

# THE AMBASSADOR

Department of World Languages and Cultures

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### Faculty Scholarship

Updates on faculty research, publications and scholarships can be found for

Dr. Habib Zanzana on page 3  
 Dr. Marzia Caporale on page 3  
 Dr. Yamile Silva on page 4  
 Dr. Roxana Curiel on page 5

### Recent & Upcoming Events

Spanish Movie Nights 2021 page 6  
 LAS Film Series Fall 2021 page 8  
 Spanish Game Night, page 13  
 French Cultural Event, page 13  
 An Origami Workshop, page 15

### FTAs

Meet the four new Foreign Teaching Assistants from Spain, Palestine, France, and Germany, pages 9-10.

### Other News

The Hispanic Studies program changes its name, page 7  
 Return of The Spanish Cultural Society, page 11  
 Wedding Bells, page 13

### WLC Information and Social Media

Can be found on pages 2 and 16

## Notes from the Chair



*Working together to ensure the continued welfare of our community.*

### Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends,

Welcome to the new semester! We begin the new academic year with hope and the joy of working together again in person. During the past eighteen months, beginning in March 2020, faculty, staff, and students have had to rethink and reconfigure the workplace and classroom to respond to the challenges brought on by the global pandemic. Much work has been done to ensure our students' continued education, while safeguarding public health and the principles of the public good, which lie at the heart of our university's Jesuit mission. Although holding classes virtually was trying for both faculty and students as we adjusted to a new and more distant form of communication, we felt fortunate to have the privilege and means to continue our mission of teaching and learning during an international health crisis. We enter the new year charged with what was for us an unprecedented and unexpected experience, knowing that together we will work to ensure the continued welfare of our community.

Community, communication, and critical thinking are the

foundation of our language curriculum. The study of languages offers a transformative experience to students as they prepare for engagement with the larger world. With courses in eleven languages, our department is a concrete example of our university's mission of readying students for a "socially responsible, engaged, and reflective" relationship with people from around the globe. Research has shown that studying another language enables people to connect more deeply with others and to gain a more profound understanding of other cultures. In addition, it has been demonstrated that knowledge of another language provides a competitive edge in career choices, as prospective employers frequently seek candidates who are able to communicate in a second language, engage with another culture, and think "outside the box" to produce sound and innovative solutions. Therefore, if you are not already taking a language, please check our course offerings to position yourself more favorably for success in your career and considerably increase your sensitivity to the linguistic and cultural differences you will encounter when working in the global market.

As part of our program of global outreach and engagement, this year we once again welcome a wonderful cohort of instructors to our department. Joining us are Fulbright Teaching Assistants **Belal N. Elkurd** from Palestine, **Julia Illarramendi Esteban** from Spain, **Nawel Kahouaji** from France, and **Fabian Postert** from Germany. **Khadiga AboBakr** from Egypt returns as Graduate Teaching Assistant of Arabic. **Chun-Sheng Su** is Visiting Instructor of Chinese and **Kentaro Fukube** is our Visiting Instructor of Japanese. We will host a series of cultural events organized by them and we hope to see you there. Please follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to receive updates on these events. We also extend an enthusiastic, in-person welcome to Assistant Professor of Spanish **Roxana Curiel**, who began her first year in the department last year.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support of the WLC department, from the faculty and Teaching and Graduate Assistants to our wonderful students to the Language Lab work-study assistants and tutors. We are especially grateful for the help of our Graduate Assistant and Student Language Lab Director, **Samuel Torres**; Language Lab Director, **Hannah Jackson**; and department Administrative Assistant **JoAnne Jurkiewicz**. Our department thanks you wholeheartedly for your hard work and efforts. Have a wonderful 2021-2022 academic year!

Sincerely,

**Dr. Virginia Picchiatti, Interim chair of WLC**

## WLC, Five Programs Made for You

The Department of World Languages and Cultures (WLC) offers majors and minors in **Hispanic Studies**, **French and Francophone Studies**, **International Language-Business** (Spanish, French or Italian), **Italian**, and **Classical Studies** (Latin or Greek, or a combination of both)

The WLC also offers courses and minors in many other languages: **Japanese**, **Arabic**, **Chinese**, **Russian**, **German**.

## Faculty Scholarship

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### Dr. Habib Zanzana

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Dr. Habib Zanzana presented a paper on Moroccan Francophone literature titled, "Contemporary Womxn's Writing and the Medical Humanities in Addellah Taïa's *A Country for Dying*", at the Institute of Modern Languages Research Virtual Conference, University of London, July 2021.



### Dr. Marzia Caporale

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Dr. Marzia Caporale published "Moroccan Identities in Motion: Narratives of Dystopia in Leïla Kilani's film *Sur la planche*" *Trans-Mediterranean Francophonies*. Ed Megan McDonald and Claire Launchbury. Liverpool University Press.2021.

Dr. Capporale had a conference presentation in March 2021 at the NeMLA (Northeastern Modern Language Association conference): "Queering Masculinities: Reinterpreting Gender Boundaries in Contemporary Italian Pop Culture."

In November 2021 she had another conference presentation, this time to SAMLA (South Atlantic Modern language Association): "Women Connecting Voices: Breaking Barriers of Confinement in Djaili Amadou Amal's *Les impatientes*

## Faculty Scholarship Cont.

### Dr. Yamile Silva

Since the Spring, Dr. Yamile Silva has been promoted to Full Professor and she is on sabbatical during this academic year.

**Scholarship:** Two of her articles and one academic interview to Costa Rican writer Tatiana Lobo have been accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals: "Narrativas de lo gótico en «La extraña» (1922) de Abigail Mejía" *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*. (Forthcoming Spring 2022). "Qué el imperio de la tiranía caiga por los mismos medios que se levantó: apropiaciones tácticas en *Catecismo o instrucción popular* de Juan Fernández de Sotomayor (1814)" *Revista Universidad de Cartagena* (Forthcoming June 2022); and "La letra escondida: género, archivos y escritura en Tatiana Lobo: entrevista" *REGS/Journal of Gender and Sexuality Studies* (Michigan State University Press) (Forthcoming June 2022).

In November 18, Dr. Silva will present her paper "Abigail Mejía: cronista de viajes" at the XXX Congress, Association of Gender and Sexuality Studies in Santo Domingo, República Dominicana. Her proposed panel, which she will chair, "Representations of Space in the Colonial Latin America (1492-1898)" has been accepted to be part of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA) conference in May 2022. Dr. Silva's critical edition of *Entre Frivolidades* (1922) by Dominican writer Abigail Mejía is under review by an academic press. Silva has submitted a proposal to be part of the NEH Spanish Paleography and Digital Humanities Institute hosted by UT Austin and LLILAS Benson Latin American Studies and Collections. She has also submitted a NEH Summer Stipend Grant.

As **Service to the Community**, on May 25, Silva served as a Spanish translator for the second vaccine clinic at St. John Nuemann Parish in Scranton. **Service to the Profession:** Dr. Silva served as a book proposal reviewer for Routledge | Taylor and Francis Group during Summer 2021. Also, she participated as an external reader for the Doctoral Dissertation "Lecturas firmadas. Género y antologías en la España contemporánea" by Raquel Fernández at the Universidad de Oviedo, Spain in September 2021. Silva has been invited to serve as a peer review panelist for the NEH Division of Education Programs, Humanities Connections Planning and Implementation competitions to be in November 2021. Silva continues serving as a member of the Executive Committee Board of the Colonial Section in the Professional Organization LASA (Latin American Studies Association). Finally, Silva has been invited to give a talk on Litigations and the Exercise of Legal Rights in petitions by Spanish women in the Colonial Americas (XVI-XVII) at the Doctoral Program in Gender Studies at Universidad de Oviedo in Spain during Spring 2022 (TBA).



## Faculty Scholarship Cont.



### Dr. Roxana A. Curiel

Dr. Roxana A. Curiel is currently working on her paper “(Un)Documented Narratives: Immigration Enforcement, Trauma Porn, and Migration Stories.” This work was accepted to be published in the forthcoming edited book *The Latinx Experience: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, under contract with Sage Publishing (2022). In addition, thanks to the Summer Research Grant she received this year at the U of S, Dr. Curiel worked on the second chapter of her book manuscript, “Illegible Lives: Blackness, Indigeneity, and Femme Bodies in Mexico.” In January 2022, she will present the first version at the Modern Language Association convention in Washington, D.C.

Moreover, as part of her efforts to build support for racialized and minoritized faculty, along with Dr. Billie Tadros and Dr. Anne Royers, Dr. Curiel obtained a Clavius grant entitled “Supporting Faculty from Underrepresented Backgrounds: Supporting the Mandated of the Society of Jesus to Serve Faith and Promote Justice.” Thanks to this grant, and donations

from diverse departments across the College of Arts and Sciences, they are getting individual memberships to the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD), a crucial resource for BIPOC faculty.

In June 2021, to celebrate Pride month, Dr. Roxana A. Curiel was part of a conversation with trans activist Sofi Kowo, one of the organizers of the first “Marcha Lencha” in Mexico which aimed to fight transphobia within the queer community. She also participated in the “Palabra y Memoria” virtual event. She exposed her research on Colonel Amelio Robles, a Black trans man from Guerrero who served in the army of Zapata during the Mexican Revolution (1910). She was also invited to give a virtual talk at El Foro Espacio Cultural Alternativo, as a closing seminar, directed by activist and drag king performer Nancy Cázares. Her workshop explored the theory and praxis of drag in Latin America. The participants and Dr. Curiel discussed issues related to machista violence, strategic drag, and her article “Mujeres rifle: Masculinidad femenina en el evento fotográfico de la Revolución mexicana.” On October 8, 2021, Dr. Curiel will talk at the “Stories for Good: A Celebration of Diversity in Our Community” event for the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council, Berkshire Community College. She will also participate in an educational session, and panel discussion with drag queens Boxxa Vine, Angel South, and Noelle Diamond.

## Recent & Upcoming Events



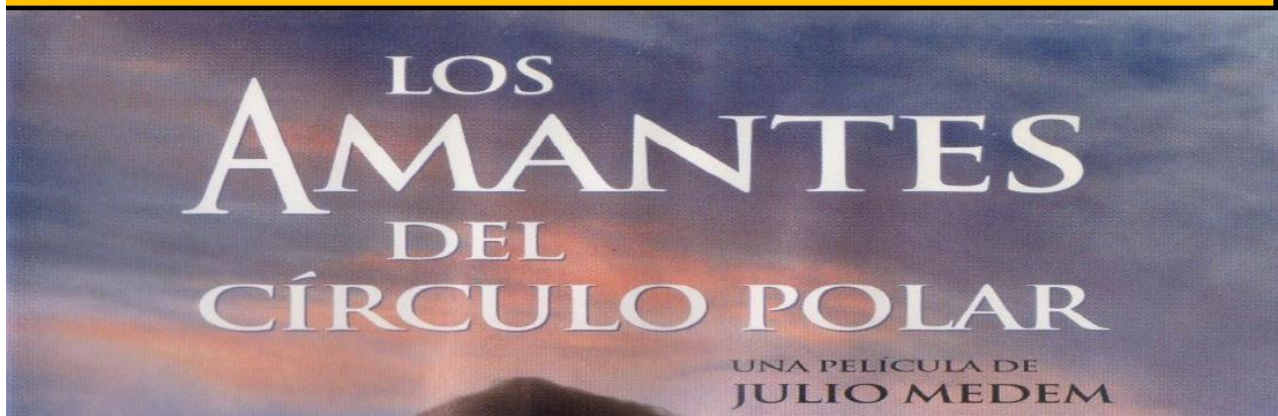
**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Spanish Movie Nights 2021**

**Place:** O'Hara 306

*Cosas de niños*

- Monday, 9/13—*La lengua de las mariposas* (José Luis Cuerda, 1999)
- Monday, 10/4— *Los amantes del Círculo Polar* (Julio Medem, 1998)
- Monday, 11/1— *El Bola* (Acheró Mañas, 2000)



# Recent & Upcoming Events

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## LATIN AMERICAN FILM SERIES FALL 2021

"Family Ties in Latin American Cinema"

**BRENNAN 228**

**7:00 pm**

***Viva* (Cuba, 2016)**  
September 21

***Zona  
Sul / Southern  
District* (Bolivia,  
2010)**  
October 26

***XXY* (Argentina,  
2008)**  
November 16

## FLTA Introductions

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### Julia Illaramendi Esteban

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¡Hola a todos! My name is Julia Illaramendi and I'll be teaching Spanish this year. I'm from Pamplona, a city in the north of Spain and where St. Ignatius was gravely injured. How I ended up teaching Spanish? After I studied abroad in Copenhagen (Denmark) I realized I wanted to spend more time with the International Community of my University and I joined and led the Spanish Club. Then, when I graduated with my BA in Spanish Philology, I pursued an MA in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language and for the past three years, I have been teaching Spanish at high school and university levels.

In my free time, I love having fun with my friends and family, painting, and watching movies and TV series.

I'm eager to know more about Scranton and the United States and looking forward to helping you discover my language and culture. See you on Campus!

To contact Julia, you can email her at [julia.illaramendiesteban@scranton.edu](mailto:julia.illaramendiesteban@scranton.edu)

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### Belal Elkurd

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Hi! مرحبًا I'm Belal Elkurd and I'm the Arabic Fulbright Teaching assistant. I'm happy that I had the chance to teach Arabic online last year at U of S and now I'm lucky to teach it again in-person this year. I'm from Gaza, Palestine. I love leaning languages and I love teaching both the Arabic and English languages. That made me major in English language and literature at Al-Azhar University. I have been teaching English language for 6 years now and started teaching the Arabic language in 2017.



Throughout my teaching experience, I have met many students from different cultures and backgrounds, this encouraged me to explore more about teaching opportunities abroad to teach, learn about other cultures, share knowledge, and be an ambassador of my country.

I will be more than happy to meet you and answer any of your questions about me, my country or Arabic language. Feel free to contact me!

To contact Belal, you can email him at [belal.elkurd@scranton.edu](mailto:belal.elkurd@scranton.edu).



## FLTA Introductions Cont.

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### Fabian Postert

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Guten Tag! My name is Fabian Postert, and I am the German teaching assistant at The University of Scranton this academic year. I was born and raised in the city of Göttingen which is located in the center of Germany, south of Lower Saxony. I am currently doing my master's degree in secondary education for English and Sports. I have also taught German courses to refugees for about two years in Germany. Besides learning and teaching languages I am also passionate about all kinds of sports, especially soccer and rugby. I am very excited to be at The University of Scranton to teach and exchange culturally with the students. At the same time, I am eager to learn more about The University and City of Scranton, Pennsylvania, or American culture in general. I am looking forward to meeting you in one of my classes, at German cultural events or around campus!

To contact Fabian, you can email him at [fabian.postert@scranton.edu](mailto:fabian.postert@scranton.edu)

### Nawel Kahouaji

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Bonjour! My name is Nawel and I am the French Fulbright Teaching assistant this year. I was born in France but my parents were born in Tunisia and they moved to France when they were 18 years old. Whether I am in France or in Tunisia, I am always near the sea as I live and was born in Brest in France! I have studied English literature, civilization and linguistics at the University of Western Brittany and during the third year of my bachelor degree I did my Erasmus in Northern Ireland for a year. This experience abroad made me fall in love with travelling and being emerged into another culture. It was then when I decided I wanted to experience life abroad as much as possible.



Before applying for Fulbright I did my master's degree while working as a tutor for the pedagogical department, the center of language department, etc. During the second year of my master's degree, I taught English at a university for the first years of LEA (Applied Foreign Languages). After that, I was sure that I wanted to teach at a university level. I am very excited to spread my passion for language learning and to discover Scranton and by and large the United States.

To contact Nawel, you can email her at [nawel.kahouaji@scranton.edu](mailto:nawel.kahouaji@scranton.edu)

# The Spanish Cultural Society

## Return of a Vibrant Club

By Crysta O'Donnell



*Crysta O'Donnell [president], Arielle Contrera [secretary], Carolina Murphy [treasurer], and Katia Ramirez [vice president] represented the Spanish Cultural Society at Dance Night on Thursday, September 30, 2021.*

After a year restricted to virtual events due to Covid-19, the Spanish Cultural Society, a.k.a. Spanish Club, is back and better than ever! On Thursday, September 30, the SCS cabinet members (pictured above) and the Multicultural Center co-sponsored a Dance Night in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15-October 15), a time to recognize the achievements and contributions of the Hispanic and Latino/x community to the history and culture of the United States. The event kicked off at 9 p.m. in the DeNaples Ballroom 407. Students, faculty, and staff danced the night away to salsa, bachata, and other music genres with the guidance of dance instructor Vince Brust. Not a dancer? No problem! Attendees also had the option to sit down, relax, and enjoy authentic Mexican and Salvadoran food and desserts from local restaurants.

Speaking of food, SCS and the Latin American Studies Department had their first South Side Restaurant Tour on Saturday, October 2. The new event offered participants the opportunity to sample different dishes from Italo's, Chicano's, La Chingada, La Libertad Pupuseria, and Florita's Bakery through a takeout or dine-in experience. SCS and LAS collaborate on movie nights as well. This semester's series theme is "Family Ties in Latin American Cinema." We hope everyone will join us at our next screening on Thursday, October 26. The film set for that date is *Zona Sur* (Bolivia, 2010).

The Fall semester is far from over, and there are plenty more events to look forward to for the whole year, including trivia nights, Lotería (Mexican Bingo), a soccer tournament, a Día de los Muertos celebration, and Holidays Around the World. Thank you for taking the time to learn about and support the Spanish Cultural Society.

If you are interested in joining the Spanish Cultural Society or you want information regarding the club's activities or events, do not hesitate to get in touch with its president **Crysta O'Donnell**. You can contact her at [crysta.odonnell@scranton.edu](mailto:crysta.odonnell@scranton.edu).

# THE LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER

## Services:

- Tutoring in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Arabic, Chinese, and more
- Weekly language conversation hours
- Computer lab
- World language resources
- Community English as a Second Language tutoring
- Volunteer opportunities and more

## Location

O'Hara 306

## Hours

9 AM – 10 PM  
Monday-Thursday  
9 AM – 3 PM  
Friday  
6 PM – 9 PM  
Sunday

Questions? Contact Hannah Jackson •  
hannah.jackson@scranton.edu • 570-941-4711

# Upcoming Events

SPANISH GAME NIGHT- THURSDAY OCTOBER  
28, 2021 @ 7PM  
LOCATION: LEAHY 235  
HOSTED BY OUR SPANISH FULBRIGHT JULIA  
ILLARRAMENDI

FRENCH CULTURAL EVENT- THURSDAY,  
NOVEMBER 11, 2021 @ 7PM  
LOCATION: LEAHY 235  
HOSTED BY OUR FRENCH FULBRIGHT NAWEL  
KAHOJAI

## Wedding Bells



*From the right, alumni Sean Rist and Jackie DeFilippis, with Dr. Zanzana, at DeFilippis' wedding.*

**Dr. Habib Zanzana** is happy to share the news and a photo of a beautiful wedding he attended in July 2021. The bride, **Jackie DeFilippis**, is a 2008 graduate of The University of Scranton who majored in Counseling and Human Services with a minor in Spanish. She also earned a Master in School Counseling in 2011. **Sean Rist** (included in the photo), a graduate of the U of S, class of 2009, with a double major in business and Spanish was also in attendance at the wedding. It was a magnificent event, and we all wish Jackie and Tom (her husband) a wonderful life together.

# Conversations in Four Languages

## Spanish Conversation Hours

 **Sundays** 7:00-8:00 P.M.      **Wednesdays** 5:00-6:00 P.M.

**Virtual or In-Person**

 O'Hara 307

 **Zoom Meeting ID:**  
Sun: 950 4481 8255  
Wed: 965 1752 6147



**With Spanish Tutor  
Katia Ramirez**

## Arabic Conversation Hour

 **Mondays** 4:00-5:00 P.M.

**Virtual or In-Person**

 O'Hara 307

 **Zoom Meeting ID:**  
928 7022 1044



**With Arabic Tutor  
Caitlyn Maurer**

## Chinese Conversation Hour

 **Mondays** 11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

**Virtual or In-Person**

 O'Hara 307

 **Zoom Meeting ID:**  
962 1862 1760



**With Chinese Tutor  
Destiny Carpitella**

## French Conversation Hours

 **Sundays** 8:00-9:00 P.M.      **Wednesdays** 3:00-4:00 P.M.

**Virtual or In-Person**

 O'Hara 307

 **Zoom Meeting ID:**  
Sun: 929 1397 3099  
Wed: 967 4643 0675



**With French Tutor  
Johanna Rene**

## Recent Events

# A Fabulous Origami Workshop

By Samiel Torres

Over 45 students, faculty, and staff attended the department's first event of the fall semester, Japanese Origami on Thursday, September 23rd. The event kicked off at 7 P.M. in Leahy 235 Kane Forum. Japanese visiting instructor **Kentaro Fukube** hosted this event where students learned about the art and the history of origami, the art of Japanese paper folding. Fukube has a Master's in Education and has taught English and Japanese to international students and refugees for five years and is currently teaching all the Japanese classes at The University of Scranton.

At this event, participants were able to learn step by step and complete two types of origami: a paper crane and a jumping frog. Fukube was very happy to teach and demonstrate origami to others which is essential part of his culture. Those who attended had such a great time immersing themselves in the Japanese culture and making origami.



*Japanese Visiting Instructor Kentaro Fukube.*



*Students show their origami masterpieces during September's workshop.*

*Right, some of the origami pieces created by students*



# The Ambassador

A NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

## Social Media

Stay up to date with the Department's activities, events, news, and highlights by following the World Languages and Cultures Department's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages!



[www.facebook.com /UofSWorldLanguages](https://www.facebook.com/UofSWorldLanguages)



[https://twitter.com/uofscranton\\_wlc](https://twitter.com/uofscranton_wlc)



[https://www.instagram.com/uofs\\_worldlanguages/](https://www.instagram.com/uofs_worldlanguages/)

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SCRANTON**  
A JESUIT UNIVERSITY