co-translated with Furman Spanish alumna Maria Bartlett have appeared in the journals EZRA and Cagibi. Finally, Friis’s book White Light: The Poetry of Alberto Blanco will soon be published by Bucknell University Press.

Sofia Kearns published “Oral Histories of Colombian Textile Workers in Greenville, SC”. (https://scholarexchange.furman.edu/textile-workers/), as well as an article, “La literatura indígena y su rol en el proyecto de recuperación lingüística en el continente americano,” in volume 19 of the Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference Review (Fall 2019, pp. 71-85). She presented “La resistencia al colonialismo religioso en la poesía de las Mapuches Graciela Huinao y Liliana Ancalao” at the virtual XXIV Conferencia Internacional de Literatura Hispana in June 2020, after delivering a paper with Santiago Quintero at the Northeast Modern Language Association Convention in Boston, MA in March: “Weaving Labor: Rebuilding Transnational (Hi)stories of Medellín and Greenville.” As a continuation of her research with Santiago Quintero on Colombian workers’ contributions to the Greenville textile industry, she has worked with four research fellows since the summer of 2019: Marina Cox, Whitney Maness, Charlie Lott, and Mary Margaret McConnell.

Angélica Lozano-Alonso completed her certification with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)’s Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). She is now an OPI tester of Spanish with full certification. She co-authored the conference paper titled, “Paris and Mexico City: A Dialogue of Two Capital Cities,” which she co-presented in March of 2019 at the 66th annual Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies Conference in Oaxaca, Mexico. In fall 2019 she presented “Advocating for the Latinx Community in the Classroom” at the first annual Latinx: Interdisciplinary Studies Talks on Civic Leadership and Mentoring at the University of South Carolina Upstate, as well as as a co-presentation with colleague Jeff Michno entitled “Course Between Study Abroad and an On-Campus Classroom: A Case Study at Furman University,” at the 69th annual MiFLC at Auburn University. Attending the Northeast Modern Languages Association meeting in March, 2020, she presented “Capturing Contradictory Beauty: Mexico City in The Romanoffs Series.” She was also a spring 2020 class member of the Women’s Leadership Institute, sponsored by Furman’s Center for Corporate and Professional Development. Dr. Lozano-Alonso also published an article, “Finding Juárez and El Paso in Everything Begins and Ends at the Kentucky Club” in the August 2020 edition of CiberLetras. Finally, she is enjoying her new duties as Faculty Director of the Office for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

Cherie Maiden organized the virtual conversations guest speaker event, funded by the Furman Humanities Center, for intermediate and advanced French language students with the Francophone African writer Léonora Miano on September 8 and
9, 2020; attended the Rentrée Littéraire Librest interviews featuring Léonora Miano and seven other writers on September 5, 2019 at the Théâtre de la Bastille in Paris; attended the inaugural two-day Colloquium, “Patrimoines déchâinés vers un réseau du paysage culturel de l’esclavage,” funded by President Macron, at the Musée d’Orsay in Paris, May 6 – 7, 2019; the special exhibit, “Le modèle noir de Géricault à Matisse,” the first of its kind in France, May 2, 2019; the guest speaker event, “Gone Missing: Léonora Miano and Hisham Matar,” organized by Albertine Bookstore, New York, September 18, 2018; and an African women authors panel including Léonora Miano, who talked about her novel La Saison de l’ombre (recently published in English) during the 2018 Brooklyn Book Festival, Brooklyn September 16 – 23, 2019.

Lourdes Manyé published a book chapter in the volume Mito e historia en la televisión y el cine español, ed. C. Blackshaw, Albatros Ediciones, 2019. She was invited to give a lecture on Catalan literary exile to Chile by the University of Chicago Katz Center and the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Spanish Civil War on April 24, 2019. She presented a paper at the 17th International Colloquium of the North American Catalan Society (NACS), held at the University of Chicago, on May 25-27, 2019. After serving as President of the NACS during 2013-2017, she finished her two-year term on the board as President ex officio in May 2019. She received a Liverpool University Press 2019 Award for Outstanding Journal Reviewer for her work on the Catalan Review. Two poems by Catalan poet Miquel Martí i Pol that she translated into English with Wayne Cox were published in the print edition of Loch Raven Review, Volume 13, 2019. One of the poems was honored by the journal and was featured on the back cover. She presented on the poet at the 69th Annual Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference (MIFLC) held at Auburn University on October 10-12, 2019, and has recently published the article “La memoria perdurable: la presencia actual y la esencia universal de la poesía de Miquel Martí i Pol,” in the 60th Anniversary Special Issue of Romance Notes, vol. 60, 2020.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Eunice Rojas published a paper on the intersection of music, politics, and trans identity in Pedro Lemebel’s Tengo miedo torero in MIFLC Review, a book chapter on teaching Latin American resistance music in the Spanish classroom in Teaching Popular Music in the Classroom: Essays, and a reflection piece on her father in Puente Atlântico following his death in February of 2020. She also presented papers at four conferences: 1) a paper on the community-building strategies in Catalan nationalist music at the Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference; 2) a paper on Latin American feminist hip-hop at a conference on literature and human rights in Santiago, Chile; 3) a paper on the humanization of the victims of human rights violations in Colombian music at the Southeastern Conference of Latin American Studies; and 4) a paper co-presented with Furman student, Daniel Sarkela, at a virtual edition of the International Conference of Hispanic Literature.

Daniel J. Worden’s article on a notable seventeenth-century utopian novelist, “Revealing the Unknown in La Terre australe connue by Gabriel de Foigny,” was published in volume XIX of Cahiers du dix-septième, the journal of the Society for Interdisciplinary French Seventeenth-Century Studies (SE17). In 2019, his critical edition and translation of Aphra Behn’s ‘Emperor of the Moon’ and Its French Source, ‘Arlequin, Empereur dans la lune,’ co-authored with Judy A. Hayden, was published by the Modern Humanities Research Association. In the summer of 2020, he enjoyed collaborating with summer undergraduate research fellows Caitlin Facello, Scarlett Holton, and Gracey Greco to write an article on the early modern LGBTQ proto-science-fiction author Savinien Cyrano de Bergerac (1619-1655). He is grateful to have received a South Carolina Humanities Grant in support of the project. He presented a paper at the conference of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association and participated in works in progress sessions with members of SE17 as part of their 2020 virtual conference. He is pleased to have taught a course on French cinema, and has developed a new French major course, “French 334: Visions of the Cosmos,” which he will offer in the spring of 2021.

Spanish alumna Sarah Foster poses with three of her favorite professors at the MLL Homecoming reception: Dr Ron Friis, Dr Linda Bartlett, and Dr Lourdes Manyé.
IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES...

“Liebe Grüße” from the German Section at Furman.

We hope that you are all doing well.

With so many things happening during the past year, I don’t even know where to start. While the most successful year in Furman’s history, it has also been one of the most challenging. In Spring 2020, Dr. Erik Grell accepted an offer at his alma mater, St. Olaf. He serves as the Assistant Director for the Institute for Freedom and Community, overseeing public programs and educational offerings. Dr. Emily Krauter, a German linguist from the University of Texas at Austin, has joined our team, and we are delighted to have her. Her extensive research on study abroad programs and language acquisition will help us assess student progress during our study abroad experiences and will provide research opportunities for our students.

In 2020, our majors won a record number of—SEVEN!!—post-graduate fellowships. Emily Peeler (Applied Mathematics) and Samantha Whiley (Political Science) received the Fulbright Germany (ETA); Pieper Powell (Psychology) and Matthew Martin (Chemistry) were awarded the CBYX Fellowship for Young Professionals sponsored by the American Congress and the German Bundestag. For the first time, we encouraged students to apply for the Fulbright Austria (ETA) Three of our majors, Audrey Rotman, Harrison Weir, and Samantha Whitley received this prestigious post-graduate fellowship. Unfortunately, COVID-19 delayed or condensed some programs. Our spring 2020 Berlin study abroad participants were also caught off guard by the rapidly developing pandemic in Europe. After the travel advisory was raised overnight, the students were evacuated on extremely short notice. Of course, our majors are resilient, and continued their studies online, though taking classes virtually cannot replace the missed experiences. To provide at least some students with the opportunity to continue their education abroad, we are working tenaciously on this year’s fellowship applications. Stay healthy, and keep your fingers crossed!
ILKA RASCH’S
“GOING THE EXTRA MILE APPROACH”
EARN`${\textit{s}}$ HER THE AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS ADVISING

LOURDES MANYÉ

After working in an office next to her for ten years and witnessing her unwavering dedication to students, I was thrilled when Dr. Ilka Rasch received the Alester G. Furman, Jr., and Janie Earle Furman Award for Meritorious Advising for the 2018-2019 academic year, during our Commencement on May 11, 2019. This is a well-deserved honor that symbolizes her commitment to advising and mentoring not only German majors, but also undergraduate students in general. A native of Cuxhaven in Northern Germany, Dr. Rasch has been a faculty member at Furman University since 2007. She holds a BA in German and English Studies from the Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, in Germany, an MA in German from the University of Utah, and a PhD in German Studies and Film and Video Studies from the University of Michigan.

Students who nominated her describe her as an “engaging, understanding, and highly dedicated advisor.” They highlight “her ‘going the extra mile’ approach to advising,” and “her dedicated and tireless assistance in identifying the best opportunities for individual students, and honing applications to the highest international standards and recommendations.” Dr. Rasch has encouraged students to have life and professional lasting experiences beyond Furman through participating in the Berlin Study Away Program, applying for internships, and considering post-graduate prestigious scholarships such as the Fulbright program. She helps them through the detailed and painstaking application process so that they can be well positioned in these highly competitive fellowships. One student who received the CBYX (Congress Bundestag Fellowship for Young Professionals) mentions that

[... we went through three drafts of my application and two mock interviews, to fully prepare me for the application process. (...) Dr. Rasch’s holistic and personalized approach to advising is exactly what I needed to thrive at Furman (and now in Germany): equal parts expert advice, tough love, unwavering support and open-heartedness.

As proof of her devoted mentorship, it is significant to note that since 2010 her students have received 19 Fulbrights (Teaching Assistant Fellowships), 5 CBYX (Congress Bundestag Fellowship for Young Professionals), and one Halle Fellowship. The German section has also seen a number of additional finalists for Fulbrights, DAAD (Music), RISE, and the IPS (International Parliamentary Scholarship for the German Bundestag). Dr. Rasch’s expertise has helped numerous students since she began serving on Furman’s Fulbright Committee in 2012.

When I received the 2015-2016 Advising Award, Dr. Rasch came to my office to congratulate me and we both looked together at the framed award on the wall thinking that so many of our faculty are deserving of it. It is an honor to share this award with her, and with our MLL colleague Dr. Sofia Kearns, who received it in 1998-1999. At the MLL Dept. we are witnesses to her “going the extra mile” approach not only when advising, or organizing a study away photo contest, or preparing a full German meal for her students in the Language House, but also when creating a sense of community by making her famous and delicious chocolate cake to celebrate a colleague’s birthday or accomplishments. One of her students said: “Our success is the only recognition she personally needs.” This time, however, it is an honor to recognize and celebrate her.
Faculty research interests and classroom assignments encouraged our students to take what they learned in the classroom out into the world. With the guidance of our faculty, Spanish majors and students had many opportunities to participate in projects and research that oftentimes focused on the local Hispanic community and Spanish speaking countries. Students interviewed and transcribed interviews of Colombian textile workers both in Greenville, SC and Medellín, Colombia as a result of Dr. Sofia Kearns being awarded the Furman Standard Research Grant awards for her project (see faculty update section).

Smith Childs (Spanish and Sociology ’20) worked with Dr. Jeff Michno on research based on the language and cultural growth of students in Spain’s fall study away students and students in Dr. Lozano-Alonso’s Spanish 305: Advanced Conversation and Composition on campus course. Students shared their experiences between the two sections and learned how to write sociolinguistic studies. Smith is helping to study the data on their language progress, their cultural perceptions and their growth in pragmatics. Dr. Knouse worked with Furman Summer Fellows Erik Ortiz (Psychology and Latin American Studies ’20) and Daria Acosta-Rua (psychology and Philosophy ’20). They collaborated in the first year of the “Spanish in the Upstate” study, a longitudinal project that incorporates a variety of researchers studying the Spanish spoken in the area. Dr. Friis and Maria Bartlett (Spanish and Math ’18) continued their work on translating and publishing the poetry based on their work and travel to Mexico to meet with poet Alberto Blanco. Dr. Lourdes Manyé and Dr. Rojas created a Catalan café.

Our courses also brought in the Hispanic speaking community to our classrooms. Dr. Manyé invited poet Santiago García-Castañón, Spanish writer and Professor of Spanish Literature at Western Carolina University to her classroom. We offered three MayX courses that incorporated community engagement. Dr. Maria Rippon took her students into the Prisma Hospital system for her course on Medical Spanish. Dr. Knouse worked with Neighborhood Focus, an afterschool program for Hispanic children for her MayX on Hispanic Youth in America. Drs. Rojas and Quintero studied hip-hop and street art in the course they offered a Latin American Studies MayX course on Performing Memory in Latin America.

We served the university community. Angeli Leal led the first Intergroup Dialogue course as a way to lead the discussion on inclusivity on campus. Dr. Stephanie Knouse served as the Cothran Reflection Fellow. Dr. Linda Bartlett continued to impress us with her leadership skills of one of the largest departments on campus. She was named Cranford Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures.
We continued to strive to follow national standards for foreign language acquisition and to stay up to date on the teaching and language acquisition practices in our profession. As such Dr. Adrián Massei was appointed to the ACTFL Quality Assurance Advisor for the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). Dr. Angélica Lozano-Alonso followed in Dr. Massei and Dr. Prince’s footsteps when she became an OPI fully certified tester.

Perhaps the thing that fills us with most pride are the accomplishments of our majors and experiencing their love of Spanish.

We hope you will come visit us soon.

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EUNICE ANNE ROJAS

Hometown: Atlanta, GA during the school year and Barcelona, Spain during the summers

PhD from: University of Virginia

Other Languages besides Spanish and English: Catalan

Why teach Spanish? I get to talk about things I love: grammar, music, literature...

What most surprises your students? That it’s often not as scary as they thought

What was your worst experience in the classroom? When I tried to draw a faucet

Where is your favorite travel destination? Chile

What topics do you research? Resistance music, Contemporary Southern Cone literature

Pets? Lola, a very fluffy black cat with one peanut-butter colored paw

Your favorite food: Just about any kind of soup

Your favorite author: Right now I am fascinated with contemporary Chilean novelist Álvaro Bisama

Favorite pop music: Txarango

SANTIAGO M. QUINTERO

“M stands for Manuel, my grandfather’s name.”

Hometown: Bogotá, Colombia.

PhD from: University of Notre Dame

Other Languages besides Spanish and English: Portuguese

Why teach Spanish? Because it’s exciting. From Spain, to Latin America, to Equatorial Guinea, Spanish-speaking culture is diverse, rich, and enticing.

What most surprises your students? Finding out that I am a total nerd.

What was your worst experience in the classroom? I once taught the wrong lesson for a full 15 minutes before one of my students made me realize I was ahead 2 weeks in the syllabus!

Where is your favorite travel destination? I absolutely love going back home, to Bogotá. But if I had to choose where to go every time, I’d probably go to Granada, Spain. That place is absolutely breathtaking.

What topics do you research? I am a monster scholar. Vampires, zombies, cannibals, all the spooks. I am interested in how these monster figures have shaped Latin America’s cultural production, particularly in contemporary times.

Pets? I had a cat. He now lives in Paris with my best friend.

Your favorite food: Tacos, extra hot sauce.

Your favorite author: You don’t ask this to a literature professor! I can tell you who’s my favorite author right now: Macedonian poet Fabio Morábito.

Favorite pop music: It’s between Prince and Selena Quintanilla.
Ever since I was little, languages have formed a huge part of my identity. Growing up with a mother and a father who spoke to me in Catalan, Spanish and English has been a gift that has allowed me to value communication. Every year of my life I have traveled to my second home, Barcelona. I have spent time there, learning its shapes, and with every passing year its languages and culture have taken shape in me—the distinct, familiar smell of my Iaia’s paella, the people smoking and talking loudly in Catalan at the sidewalk cafés in Plaça Catalunya, the cheering and applause at the demonstrations of the human tower teams during festival season, the traditional “Dia de Sant Esteve” celebration I celebrate with my family. The Spanish and Catalan languages hold an essential connection with my past, but it also allows me to identify with my future.

As a Spanish and Communication Studies major, I’ve had several opportunities to combine my skills into activities at Furman. My mother—Lourdes Manyé or “Profesora Manyé”— and I have always shared a passion for the Catalan culture. Whether you’re walking down the streets of “Las Ramblas” in Barcelona or ordering tapas at a restaurant, you will most definitely hear a language that doesn’t quite resemble Spanish. The autonomous Spanish region of Catalonia has a long history of unique cultural and linguistic tradition that most people in the U.S. don’t know about. So why not show everyone about this vibrant culture? That’s when my mother and I came up with “Cafè Català,” an afternoon activity for students to have the opportunity to practice the language and learn about the culture. A variety of students would attend, some who were studying abroad in Spain and were interested in learning more about Barcelona, while others were Spanish majors who had visited Barcelona and heard the language before.

Dr. Eunice Rojas, a Catalan native herself, also helped tremendously during the activity. We usually start the activity by talking about our week, what we did, what we’re doing this weekend, how we’re feeling. Then, we go over some grammar: past, present, future tense. And we finish off by talking about cultural norms, customs and traditions, especially the food! “Pa amb tomaquet” is a staple of Catalan cuisine and identity, and at the end of the semester, I showed the students how to make “un bo pa amb tomaquet.”

As the teaching fellow for Cafè Català, I’ve thoroughly enjoyed showing students about a culture and language I appreciate and identify with.
TRAVEL DIARIES:
MLL TRAVELS TO MEDELLÍN, COLOMBIA

By Whitney Maness and Santiago Quintero
AUGUST 5TH
ENTRY BY: SANTIAGO QUINTERO

Arrived in Medellín early in the morning. As we landed, a beautiful panoramic of the Andes and a warm cup of coffee welcomed us. Being a Colombia native living in the United States, I have learned to cherish these moments; a taste of familiar flavors, a sight of familiar views. Yet this time was different. For the first time in a decade, I felt a sense of bewilderment with my own country. The mountains seemed greener, the sky, bluer, and Medellín—a city I have visited multiple times—a looming question mark. Why?

Today we started our 10-day research trip in Colombia, as part of our project on Textiles, Immigration, and the Colombian community in Greenville. With my colleague Sofía Kearns, and two excellent students—Marina Cox and Whitney Maness—we carefully crafted an itinerary full of interviews, workshops, and sightseeing. The idea was not only to collect material for a documentary we are making (tracing the connections between Greenville and Medellín) but to provide a pedagogical experience. But how? How can we introduce our country to these two students with such different backgrounds? How can we make it so that it is both meaningful and useful for their personal and professional lives?

As we part to our first meeting—and conduct an interview with a renowned historian from EAFIT University—I ponder upon these questions. I start to realize that, perhaps, teaching, like a good poem, is not about “passing down” the information you know. Instead, it challenges you to make the things you knew anew. It gives you a chance to explore the subject—with those who are unfamiliar with the issue—and with a renewed sense of curiosity.

This reminds me: How can airplane coffee be this good?
AUGUST 6TH
ENTRY BY: WHITNEY MANESS

Today we took a tour of Comuna 13, a neighborhood on the edge of Medellín. Almost every inch of wall, door, and concrete stair is covered in the vibrant colors of local graffiti artists. Houses are stacked on the sides of the valley like colored blocks a kid plays with. More creativity than order. Hip hop culture thrives not only in the urban art, but also from the music streaming out an open window and a B-boy dance group performing as we pass by. The energy is impressive, but even more so in the historical context. Comuna 13 used to be one of the most dangerous barrios in the city as a result of drug trafficking, paramilitary groups, and gang violence. Hip hop isn’t just a fun trend there, it’s the lifeblood of community healing and memory. It’s the balance between recognizing a painful past and creating a better future.

AUGUST 6TH
ENTRY BY: SANTIAGO QUINTERO

One of the main objectives of this trip to Colombia was to provide students with a high impact learning experience. For this, we teamed up with Imán Music, an award-winning production company in Colombia. Tariq and Adriana, experts in documentary filmmaking, tagged along with us during the first days of our trip. The idea was for them to share some knowledge of filmmaking through a hands-on approach.

One of the “tasks” we had planned concerning this objective was a trip to Comuna 13. Previously known as ‘the most dangerous place in the world,’ the neighborhood is currently undergoing a cultural renaissance. Thanks to the power of grass-roots politics and community activism, today Comuna 13 is a site of healing. Students captured everything on film: the booming hip-hop culture, the vibrant graffiti, the astonishing break-dancing shows. But more importantly, they captured—and were captivated by—Comuna 13’s thriving, hard-working community and their resilience.

Also, we had the meanest green mango ice cream over there.
AUGUST 10TH
ENTRY BY: WHITNEY MANESS

Guatape, Colombia

I’m currently on a tour bus with brakes like a dying parrot, screeching back down the mountain. Today we adventured with our fellow travelers to Guatape, a small town about two hours from Medellín, with houses painted every color of the rainbow. Little designs illustrated on the baseboards of every house called zocalos, keep pace with you every step of the way. Our tour included a typical hearty Colombian breakfast, complete with rice, beans, scrambled eggs, an arepa, and caramelized plantains. The first stop was a beautiful boat ride around the nearby, man-made lake featuring Pablo Escobar’s old vacation home, now a charred remains after it was bombed. We also conquered La Piedra or “the rock” which consists of a 700+ stair climb and culminates in a breathtaking view of the surrounding lakes and hills. Although I’m now exhausted, I’ve had a thorough introduction to the incredible landscape of Antioquia today.
AUGUST 12TH
ENTRY BY: SANTIAGO QUINTERO

Medellín, Colombia

Today, la pandilla (“the crew”) went on a road trip without me. While Sofía, Marina, and Whitney were in the small town of Jericó, enjoying the local cuisine, I stayed in the city to do some archival research (hooray!). Thanks to some connections, we got access to the photographic archive of Fabricato, Colombia’s largest and most important textile company. Needless to say, for us research geeks, an archive like that was a dream come true: the Fabricato archive has over 10,000 photographs and documents pertaining to the history of the textile industry in Medellín, including documents displaying the relationship between the industry in Colombia and the United States. I will not tire you with all the details, but here are a couple of highlights:

• During the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s, Fabricato’s administration brought American scholars to give talks on the “threat of communism” to the workers.

• Lucky Strike was one of Fabricato’s preferred cigarette brands. They were sold in the factory store at 2.00 Colombian pesos (roughly 40 cents)

• 1960s Miss Universe Linda Bement visited Medellín. She went to Medellín to participate in a special fashion runway, featuring dresses made with Colombian textiles.

I guess it is true when they say you learn something new every day, even about your own country.
Jérico, Colombia

This morning, I dragged myself out of bed at 6 am, drove for three hours on a mountain road that would frighten the most ambitious Mario Kart racers, and arrived promptly at a small town called Jérico. Despite the journey, I’ll easily say it was one of my favorite days so far. Similar in colorful design to Guatapé, Jérico is distinguished by a background of lumbering green mountains and rolling hills. We were there to interview Jimmy Palacio, the former owner of a Colombian restaurant in Greenville, who returned to his homeland and opened another restaurant in Jérico called La Gruta. We focused on applying the film and audio techniques we learned from Adriana and Tariq, like how to set up two camera angles and finding the best spot for lighting and sound. It was a tricky location to work in because the background of the restaurant was so ideal and unique. It was challenging to reduce the kitchen and street noises. After the interview, naturally, we had to try the food, so I ordered a cazuela of bandeja paisa, a traditional regional dish of beef, rice, beans, plantains, chorizo, arepas, and avocado, served in a bowl. I’m currently devising a way to recreate it in my North Village kitchen back at Furman.

Interview with Jimmy Palacio and Luis Fernando López at their restaurant La gruta in Jericó, Antioquia. Jimmy and Luis Fernando embody one of the many bridges connecting Greenville and Colombia. Before returning to the Jericó region in Antioquia, Jimm and Luis Fernando funded and managed Cositas Ricas, a beloved Colombian eatery located in Cedar Lane, Greenville, SC.

Cazuela de Fríjoles (Bean stew). Traditional dish from the Antioquia region. A bean stew with rice, avocado, plantains, chorizo and, more often than not, a fried egg to top it all off. Delicious.
AUGUST 14TH
ENTRY BY: SANTIAGO QUINTERO

Bogotá, Colombia

Just landed in Bogotá after 10 days in Medellín. In a couple more days, I will return to Furman Hall to old and new colleagues and students. We will certainly miss the city, its warm weather (it’s not going to be summer forever in Greenville!), and its delicious food. But above all, we will miss—I’m sure—the sense of wonder, the eagerness of exploring a new city, a new country (even if it’s my own country), and a new culture. We will miss, quoting Mexican poet Octavio Paz, what lies in the center of true learning, “the forgotten astonishment of being alive.”

Man, I really hope Whitney finds a way to recreate that cazuela.
Evan Myers and Will Przedpelski are current senior Spanish majors who met at scholarship interviews before enrolling in Furman. Combining their passion for language study with their desire to build community within the Furman family, they created the PCP, a program that pairs Furman staff with students for informal conversation across languages, cultures and generations. Will and Evan presented the results of an evaluation of their program at a recent Furman Engaged! They sat down with Palingual staff to discuss their experiment in engaged learning; here are excerpts from that conversation.

Bill: Thanks for coming to talk to us today about the Paladin Conversation Partners.

Will: PCP.

Evan: That’s right.

Bill: Have you collaborated on other projects before this one?

Will: We’ve come up with a lot of ideas, but I think this one was the one we actually really put into action and made happen.

Evan: I would agree with that. It’s kind of like we’ve had an echo chamber, for a year, of ideas. Anything from business to how to make Furman better. I feel like Furman has really given me a ton of opportunities, starting with the scholarship, but including study abroad and really great internships. And I just wanted to figure out ways that we could improve this school and give back to people who had given to us. That was my motivation.

WP: Part of the reason we actually ended up coming to Furman was because we saw that we would be able to make an actual difference. If we went to a large school and we were really passionate about something, it would be a whole lot more difficult. Furman’s very open to welcoming new projects and plans and things like that.

Bill: How did you come up with this specific idea for the PCP?

Will: I was sitting at dinner during study abroad last fall, in Salamanca next to my professor, Dr. [Jeff] Michno, and he started talking to me about Bozena [Szemraj] who cleans the offices in the Modern Language Department. He told me that he had talked to her about being Polish, and it got me thinking about how there’s a lot of knowledge that people have around Furman and sometimes there aren’t the pathways to share that knowledge. People who could benefit from learning English, people who could benefit from learning another language are on this campus and nobody’s taking advantage of it right now. So, over the course of a month or so, Evan and I came up with the idea of a conversation partner program, where people would be matched up in a development relationship with their partner, so they would have that as a benefit, but they would also get the added language skills and the practice. The refinement came from Evan and I bouncing ideas off of each other.

Evan: And conversations with Dr. [Stephanie] Knouse. Dr. Knouse definitely helped us kind of whittle that down and approach it in a different way. Will and I both felt like staff are an underappreciated part of the community by students pretty often. Especially staff that don’t necessarily have the ability to speak English and interact with students as easily.
Will: Or maybe the confidence. The confidence to speak English with students.

Evan: Exactly. And we wanted to do something to integrate our community better. So, it was in part about the benefits that you're going to receive as a student and as a staff member from these conversations. As a staff member, you get to see a student perspective, you get to hopefully feel appreciated by a student and hopefully feel like a bigger part of the community. As a student, you have an older person with lots of life experience guiding you.

Bill: How many people do you have involved in the program now?

Evan: Well, altogether, I think we've had about 9 staff members who at some point participated and who have been paired with about 12 students. Again, it's a small program and last year was a pilot. Will and I did a lot of the leg work last year: it was initiated by us, funded by a grant we applied for, we managed the whole thing.

Will: But recruiting students was really the most difficult part of the entire thing and getting students to stay on top of it.

Evan: We had great students, though. The students who did participate generally did a very good job. But it was hard to incentivize them, which is exactly why I would really appreciate having conversations with the Modern Language Department. I think one incentive could be a zero-credit course, we've also talked about the study away incentivization or requiring maybe for some basic learning classes, similar to the way you do a café español or café français. So, there are a lot of options and we want to incentivize students.

Will: It's incredibly difficult to do. But honestly, I think it paid off. Down the line, I think we need a department or an office that supports us and can sort of help out with getting it up and running every semester because that's the bulk of the work. Once it's running, there's very little work to do. That's what we found last year.

Bill: I'd like to hear a phrase that you've learned in Macedonian. (laughter) Or a phrase that you've learned in Polish.

Will: (speaking Polish): “I'm going to slap you across the head!”

Evan: (speaking Macedonian): “Where's the brandy and where are the women?”

Bill: I think this program has a very bright future, thank you again for talking to us.
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

SEND US YOUR UPDATES

We are still gathering information on what our alumni are up to professionally and personally. To complete the MLL Alumni Survey, please do so here: bit.ly/2b3rHqb. If you’ve done this survey and would like to update us on a recent accomplishment, please use the following link: bit.ly/2eeNcEZ.

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Thank you to the many colleagues and modern language students who contributed to this edition of *The Palingual*. Please feel free to email us at mll.alum@furman.edu or write us at The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Furman University, 3300 Poinsett Highway, Greenville, SC 29613.

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