LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As I step down from the position of Department Chair, I want to take this opportunity to thank the many who helped during these past two years. The biggest relief to me is that I do not have to say the full name of the Department in a public forum! Each time I was called on to do so, I was fearful that I would either forget a name or reverse the order. Fortunately, I made it through unscathed.

I leave the department with 886 majors and minors, a 22% increase over one year ago. Nearly every major had an increase in numbers and the credit goes to the faculty and the undergraduate adviser for their hard work. The increase is also due to two new minors in the department. Ok-sook Park and Catherine Ryu successfully proposed a Korean minor and we now have the TESOL minor, thanks primarily to the work of Debra Hardison and Charlene Polio. Our LCTL program, under the leadership of Danielle Steider, continues to be strong.

We have seen numerous changes, including structural changes to our Bylaws and to various policies and procedures; we have seen personnel changes (departures, retirements and sadly, one death – see article in this issue on George Peters); and what we can be most proud of, excellent teaching and impressive faculty productivity. This year alone 20% of the faculty had authored, co-authored, or edited books. An informal count on my part shows that an additional 25% of the faculty has books in the pipeline, most with contracts.

The office staff has been unbelievably supportive. They had to work with two Chairs and two Directors, but they rose to the occasion despite the different working styles of these individuals.

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IN MEMORIAM: GEORGE F. PETERS

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Professor George Peters on July 8, 2014 in Oregon. George was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, but continued to enjoy teaching and conducting research until his retirement from Michigan State University on May 15, 2014.

George will be remembered as a dear colleague to all of us. He was an impactful and caring teacher and mentor, a dedicated scholar with an international reputation, a thoughtful and highly effective leader, and a dear colleague to all who had the pleasure of working with him. George received his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in German from Stanford University. He came to Michigan State University in 1989 to chair the Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages after spending nineteen years at the University of New Mexico, where he was named Teacher of the Year. He also served as Chair of the MSU Department of Theatre for five years in addition to serving as the Resident Director of the Academic Year in Freiburg Program two times.

George distinguished himself as an international scholar of the 19th century German author Heinrich Heine and was finishing his third book on Heine at the time of his death. He was respected by graduate and undergraduate students alike for his excellent teaching, his keen understanding of German culture, his thoughtful feedback and his meticulous preparation. The range and volume of his scholarly activity were impressive.

He was actively involved in the concerns of the profession. He moved the national conversation forward through his involvement in a special taskforce on diversifying the professoriate, sponsored by the AATG. He also shaped the conversation on the art and science of teaching through his editorship of the journal Die Unterrichtspraxis / Teaching German.

His 2003 article, Teaching Deeper German Culture in a Proficiency-Based Curriculum, was awarded best article of the year in Die Unterrichtspraxis/ Teaching German. Never one to rest on his laurels, he recently restructured his third-year German culture course as a hybrid course.

George was highly regarded by colleagues in German as a tireless advocate for the German language, having received the Officer’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Order of Merit of the Republic of Austria as well as awards from the American Association of Teachers of German and the Goethe Institute. He was an early advocate for the integration of language, literature and culture and remained a thoughtful innovator throughout his career.

We will cherish our memories of him forever. We have lost a dear friend and a highly respected colleague, and an important member of the community of scholars.

His colleague, Pat Paulsell, his wife Rosie, along with other members of the faculty, family and friends endowed The George Peters Memorial Fund to honor his memory with student support for a program he cared deeply about: the life-altering experience of a full year abroad in Germany with our Academic Year Abroad Program in Freiburg. The fund welcomes support from other colleagues and former students. This is a great opportunity to honor an amazing educator while also helping our students and a cause George cared deeply about.

See https://givingto.msu.edu/gift/?sid=1626 for more information.
JET PROGRAM ACCEPTS RECORD NUMBER OF MSU STUDENTS

The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program is popular among new MSU Japanese graduates wanting to work in Japan. JET is sponsored by the Japanese government and places participants in English teaching positions in public schools or in local government offices with the mission of promoting internationalization. In existence since 1987, JET is the most prestigious program of its kind and the application process is rigorous and highly competitive.

For the past few years, MSU has been the leader in the number of alumni selected for the program among all Michigan universities. The 2014-15 year was no exception with a record number of seven alumni earning a place in the program for this year selected from a national pool of applicants.

Rhea Young, JET Program Coordinator, has this to say, “Michigan State University has long been a close friend of the Consulate General of Japan in Detroit and has sent dozens of students to work in Japan through the prestigious JET Program. I have always been impressed with the students’ enthusiasm for Japanese culture and their sincere interest in bridging ties between the United States and Japan.”

Current JET participant and MSU alumni, Joseph Canty: “I’m so happy being in Japan! It has been my dream to experience living and working here since I was a kid, so everyday feels like an adventure. My Japanese language studies at MSU helped me to feel confident when I began this job, and my skills are getting better every day. It’s a great cultural exchange and I’m confident I’ll be able to use this experience to open many doors in the future.”

THOMAS W. AND SARAH L. JUNTUNE ENDOVED SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED

Former faculty member Thomas Juntune and his spouse, Sarah, recently established an endowed scholarship for German majors to study in Germany or another German speaking country. Both experienced the transformative benefits of living and studying abroad, and in their professional careers they sought to make such experiences available to others. As a faculty member, Thomas encouraged study abroad, in Freiburg, Germany, having been Resident Director there. He served as an MSU faculty member from 1967-2002.

Sarah taught German for over thirty years at Okemos High School, and she had a partner school in Germany, with whom she managed an exchange program. Some of her students later studied on the Freiburg program.

The department is grateful for the Juntune’s investment in German majors for whom financial assistance makes a difference in their ability to study abroad.

2014-2015 FLTAs

The 2014-15 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistants (FLTAs) from left to right:
Natalia Santos Giarola, Brazil/Portuguese;
Zubairu Abdul kadir, Nigeria/Hausa; Mansur Tursunov, Uzbekistan/Uzbek; Tolulope “Tolu” Odebunmi, Nigeria/Yoruba; Said Om ary Said, Tanzania/Swahili; Hewa Mohammed, Iraq/Arabic; Shakul Tewari, India/Hindi.
After a four year hiatus, the eighth World Languages Day (WLD) conference returned to MSU, hosting hundreds of high school students, teachers, administrators and parents on campus. The day-long conference, sponsored by the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), focused on world cultures, languages, globalization and importance of language learning.

The plenary speaker this year was Arabic major, Brady Ryan, who spoke about his experiences studying in Jordan and Morocco.

Participants chose from numerous sessions with a significant number of presenters from the Department of Linguistics and Languages. Many of the conference volunteers were students from the department as well.

Plans are already underway for the 2016 WLD conference, tentatively planned for April 16, 2016!

This year marked a special anniversary for MSU linguistics by welcoming back alumni, Chris Heffner, the founder of the now seven-year-old Michigan State Undergraduate Linguistics Conference (MSULC), and the six-year-old Great Lakes Expo for Experimental and Formal Undergraduate Linguistics (GLEEFUL). Both were held in mid-April and hosted by the MSU undergraduate student organization, qUALMS (q Undergraduate Association for Linguistics). Heffner provided the keynote address for MSULC. Heffner is currently a 3rd-year Ph.D. student in linguistics at the University of Maryland.

Following in the tradition established by Heffner, qUALMS also invited a keynote speaker for GLEEFUL: professor Bill Haddican of Queens College, City University of New York, whose talk centered around variation between different dialects of English. Haddican also held a practical workshop on the Sunday following the conference, guiding students through the basics of using the R statistical package.

The majority of both conferences, however, was devoted to the work of undergraduates from all areas of linguistics. GLEEFUL follows the format of a formal academic conference, with abstracts submitted from all over North America and subject to an anonymous review process. For those undergraduates whose abstracts are selected, the conference provides an opportunity to present their work in a professional yet welcoming environment. As Kyle Latack, current president of qUALMS, points out, “It’s a good stepping-stone for students who want to go to graduate school.”

While qUALMS received financial support from a wide variety of MSU departments, including Linguistics and Languages, the Honors College and the College of Arts and Letters, as well as mentorship from faculty members Cristina Schmitt and Alan Munn, it has always been the undergraduates themselves who organize the conferences as a whole and make them a success, year after year.
During the 2014-15 academic year two long-anticipated minors were made available to MSU undergraduate students.

Although the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teaching minor has been offered at MSU for both elementary and secondary education students for many years, the new TESOL minor is specifically designed for students not pursuing teacher certification. It is intended for students interested in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) abroad or in community education programs. The required practicum provides experience working with adult ESL learners.

The new Korean minor combines the Korean language classes long offered by the department and Korean culture courses. Some of the culture courses are available through the CIC (Big Ten) e-Korea School funded by the Korean Foundation and administered by the Nam Korean Studies Center at the University of Michigan. Both minor programs already have robust enrollments.

The Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) has received a two-year, $800,000 grant from the National Security Education Program to evaluate how practices used to measure foreign language proficiency affect language teaching and learning. The grant is part of a major federal initiative designed to build a broader and more qualified pool of U.S. citizens with foreign language and international skills. MSU is one of only three universities to receive such a grant.

“We anticipate this project will have a broad impact on the MSU language teaching community,” said Sue Gass, co-PI of the grant and chair of the Department of Linguistics and Languages. “Our project team has a deep understanding of language testing, language instruction, and language learning and this grant will offer new and exciting insights into current language teaching practices and ways to integrate assessment into those practices.”

The broad-based program tests speaking, reading, and listening skills based on the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in all four years of MSU’s undergraduate Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish language programs. Testing was expanded to include German, Italian, Japanese, and Portuguese, thanks to funding from the College of Arts and Letters and the cooperation of ACTFL.

The Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) program has expanded the way students can access their language courses through online, technology enhanced and CIC (Big Ten) schools “courseshare” classes.

New online courses offered by the department are Dutch, Tamil, Thai, and Vietnamese. Technology enhanced classes, defined as 3 hours in the classroom and 2 hours on-line weekly, are now available in Hindi, Persian and Turkish, with more pilots expected this coming academic year.

For a number of years, the department has participated in CIC courseshares for Classical Japanese and Korean Studies. The LCTL program now “sends” Tamil, Thai, Vietnamese to other CIC universities, and MSU students can also take Dutch, Polish and Tibetan classes we “receive” from other CIC universities. Turkish, Romanian, Greek, and Ojibwe are among the many languages likely to be added to the courseshare list in the 2015-16 academic year.

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STUDENT AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, the department expanded the number of awards given to both undergraduate and graduate students. The first annual Awards Ceremony was also held in May 2015 to recognize the awardees as well as inductees into the honors societies of the German, Japanese and Russian programs.

2015 Department Awards

Outstanding Graduating Senior in Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages,
Emily Hammond, Japanese Major
Outstanding Teaching Assistant in Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages
Kali Bybel, Linguistics Ph.D. Candidate
Outstanding Graduating Senior in Arabic
Varsha Koduvayur
Outstanding Graduating Senior in Chinese
Michael Robinson
Outstanding Graduating Senior in German
Maxwell Bender
Outstanding Graduating Senior in Linguistics
Darren Embury
Outstanding Graduating Senior in Russian
Paul Rose
Outstanding Graduate Student in German
Anne von Petersdorff-Campen, Ph.D. Candidate
Outstanding Graduate Student in Linguistics
Qian Luo, Ph.D. Candidate
Outstanding Graduate Student in TESOL
Hima Rawal, M.A. Candidate

2015 College of Arts and Letters (CAL) Awards

Award for Undergraduate Excellence
Jessica Prieskorn, Linguistics major
Marian Lee Aylesworth Award
Bethany Zimmerman, Japanese & Chinese major
John W. Eadie Scholarship in Arts & Letters for International Education
Ashley Rall, Chinese major

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Federally Funded Awards

BOREN SCHOLARSHIP
Mykala Ford, Arabic major, 2014-15 study abroad in Morocco Flagship Program
Christopher Murphy, Chinese Major, 2014-15 study abroad at Zhejiang University in China

FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND AREA STUDIES (FLAS) FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS
Lauren Denomme, Japanese major
Valarie Dietrich, Chinese and Linguistics major
Elena Herfl, Arabic major
Harrison Jones, Arabic major
Patrick Mercer, Japanese major
Katherine Rock, Chinese and Linguistics major
Anna Stouffer, Japanese major

Additional Awards & Scholarships

Corinna Applegate (German major), DAAD (German Academic Education Exchange Service) for study at Freiburg University in Germany
Caroline Hron-Weigle (Arabic major), S.C. Lee Award
Kristin McCool (Chinese major), Richard Lee Featherstone Prize
Patrick Mercer (Japanese major), S.C. Lee Award
Sierra Parent (German and Arabic major), Baden-Württemberg Scholarship for study at Freiburg University in Germany
Chelsea Stuart (German major), Mayen Scholarship for 2014 Mayen summer program in Germany
NEW FACULTY

Jonathan Glade (Japanese) received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago where he specialized in modern Japanese and Korean Literature. He is currently working on a book manuscript, tentatively titled *From Imperial to National: Transformations in Japanese and Korean Literature, 1935–1952.*

Lynn Wolff (German) received her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin, where her research interests encompassed modern German-language literature and culture, in particular the relationship between literature and historiography, the representation of the Holocaust, theories of translation, and concepts of world literature.

Mika Yamaguchi (Japanese) received her Ph.D. from Konkuk University in South Korea where she specialized in Japanese language education. Her research interests include Japanese pedagogy and second language acquisition.

Miyuki Kamiya (Japanese) received her M.A. in Japanese Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Her research interest are in Japanese language and language pedagogy.

Many thanks to the instructors serving the department for the 2014-15 academic year with one-year appointments:

- **Ariana Mentzel**, Hebrew
- **Heather Taylor**, Linguistics

Best wishes to long-serving instructors who have left the department to pursue other opportunities:

- **Sara Hillman**, Arabic
- **Nao Nakano**, Japanese

FACULTY NOTES

Xiaoshi Li (Chinese) promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, effective July 2014.

Sean Pue (Hindi Studies) promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, effective July 2014. He was also appointed director of the Digital Humanities program in the College of Arts and Letters, effective August 2015.

Karin Wurst (German) received the MSU Inspirational Woman of the Year Award in the Culture of Empowerment category. The award highlights women-identified individuals who demonstrate integrity, leadership, quality performance, integrative and inclusive action, and influence on campus and the community. She also serves as Adviser to the Provost on Intercultural Learning and Student Engagement.

RETIREMENTS

Many thanks to the following individuals who retired from the department:

- **Ellen Rothfeld**, who retired in May 2014, after eighteen years of teaching Hebrew at MSU with dedication. She also successfully coordinated the annual Israeli Film Festival for the past ten years.

- **Helen Roy Fuhst**, a long-term instructor of the Ojibwe language, also retired in the spring of 2014.

Xiaoshi Li (Chinese) promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, effective July 2014.

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New office staff, pictured from right to left: Logan O’Neil, Carly Ensign, Leann Dalimonte
FACULTY PUBLICATIONS


Tze-lan Sang. The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2014. (Chinese edition)