Welcome by Dr. Antoinette Sol, Chair of the Department of Modern Languages

8:45-9:00 Light breakfast served

9:00-10:00 “Teaching Afro-Diaspora Literature and Film” Chair, Dr. Amy Austin, Assistant Professor of Spanish

“Teaching Olaudah Equiano and His ‘Talking Book’”
Dr. Cedrick May, Associate Professor of English

Abstract: This presentation is an attempt to deal with two related issues that occur frequently when teachers find themselves covering a text that contains a significant amount of religious content. The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano is one of the most important pieces of writing in eighteenth-century transatlantic literature, one that overlaps the boundaries of several popular genres of the period. One genre it represents is the spiritual autobiography. It is also a powerful antislavery argument. However, that anti-slavery argument is expressed in a religious idiom often unfamiliar to teachers and students of today. Even for students who are familiar with the Bible and contemporary biblical interpretation, figuring out just what Equiano might mean at any given point can still be a challenge given the very distinct theological predispositions of the mid to late eighteenth century. What I hope to provide here is a means for interpreting and understanding Equiano’s autobiography so that the teacher of his text will be better able to conduct class discussions and prepare assignments that fully address these important, intersecting aspects of The Interesting Narrative.

“Teaching Afro-Latin American Culture through Film: Raíces de mi corazón and Cuba’s guerrita de los negros”
Dr. Sonja S. Watson, Assistant Professor of Spanish

Abstract: Studies have shown an absence of Afro–Latin American culture at all levels of Spanish instruction. In this essay, I propose the use of film to expand the undergraduate curriculum. Film provides both a visual and cultural narrative for the understanding of Latin American history, culture, and literature, and is an invaluable resource for teaching Afro–Latin American culture and promoting visual and multicultural literacy. This article focuses on Raíces de mi corazón, a short film that deals with the establishment of the Partido Independiente de Color, a political party that called for social reforms for Afro-Cubans and Cuba’s race war of 1912, which
led to the murder of over six thousand men, women, and children of color. *Raíces de mi corazón* spotlights the importance of Cuba’s little known *guerrita de los negros* and provides a way to expand both the canon and curriculum through the incorporation of minority voices in the classroom.

**10:00-11:45**

**Special Panel: “Teaching Sex and Gender Controversies” Chair, Dr. Sonja S. Watson, Assistant Professor of Spanish**

“X-Rated: Teaching [About] Porn in Human Sexuality Courses”  
Dr. Joci Caldwell-Ryan, Adjunct Professor of Sociology and Anthropology

**Abstract:** The coverage of pornography in most textbooks includes a discussion of the ambiguity inherent in defining porn, a description of outlets for pornographic material, identification of contexts for use of porn, and the economic impact of porn production and consumption in the U.S. Textbooks are less uniform in their treatment of academic debates about the impact of pornography on society, and the social/economic/political aspects of defining and regulating porn. How can we go beyond textbook content to have authentic discussions about pornography that take into account the real life experiences and differing views of our students in a sensitive way? Do students need to see “real” porn to learn about it? How can we get students to move beyond simplistic “good/bad” evaluations to see pornography as a complex cultural product with many modes and meanings? Teachers in courses offered by Women’s and Gender Studies programs face additional challenges in the face of entrenched stereotypes about “feminist perspectives” on porn. In this paper I will discuss teaching strategies I have found effective, including use of the controversial documentary, *The Price of Pleasure.*

““Love the Way you Lie’: Domestic Violence, the Media, and the Women’s Studies Classroom”  
Dr. Margaret Lowry, Independent Scholar

**Abstract:** The “Introduction to Women’s Studies” course addresses a whole range of potentially explosive topics, from religion to sexual orientation to sexual assault. The commonplace that we live in a “post-feminist” America, combined with the resurgence of aggressive masculinity discourse since 9/11, makes it particularly challenging to unpack dominant cultural narratives related to violence against women. Drawing on articles from *Feminist Teacher, Violence against Women,* and *Gender and Education,* I discuss strategies for using pop culture in the Women’s Studies classroom to engage students, develop media literacy, and interrogate U.S. narratives about domestic violence. My paper focuses specifically on my use of the Rihanna/Chris Brown domestic violence incident during my “Introduction to Women’s Studies” course in fall 2009. I discuss the benefits and challenges of analyzing the media coverage of the incident (e.g., weighing the pro of student interest against the potential for catalyzing a TMZ-type discussion that glamorizes domestic violence and reinforces racial stereotypes). I also interrogate how recent developments (Rihanna and Eminem’s video for “Love the Way you Lie” and media
coverage of Rihanna and Chris Brown’s rekindled romance) undermine the teaching I did in fall 2009 and provide new challenges for instructors who want to use this example to foster class discussion about domestic violence.

“Word Choices: Male Instructors Teaching Sex and Gender in Multi-Gendered Classrooms”
David Wallace, Graduate Teaching Assistant- English

Abstract: Using a framework of men’s studies, the pedagogy of teaching in multi-cultural classrooms, and anecdotal experience, I propose to discuss the differences in the ways that men and women must approach teaching sex and gender in multi-gendered classrooms. I have a female colleague who teaches sex and gender and I regularly hear anecdotes about her teaching experiences. She often uses words or phrases that as a man I could never say. We often laugh together over these “slips of the tongue,” but in reality these stories—whether about discipline issues or word choice—highlight some of the key difficulties inherent in being a male instructor teaching sex and gender in a multi-cultural, multi-gendered classroom. For instance, one of the key goals of feminist theory is to address the gender inequalities inherent in hegemonic, male-dominated power structures. This goal presents a unique challenge for male instructors who are themselves assumedly complicit in building these structures. Thus, in addition to managing a class whose subject matter is controversial and which can make some students prone to anger and others to “humorous” diffusion, men who teach sex and gender in multi-gender classrooms must also be extremely careful to situate their discussions on neutral (or neuter) ground.

12-1:30 LUNCH followed by Guest Speaker Jason Wallach will present and discuss the documentary Maestra

Presentation: Maestra and the Cuban Literacy Campaign

The Cuban Literacy Campaign of 1961 dramatically changed the nation's literacy levels within one year by organizing over 250,000 youth to teach classes in the rural areas of the country. The Campaign educated over 700,000 Cubans. The Literacy Project collected testimonies of women literacy teachers, exploring how this experience influenced their own lives and sense of self. Maestra documents these events that shaped Cuban national history. The following presentation will feature a showing of the 33-minute documentary Maestra followed by a question and answer session with Jason Wallach, Outreach and Distribution Coordinator for Maestra. Jason Wallach is a veteran educator, documentary video producer, and Latin American solidarity worker. He currently resides in Oakland, CA and coordinates The Eric Quezada Center for Culture and Politics.
1:45-3:30 “Enhancing Pedagogy through the Visual Web, Writing Center, and Code-Switching”
Chair, Dr. Christopher Stewart, Assistant Professor of French

Dr. Lana Rings, Associate Professor of German
Abstract: Visuals are said to add an enhanced dimension to the cognitive aspects of learning, and when used well, can facilitate deeper and longer lasting learning. This session will describe the results of using native and foreign language web image search engines in a foreign language course on intercultural communication. After having heard audio clips, read transcriptions, and created mind maps of German native speakers’ impressions of U.S. American behavior, and conversely U.S. speakers’ impressions of German behavior, students were required to search web images for various topic-related concepts in both google.com “Images” and google.de “Bilder.” They were then required to work in pairs to describe and compare the images on the two websites. They reported their findings on the blackboard, which were then discussed in class. Toward the end of the semester, they were asked to explain in writing what they had learned through their exploration of the concepts in visual form on the web.

“But Isn’t this the “English” Writing Center? Multilingual Writing”
John R. Reed, Undergraduate Student in Spanish

Traditionally, writing centers have helped students with a wide variety of assignments ranging from literary analyses to lab reports—as long as these assignments were done in English. This approach worked well when writing centers first earned a spot on college campuses, especially if they consisted mainly of English language learners. Many Colleges and Universities are experiencing an increase in students majoring in foreign languages. Despite this trend, many writing centers, including the one at the University of Texas at Arlington, are not adequately prepared to address the writing needs of their entire student population due to the lack of consultants experienced in foreign languages. This paper introduces methods that “traditional” writing centers, those that work solely with assignments written in English, can utilize to address the needs of foreign language major and minors. These methods include employment of students proficient in other languages to “consult” in that language, sponsorship or funding from language departments to employ students knowledgeable in foreign languages, and more advertisement of what writing centers do in foreign language classes in the form of workshops and classroom visits.

“Choose a Language, Choose a Message: Language Choice and Code Switching Motivations between Spanish/English Graduate Students and Professors”
Kari Christopherson, MA Student Spanish

Abstract: When bilinguals interact they adopt a language to use together known as the base language. This choice to use one language or another (or a mix of the two) in conversation is referred to as language choice. To identify motivations for language choice among Spanish/English bilingual graduate students and professors, I analyzed four recorded
conversations between four graduate students and two Spanish professors. I then interviewed all participants about their perceptions of their own language use and the language use of others. The results suggest that the graduate student’s main goal in language choice while speaking with professors is to protect their own “face wants” and to honor the perceived face wants of their professors. By contrast, the professor’s main goal in the same context is to create authentic interactions, to ensure comprehensibility and to stay genuine to the nature of the topic being discussed. Recognizing the differing motivations for language choice can benefit the interaction between graduate students and professors inside and out of the classroom.

3:20-3:30 Light snack provided

3:30-5:00 “Service-Learning, Digital Pedagogy, and Visual Processing” Chair, Dr. Lonny Harrison, Assistant Professor of Russian

“Service-Learning Use in Criminal Justice Education”
Dr. Jaya Davis, Assistant Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Using an exploratory, cross-sectional, survey design (N=61), the current study explored the use of service learning in criminal justice education by examining how faculty members perceive the pedagogy, how often they implement it, and when they do so, how they implement it. The majority of respondents (85%) reported that they use service learning occasionally or regularly. Few significant differences regarding perceptions of service learning were noted; however, it was notable that even among faculty members who never use service learning, the majority agreed that service learning had a positive impact on student outcomes. In contrast, a higher percentage of those who indicated that they never use service learning indicated that certain barriers, specifically instructor unfamiliarity with the community served as a barrier to the implementation of service learning compared to occasional and regular users. The results may suggest that encouraging greater use of service learning may come through reducing barriers rather than continued education about the benefits of service learning. Additionally, the current study showed that service-learning implementation in criminal justice is generally consistent with the literature, as the vast majority reported using reflections and requiring between 1 and 40 hours of service.

"Digital Mentoring as Transformative Practice: Using Videoconferencing Technologies to Deepen and Engage Learners"
Dr. Peggy Semingson, Assistant Professor of Literacy Studies

This presentation shares a theoretical framework as well as practical ideas for drawing on best practices in mentoring to shape the practice of digital mentoring, especially as it applies to practices within online teaching contexts. The presentation will share highlights from a research study in progress where online graduate students participate in 1-on-1 tele-mentoring sessions via a videoconferencing tool. Using audio, chat, video, and a virtual classroom, digital mentoring offers the chance for educators across a broad array of fields to engage students in personal reflection, a deepening of course content, and a feedback loop that benefits both teacher and student(s). Practical handouts and tips will be provided.
Debbie Cockerham and Katherine Rublein, Graduate Students; Faculty Advisor: Dr. Evie Malaia, Assistant Professor, Curriculum and Instruction (Mind, Brain, and Education)

Our EEG study investigated how ASD and TD children combine visual information from faces and bodies for interpreting emotional cues. Participants viewed emotionally charged facial expressions and body postures both as independent pictures and in matched/mismatched combinations. Preliminary analysis indicates that, while TD children relied primarily on facial cues during perceptual integration of facial expression and body language, a subgroup of ASD children depended on body language cues to identify emotion. For this group, the N170 EEG component peaked significantly later when viewing compound stimuli than for TD and ASD participants who used facial cues. These results suggest that a subset of ASD children exhibit altered early visual processing of emotional cues, which might impact social interaction skills through inefficient emotional interpretation. Because an ability to effectively interact with others in the educational community is an important component of the learning process, the insights provided by this research will be important in understanding, diagnosing, and intervening in autism spectrum disorders.

Closing Remarks by Dr. Sonja S. Watson, Assistant Professor of Spanish

The Department of Modern Languages would like to thank the following for their support of the Fifth Biannual Cultural Constructions Symposium:
The Center for Mexican American Studies
The Charles T. McDowell Center for Critical Languages and Area Studies
The Festival of Ideas Global Research Endowment
Women’s and Gender Studies