



EVENTS SPRING 2020

Distinguished Lecturer Series:

Arindam Chakrabarti
February 14, 3:00pm in
Old Main 1030

CMLL Language Expo:
February 20 2nd floor of
Colvard Student Union

CMLL @ SCOLT in Mobile, AL
March 26-28

International Fiesta: April 4
11:00-3:00 Drill Field

ISOLC language tutoring:
Thursdays 4:00-5:00 pm

Language Clubs meet regularly
during the year.

CMLL HOSTS SECOND LANGUAGE EXPO FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

The second CMLL Language Expo will take place February 20, 2020 at Colvard Student Union. Two hundred students from 12 Mississippi high schools will be attending the event with their teachers. The Language Expo gives high school language teachers an opportunity to show their students that language studies are relevant not just by themselves, but also in combination with other disciplines. There are not many events in Mississippi that provide this opportunity for free, so the CMLL Language Expo has become very popular, going from 70 attendees in 2018 to over 200 in 2020.

This year the event focuses on the importance of biliteracy, bilingualism, and the relevance of language education in STEAM fields. There will be a panel discussion with MSU faculty and students during which students will learn about language-related career options and have a chance to ask our panelists questions. This session will be moderated by George Dunn from the Shackouls Honors College. Also included is a World Language Experience session that provides an opportunity to learn and practice various languages available at MSU as well as participate in cultural activities related to the countries where these languages are spoken. The Language Expo also includes a Table

Fair during which attendees will be able to meet MSU students and faculty representing all of the languages taught at MSU, student organizations, honors societies, as well as MSU departments and colleges in which languages play an important role. The attendees will also have a chance to participate in a Language Café session, where they will play language-related games with our current students and faculty. Additionally, students will showcase their language skills or cultural knowledge in a poster presentation session. The poster presentations will be judged and prizes will be awarded to top 10 presentations.

The faculty and staff of the Department of Classical & Modern Languages and Literatures have been working since the beginning of Fall semester to prepare this event. The CMLL Language Expo is made possible by great support from the Dean of College of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Rick Travis and various departments from MSU as well as organizations outside the University. [A.D]



ELIZABETH LANGSTON: FROM STUDY ABROAD STUDENT TO ADVISOR

Elizabeth Langston earned a bachelor's degree in Spanish on December of 2013. After she graduated, she went on to earn a master's degree on Counselor Education here at MSU. After being away working at Texas A&M for two years, she decided to move back to her hometown to be closer to her family. She is currently the Study Abroad Advisor at the University of Memphis and her career has taken her places such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Costa Rica in the past four years. We caught up with Elizabeth to hear how she started her career path.

Elizabeth grew up in Memphis, TN and attended Sea Isle Elementary. She graduated High School from Arlington High School in 2010. During her High School years, she was very enthusiastic about her Spanish courses and was excited to become more fluent in the Spanish language. She was especially interested in the history and the culture of the Spanish-speaking world. She gives credit for much of this interest to her High School Spanish teacher Señora Robinson.

Having just graduated High School as an 18-year-old, Elizabeth enrolled at MSU because she had fallen in love with the beauty of the campus and also the diversity of majors that the university offered. At the time, she wasn't sure what field and major to study, but she was confident that she would find the right one for her.

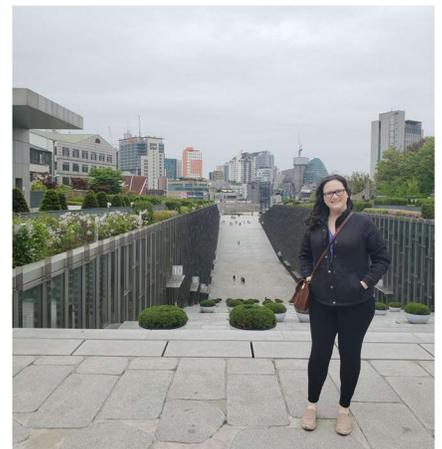
As an undecided freshman she was assigned to an academic advisor and the advisor recommended her to register for courses that interested her. All she wanted to take were Spanish courses. Thus, she decided to major in Spanish. Even though Spanish was her passion, she knew she had no interest in teaching or interpreting so she decided to add an International Studies minor to broaden her horizons.

While studying the upper division courses, Elizabeth remembers that her classes with Brian Davisson and Silvia Arroyo were by far her favorite. She says, "Upper division courses with them often felt like more like a Spanish Literature Club meeting rather than a tedious course". She also recalls Rosa Vozzo as an instructor that left a lasting impact on her. She says, "Her advice in and out of the classroom helped shape my interest and goals moving forward".

Elizabeth participated on the faculty-led Alcalá de Henares program in Spain while she was a student at MSU. She says, "Nothing compares to the language learning benefits that immersion provides... Studying abroad helped me 'think in Spanish'... I was fluent and very confident in my Spanish speaking abilities after being immersed for a month".

As a student, Elizabeth was an RA for housing. She often tried to incorporate her international interests into the programs she created. She created international nights, salsa lessons, etc... She was also an instructor in the MSU Ballroom Dance Club. She has fond memories with the Ballroom Dance Club. She met her now husband during this time. He was also a part of the club and they taught the class together for a few years.

Elizabeth give two pieces of advice to all language students. One, studying abroad is a must and affordable programs exist. Two, you may not have discovered what your dream job is yet, and it may change again 5 times throughout your life. That's just part of the journey. Being fluent in a foreign language will help and inspire you in unexpected ways throughout your career. [M.A.]



CLARK NAMED MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY'S HUMANITIES TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2019-2020

The Office of the President and the College of Arts & Sciences at Mississippi State University announced Dr. Clark as Mississippi State University's Humanities Teacher of the Year for 2019-2020. The award is sponsored by the Mississippi Humanities Council and recognizes the scholarship and teaching of faculty across the state who have significantly advanced the mission of the humanities in Mississippi. As Mississippi State's Humanities Council Award winner, Dr. Clark will give a public lecture about his humanities work on February 26, 2020 on MSU campus. [A.D.]

CMLL DISTINGUISHED LECTURER SERIES SPRING 2020: ARINDAM CHAKRABARTI



We are honored to welcome the prolific and highly influential philosopher Arindam Chakrabarti to MSU. Dr. Chakrabarti is an internationally renowned scholar in Indian philosophy, aesthetics, philosophy of language and Buddhist epistemology. He is the author or editor of 17 scholarly monographs and over a hundred papers in journals and anthologies appearing in English, Sanskrit, and Bengali. After holding previous academic appointments at The University of Delhi, University College London, and The University of Hawaii, he is currently the Nirmal K. and Augustina Mattoo Endowed Chair in Classical Indic Humanities and Philosophy at Stony Brook University. Dr. Chakrabarti's presentation "Gratitude in the Time of Mindless Cruelty" will be February 14, 3:00pm in Old Main auditorium 1030. [A.M.]

CMLL HOSTS INTERDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM IN FALL 2020

Dr. Keith Moser, the head of the CMLL Symposium organizing committee, shares details for the upcoming conference.
[A.M.]

We are truly excited to announce that CMLL will soon be hosting another interdisciplinary symposium entitled "The Power of Images" from October 9-10, 2020. Owing to the success of our last conference, which inspired the forthcoming book *The Metaphor of the Monster: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Understanding the Monstrous Other in Literature* (Bloomsbury Academic), this year's symposium promises to spark even more interest. The distinguished keynote speaker will be David Morgan from Duke University who has published several books on the history of religious visual culture, fine art, and art theory including *Images at Work: The Material Culture of Enchantment*, *The Forge of Vision: A Visual History of Modern Christianity*, and *The Lure of Images: A History of Religion and Visual Media in America*. We are also honored to welcome Raul Touzon, an internationally acclaimed natural history photographer and frequent contributor to National Geographic, who will be presenting in a plenary session entitled "Holy Week in Antigua and Day of The Dead in Oaxaca: The Juxtaposition of Christian and Pre- Hispanic Beliefs in Modern Latin America." For more information about the conference, visit <https://www.cml.msstate.edu/symposium/call-for-papers/>, or contact Dr. Keith Moser (kmoser@cml.msstate.edu). All sessions are free and open to the public, so mark your calendars and spread the word!

CMLL FACULTY RECOGNIZED AT ANNUAL MFLA CONFERENCE

CMLL hosted the annual The Mississippi Foreign Language Association (MFLA) conference on November 8-9, 2019 at the Mill. The conference was well attended with over 100 participants state-wide. During this year's conference, Dr. Kelly Moser received the post-secondary Educator of Excellence award. This recognition is awarded based on nominations from MFLA members recognizing educators who demonstrated excellence in teaching. The winners of the Educator of Excellence award, as well as the K-12 Teacher of the Year will go to SCOLT to compete for the regional awards at those levels. Dr. Moser said that she was really excited to receive the award.

Dr. Bob Wolverton received the Award of Distinction. This award is presented to those showing excellence in teaching, evidence of leadership and promotion of language teaching and learning, and professional involvement in foreign language organizations. The first Award of Distinction was given to Teresa Arrington in 1995. Dr. Mark Clark, Associate Professor of Classics, received this recognition in 2009. [A.D.]

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY THROUGH LANGUAGE VIP

Language Volunteer Interpreter Program is a new organization providing language interpretation services to local elementary school teachers. Ania Debicka-Dyer, Instructor at CMLL, started the program after participating in a focus group organized by the Starkville Oktibbeha Consolidate School District (SOCSD) in 2018/2019. The group met for one academic year to discuss the unique challenges English learners (EL) and bilingual students, as well as their teachers, face in the classrooms. One recurring issue brought up by the teachers was the difficulty teachers had when attempting to communicate with parents of bilingual students. Often the parents of EL or bilingual students do not speak English, or do not speak English well enough, to understand the letters or phone calls from teachers. Mrs. Debicka-Dyer saw an opportunity to bring the community to help with the issue. With support from the school district, she coordinated her efforts with Mr. Rob Brown to connect the teachers with interpreters. Mr. Brown, the SOCSD EL Student Services Coordinator, works directly with teachers to provide the interpreters for their meetings with parents. With over 20 languages represented by EL students in the district, the most sought after languages are Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. Language VIP currently offers assistance with in-person interpretation and members are working on developing materials for teachers to use in written communication with parents as well. Mrs. Debicka-Dyer also offers teachers advice on how to help EL and bilingual students in and out of the classroom, and create a welcoming and inclusive environment. For more information, contact Mrs. Debicka-Dyer at adebicka@cml.msstate.edu. [A.D.]



GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: JUDE MENSAH

Jude Mensah is a graduate student in French. He is from Ghana and speaks three languages English, French, and Asante Twi (his mother tongue). He joined CMLL in Fall 2019. So far, his favorite class is "La literature Maghrebine" taught by Dr. Keith Moser. Jude said, "I like the course organization, and how, as students, we are allowed to give our personal opinions while interpreting a new text." Jude's favorite book is *The Gods are not to blame* by Ola Rotimi. [A.G.]



ZELAYA RECEIVES STRATEGIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES GRANT AND DIVERSITY AWARD

Dr. Karina Zelaya was awarded an MSU College of Arts & Sciences Strategic Research Initiatives grant in support of her current research project “Expanding and Safeguarding the Salarrué Archive.” This is a collaborative effort to rescue, to protect and to ensure the preservation of, and open access to, the works of the canonical writer, music composer, painter and essayist, Salarrué. The awarded SRI grant will facilitate travel to El Salvador to visit the three main archival repositories (the Salvadoran National Library, the Salvadoran National Archive and the Special Collections at the Universidad Centroamericana’s Library) to review the catalogues for their newspapers holding of the 1920s and 1930s. The quantifying of this information is pivotal to advancement of the Salarrué digital Archive Project. Dr. Zelaya also received the 2019 Diversity Award in recognition for her advocacy for traditionally underrepresented groups. She has organized and led numerous study abroad programs to Latin America and is a strong supporter of the Latino Student Association. Dr. Zelaya has a record of bringing globally recognized scholars and artists to MSU who share fresh perspectives, new insight, and new ways of thinking. [A.D.]

BARTERA RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CLASSICAL STUDIES



Dr. Salvador Bartera, Associate Professor of Classics, was named the co-recipient of the 2019 Outreach Prize from the Society for Classical Studies. This prestigious award is given annually to individuals whose efforts to promote classical studies to new audiences are regarded as exemplary. Dr. Bartera received the award in recognition for his involvement in the organization of Classical Week at Mississippi State University, an event he and Dr. Clevenger from the Shackouls Honors College organized for the past five years. Classical Week includes performance by MSU students and colloquia by invited scholars. Dr. Bartera said that he was honored to receive the award. He has devoted a lot of time to the plays, over a 5-year span, and

the event grew incredibly. This award shows that Classics at MSU does significant things even beyond the classroom. It shows recognition not just within the southeast region, but also nationally. The Classical week is well attended by students from across disciplines and it shows the popularity of Classical studies among modern students. [A.D.]

RUSSELL RECOGNISED FOR ADVISING ACHIEVEMENTS WITH THE JEFCOAT AWARD

Amie Russell, Instructor and Undergraduate Coordinator, received the Irvin Atly Jefcoat Award for Excellence in Advising 2019. Mrs. Russell has been working at CMLL as an instructor since 2006 and has been the Undergraduate coordinator since 2014. She introduced many innovative tools to help faculty and students. She has also developed advising courses in Canvas to ensure easy access to accurate advising information and resources for faculty and students. She organized recurring advising meetings and training for the faculty. Mrs. Russell said “Advising students on their path to graduation appeals to parts of my personality that I think have enabled me to be a valuable guide in the confusing world of undergraduate requirements and procedures. Communication, personalization and organization are all key components to keeping today’s students on track, and are all necessary qualities in good advising practices.” [A.D.]



FACULTY FEATURE: ROBERT HARLAND

Dr. Robert Harland is an Associate Professor in Spanish and has been with the Department since 2003. We asked him to tell us more about his teaching and research at MSU. [A.D.]

Tell us more about where you are from and what brought you to the US and to MSU.

A happy accident got me here. My degree is from Cardiff, in Wales, but I am from Birmingham in England – the original and best, home to everything from Cadbury’s chocolate to Ozzy Osborne. I was claiming Social Security while finishing my Ph.D. In order to keep claiming, you have to prove you are looking for work and keep applying for jobs. Initially I was just looking for jobs in the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland, but I found that the US has many jobs available: there are more than 52 million Hispanics in the US. The trade with Latin America is in the 100s of billions of dollars. If we translate that to courses at universities and jobs for university professors, that is quite a lot.



You have taught some unique courses at MSU, such as the horror films class. Can you tell us more about those classes? What led you to introducing those courses into the curriculum?

I got into horror and fantasy movies as a research field as that has really taken off with the advent of the DVD and now streaming. In ancient times you could literally only see films at the cinema and on TV, then on the bulky and awkward VHS. I grew up watching genre movies and in order to improve my Spanish got started buying some classics. Of which Mexico has many, and Spain has its own too. And although horror films are some of the most produced and popular films of all time, they are often little studied, especially the older ones. They simply weren’t available! Nowadays even if they aren’t streamed, someone is burning them onto DVDs. And they can tell you a lot about society and even economics. People can sometimes see it as a trashy genre, but some of the most acclaimed filmmakers of all time, from Luis Buñuel to Guillermo del Toro make horror and fantasy movies. I do think that they should be balanced with literature courses, however. You should read full length novels in Spanish (or whatever language) otherwise it just isn’t going to stick.

What is your research focus?

I would say threefold: the horror and fantasy films we have talked about, the detective story (and films), but also “mainstream” intellectual fiction from Mexico and Spain, from the late 19th century to the present. You can combine them: recently I gave a paper on two film adaptations of the Mexican Revolution classic *Los de abajo* / *The Underdogs*. I really need to work on a book with a manageable topic, so have shifted to a project on the admittedly depressing topic of films about the murdered women of Ciudad Juárez – a great and dynamic border city (next door to El Paso, TX), Juárez had the unfortunate notoriety for being a centre of serial murders of women, though the films tend to caricature that. And the films are almost all terrible! But it is an important subject, and the distance between art and reality, and how the truth is mediated (or discarded) in film is very interesting. However, you should do literature along with the less conventional material – I published in 2018 on the Spanish author Ramon Sender, and he is about as canonical as it gets. I went to Flinders University in Australia at the end of October last year to talk about the Ciudad Juárez film *Traspatio* or *Backyard* (it’s with Jimmy Smits and it’s about the only good one) and I have just recently sent off a paper on a Spanish zombie movie franchise called *REC*. That was for a conference journal at the Vancouver School of Theology. Research certainly makes you travel.

I understand you also write poetry and short fiction. Can you tell us more about that?

I started writing poetry in Spanish for the first time when I went to El Paso, but I find it harder to think in Spanish here – there’s simply less of it. Some weeks I think a little and realize that I have spoken more French with my colleagues than Spanish. I am planning on interviewing Latinx people to see if I can get something out of their voices. I would be worried that I would risk sounding false if I just tried to write with my Spanish. There have been various poetry and prose writing groups around the Golden Triangle (you are right – I did write a few short stories) but they aren’t very stable. It’s really a hobby.

What languages do you speak? Have you considered teaching other languages besides Spanish?

I speak English (English English!), Spanish, French and Catalan. And I have taught all of those last three at university level. I have sometimes taught French here at MSU and in fact it helped me get the job here, just as earlier it did in El Paso and sometime in the last century a job for a year at Strathclyde university in Glasgow I was hired in part to teach Catalan: they speak it up the Spanish East Coast in Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands. It’s a bit like a cross between Spanish and French with some bits of Portuguese and Italian thrown in. I miss Catalan – I know one lady in Mississippi who speaks it, and she lives in Hattiesburg! It also saddens me a little that we have to keep advising students NOT to study in Barcelona. Because the language you will encounter there much of the time is Catalan, not Spanish. We actually have one colleague living in Spain –Chris– who is getting qualified in Catalan, and he still teaches online for us at MSU. Who knows, when he gets his certificates, we could offer Catalan online for MSU between us.

What is something interesting about you that you’d like to share with our readers?

I don’t do so much these days, but I sing. Strange but true: one of the campus cafeterias, the Fresh Food Company, has started doing karaoke on a Tuesday night. So I sang a few weeks back. I went there this Tuesday and the cooks told me to get up and sing again!

And finally, go abroad! You can do it more than once, and if you want to get a job with your language, you need to immerse yourself. Failing that, work at a Mexican restaurant. Have a conversation exchange with an engineer. You need to speak and listen, read and write. We can help with the latter, but the real experts in conversation are Hispanics themselves.

STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH CMLL FOR SUMMER 2020

Berlin, Germany - Experience the sights and sounds of one of the most dynamic, historically rich, and happening cities of Europe! In this adventure, students will learn a great deal of German both in the classroom and out.

Cartago, Costa Rica - Partnering with the Costa Rica Institute of Technology, students will complete coursework while participating in excursions to cultural, historical, and natural sites including Orosí Valley and the Arenal Volcano. Students will have access to ecotourism sites and visit other sites on optional excursions.

Tours, France - Spend four or six weeks in the city of Tours, a vibrant university town of 300,000 in the Loire Valley, located just one hour southwest of Paris. Immerse yourself in French language and culture through intensive classes at the Institut de Touraine.

Alcalá de Henares, Spain - You will take classes from the Spanish faculty at Alcalíngua, and classes with MSU faculty (Hybrid program only). You will also go on cultural and historical excursions to Madrid and Segovia, all with time for travel and cultural immersion. [A.D.]



DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

The Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures at MSU, consisting of faculty members in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish, offers Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts Degrees in Foreign Languages with concentrations in Classics, French, German, and Spanish.

East meets West, Classical languages converge with Modern languages giving our students the experience that will allow them to embrace diversity, while maintaining a solid sense of their own historical identity.

EDITORIAL STAFF

Ania M. Debicka-Dyer
Adrian Austin
Magda Hernandez
Ana Gonzales
Arleana Moya

Contact Us
(662) 325-3480
cml.mail@cml.msstate.edu

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Lee Hall

CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Lee Hall 1500
PO Box FL
Mississippi State University, MS 39762

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Street Address
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