

Notes from Wescoe



Italian cooking class

Chair's Message

By Bruce Hayes, FFIT chair

2017 has been an exciting year for our department. So much has happened, more than I can list here. As I have mentioned in a previous message, we are now officially the Department of French, Francophone & Italian Studies, a name change that highlights the importance of the Francophone world in our teaching and research. Thanks to the efforts of my colleagues Antje Zithen and Van Kelly, we are now in the process of gaining university approval for an undergraduate certificate in Francophone Studies, a collaborative effort with the Department of African & African-American Studies. On the Italian side, we have made two wonderful hires in the last year and a half. You can read about Edward Bowen, an advanced lecturer we hired last fall, and Nicola Di Nino, a visiting assistant professor hired this past spring. And in the ultimate sign of departmental harmony, Patrizio Ceccagnoli from the Italian side married Christine Bourgeois from the French side.

As you can read about in the message from our Director of Graduate Studies, our graduate program is thriving. Additionally, both our Italian and French undergraduate programs are doing extremely well. We have spearheaded several outreach and recruiting initiatives and currently have over 150 majors and minors. We have a very active group of students involved in French and Italian Clubs. They have organized numerous activities and brought out record crowds for movie nights, language tables, and cooking classes. The two clubs are working together right now to organize a "Swiss Party" with the German Club next semester. The reactivation of our chapter of Pi Delta Phi, the national French honor society (KU's chapter was founded in 1930) and the establishment of a chapter of the national Italian honor society meant that we inducted more than 30 students into these societies over the last year.

We continue to see a strong level of participation in study abroad, and **this year we were able to award almost \$50,000 in study-abroad scholarships to students.**

Thanks to generous donations, we were also able to help graduate students with conference travel support. I hope you enjoy reading some of the comments from



Some of our 2017 study abroad scholarship winners

students who have studied abroad this past year. As many of you know from your own experiences, it is difficult to overstate the importance of having students spend time living in a foreign country, studying the language and learning about the culture. It helps widen our horizons and see the world around us differently. These kinds of experiences have never been more important than now and it makes me very happy that we are able to help so many students achieve this.

Now that I have had a year to settle into my role as department chair, I am

humbled by the long legacy of French & Italian at KU. It has been tremendously satisfying to have the chance to meet alumni, either through email or in person. If you are ever in Lawrence, please let me know and come pay us a visit. Although it is only a start, if you click on the following [alumni link](#) on our website, you can see the stories we have started to collect from our alumni. Please consider contacting me and volunteering to share your story. This can be beneficial to our current and future students as they try to make their way in the world. I feel very fortunate to work in such a great department with amazing students and enthusiastic colleagues.





Director of Graduate Studies Message

By Van Kelly, DGS

The graduate programs in French and Francophone Studies have had a remarkable year. At our annual fall graduate convocation, we welcomed an incoming class of M.A and Ph.D. candidates recruited from the University of Arizona, University of California-Davis, Michigan State University, Saint-Louis University, and, of course, the University of Kansas, whose strong undergraduate programs often contribute one or two topnotch candidates to our M.A. in French and Francophone Studies. This entering class also includes recipients of two university multi-year fellowships, Chancellor's Doctoral Fellow James Estes, who is interested in Albert Camus and Francophonie, and Hall Center for the Humanities Doctoral Fellow Emily Frederich, whose intellectual focus is the Middle Ages and Renaissance Humanism. In the spring and fall, two of our M.A. candidates, Mary Claire Chao and Lucie Dubail finished their degrees with a flourish and honors. Félicitations, Mary Claire and Lucie! Our current graduate students have been very active professionally: among others, doctoral candidate Kristi Roney (who will defend her dissertation on Balzac and economics in spring 2018) presented at the Nineteenth-Century

French Studies Conference, doctoral candidate Clarisse Barbier at KU Digital Humanities Forum and at the Princeton Graduate Student Conference, M.A. candidate Garrett Gaddy at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette Conference "Visions" (Garrett being, in addition, this year's graduate exchange teaching assistant at the Université de Franche-Comté in Besançon), and M.A. candidate Helena Buchmann (who also received a KU Springer Fellowship to pursue summer research in France) at the University of Colorado's Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference on (Re)activism: Artists and Academics as Political Agents. Ellen Collier, under the aegis of her Hall Center Summer Fellowship, worked as an intern for the Kansas Humanities Council in Topeka, as well as being selected to attend Middlebury College's prestigious Bread Loaf Translator's Conference. Christina Lord received a Graduate Studies



Summer Fellowship to continue work on her dissertation, which revolves around French science fiction, and she was chosen to be a doctoral participant in the Hall Center Faculty Seminar on Posthumanism. Already this fall (what a quick start out of the blocks!) incoming graduate student Olivia Cooper has had a paper accepted for the upcoming Renaissance Studies Graduate Student Conference at the internationally renowned Newberry Library in Chicago. **As you can see, our graduate students' activities are very varied and dynamic, and they represent us well in the university community, nationally, and abroad.** Ah! and I forgot to mention that Kristi Roney and Clarisse Barbier have had articles accepted for publication in refereed scholarly journals, French Review and Présence francophone, respectively. At the graduate recognition luncheon on stop day in May 2018, we undoubtedly will have many further reasons to be proud of our students, as they further our longstanding (and ever-growing!) excellence in French and Francophone graduate studies.





French Club Leaders

French Undergraduate Program

By Christine Bourgeois, Co-Director of French Undergraduate Studies

This has been an exciting year for the French undergraduate program. At the beginning of fall semester, we were thrilled to launch what we hope will be an annual tradition: an Open House for prospective majors and minors. It was a great opportunity for the faculty to get to know some of the students just starting out in French language classes over a slice of pizza, and an even better opportunity for new and returning students to find out about all the wonderful social, academic, and service-based opportunities that French at KU has to offer. Meanwhile, our student organizations were hard at work too. The KU French Club made a big splash when they planned their first major event in September: a cooking lesson with French chef, Claude Aoun. While Chef Claude



demonstrated his process for making the perfect macaron, an audience of over sixty KU students and Lawrence community members enjoyed crêpes fresh off the griddle (thanks to the expert crêpe-flipping skills the French Club officers) and of course, Chef Claude's macarons. **As the fall progressed, the Club has grown by leaps and bounds and just packed the French and Italian Library for a screening of *Les Choristes* accompanied by candy, popcorn, and of course, the good company of our majors and minors.** Our newly rejuvenated chapter of the French Honors Society, Pi Delta Phi, has also begun to take off. This fall, they have been researching ways to organize effective donation of time and money to charities in Haiti. If you are in Lawrence this winter, keep your eyes open for Pi Delta Phi's percentage night to catch up with the French department, enjoy a good meal, and give back to a good cause!



Italian Undergraduate Program

By Patrizio Ceccagnoli, Director of the Italian Program

The Italian Program at KU has lately been more active than ever, or so it seems. This is thanks to a rare, proactive, and friendly group of students who expanded the newly founded Italian Club and organized many different events and activities (gelato night, visit to the Spencer Museum, study groups, etc.).

The whole Program though is expanding thanks to the recent addition of another faculty, Dr Nicola Di Nino, who joined the Department in summer 2017 as the new Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian. He recently gave a successful presentation on "The Fine Art of Italian Gestures" co-sponsored by the Italian Club. As usual, our students gather every Thursday at 5 at a local institution, Wheatfields Bakery, where they mingle with



Prof Andrea Righi

Italian lectures, faculty and other community members to converse and have a slice of cake at the Tavola Italiana. Meanwhile, Dr Edward Bowen has continued to run the Italian Film Series with four screenings for his students and the general public.

In November, Prof. Andrea Righi came from Miami University (Ohio) to be our guest speaker of the semester. He spoke about Fascism and Primitivism in the work of Italian writer, journalist, and director Curzio Malaparte.

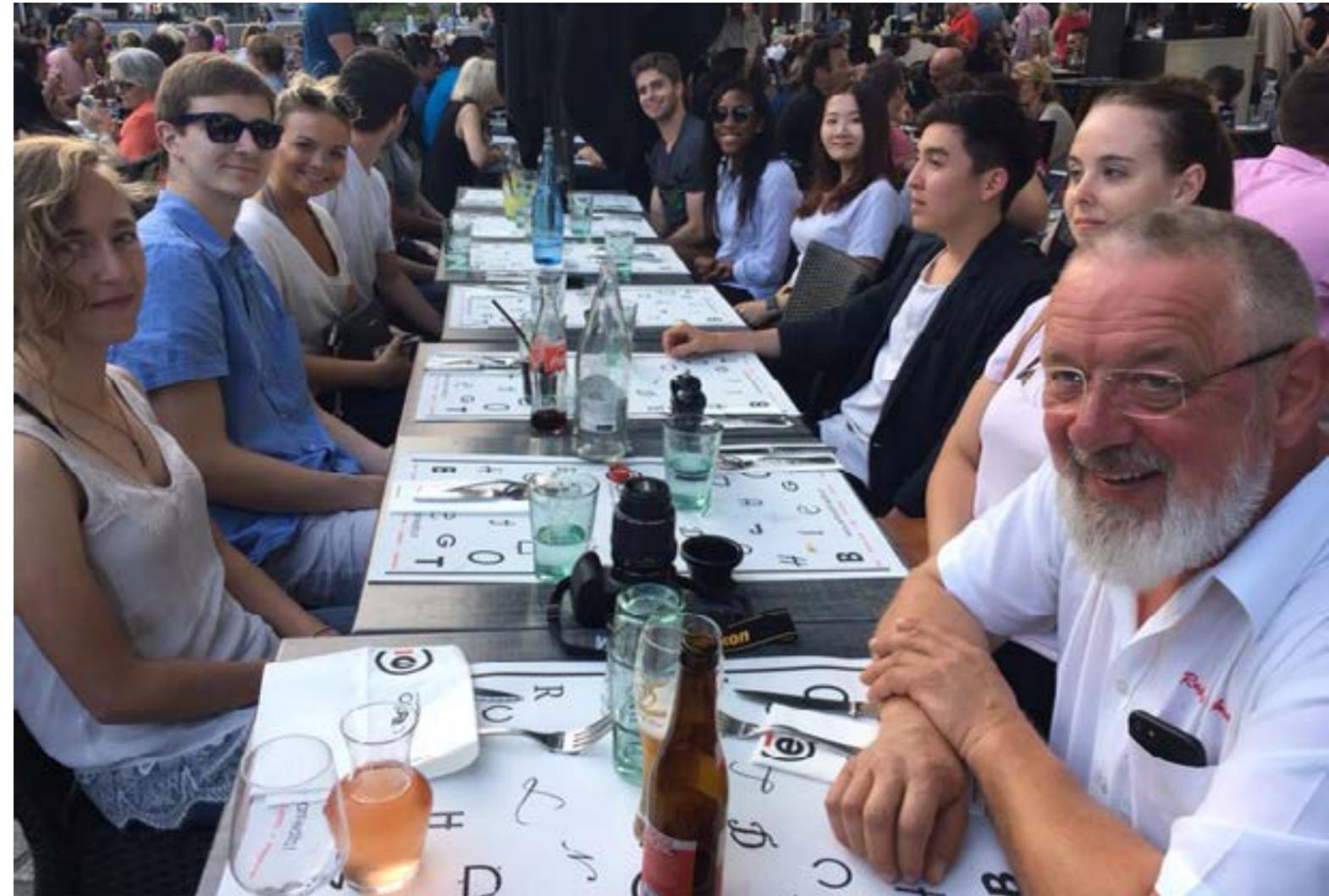
The semester started with an open house in which we welcomed back those students who could go to Florence to study Italian over the summer. Students and faculty selected the best picture taken by our students in Italy. It was a hard choice. The winning picture, taken in the Piazza del Campo in Siena, Tuscany, encapsulates all the joy of our KU students abroad.





Postcards from France

This past summer's Paris Summer Language Institute was a great success, even though it marked the end of an era, with the final bus tour with the world's greatest bus driver, Monsieur Roby Strotz. On the last trip with Roby, students and our own Diane Fourny were able to travel through Alsace-Lorraine, the Loire Valley, Brittany and Normandy.





from program co-director Paul Scott

“We had walking tours in the Marais, Quartier Montorgeuil, and Latin Quarter, during which each student had to prepare a presentation in French on a monument, building, or spot of historic significance. We visited the Musée de Cluny, the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, the Institut du Monde Arabe, and the Musée des Arts et Métiers. We also did a coffee tasting at the Caféothèque, the cradle of new-wave coffee in Paris, whose owner Gloria Montenegro opened it in 2005 after having been the Guatemalan ambassador to France. Gloria coined the term *caféologie* (coffeeology) for the art (and science) of coffee, applying the protocols of wine to the beverage. We had a visit to La Maison du Pastel, a store open once a week on Thursday afternoons which produces handmade pastels. The business was founded in 1720 with over 1300 different colors. The pastels have been used by some of France’s greatest artists from the 18th century to the present-day. We also enjoyed a visit to Stohrer, the oldest pâtissier in Paris, founded in 1730. Some students had a baba au rhum, a small cake known worldwide and which was invented by the very store we were at.”

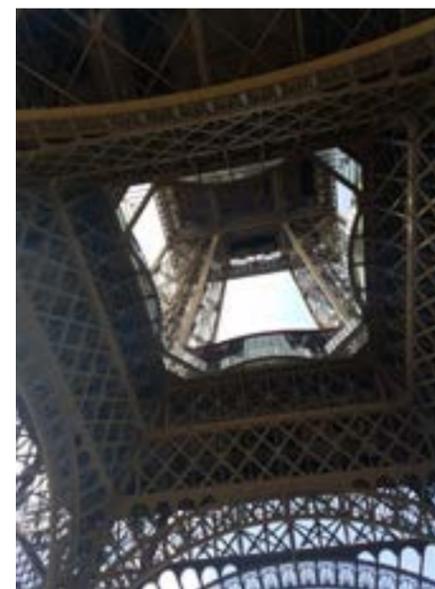


from students



“Studying abroad in Angers, France has really been a blessing. I’ve met so many interesting and cool people from all over the world. I’ve been exposed to a completely new culture that has me very excited to one day come back and possibly live in France. Mostly, I think this study abroad experience has opened the door of possibilities for me, as I no longer see just one life path, but many available to me. It also has encouraged me to truly learn another language and fueled my love for travel. In many ways it has helped me gain practical skills because so many things have gone wrong and being alone here, I’ve had to learn how to deal with the problems that come my way and fix them.”

—Samantha Gilstrap
Angers semester program, 2017



“I participated in the Paris Summer Language Institute this past summer. I think what was most meaningful to me was the opportunity to see and experience other cultures. It really showed me how large the world is, and how different and beautiful other cultures are. Ever since returning to the States, I can’t wait for my next chance to go and explore the world again and to meet new people.”

—Claire Wakefield
Paris SLI 2017



Postcards from Italy

We had a very successful Florence Summer Language Institute this past summer, with almost two dozen students participating, led by Edward Bowen and Ann Talleur. Cultural activities included a cooking class where students made pasta from scratch.



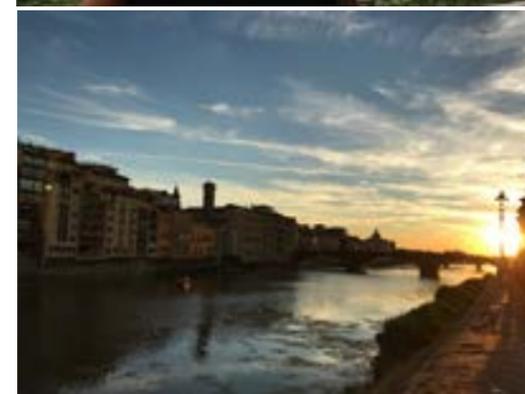
“Every part of my study abroad experience was an opportunity for self-growth. Seeing different parts of the world humbles you in a way that you didn’t think was possible and gives you a new appreciation for the endless amount of differences in our own human race. I feel that I am more ready to discover and learn about new places and new people, and I credit that to my study abroad opportunity in Italy.”

—Lindsay Roush
Rome study abroad, summer 2017



“My study abroad to Italy this past summer was not only my first time studying in another country, it was my first time abroad ever. I made numerous memories while over in Italy, and without support, I would not have been able to achieve this. My understanding of the Italian culture and language grew, and for that I cannot thank you enough.”

—Alexis Derritt
Florence SLI 2017





Wedding of Christine Bourgeois and Patrizio Ceccagnoli

Faculty News

Tom Booker presented a paper on Stendhal as insecure autobiographer at the International Conference on Romanticism, held at the University of Texas at El Paso, in October; while there, he took the opportunity to enjoy an unobstructed view across the border into Mexico, before the great wall goes up. He continues to enjoy teaching at all levels, from Honors sections of third- and fourth-semester French, to graduate seminars, and looks forward as always to hearing from former students.

Edward Bowen has been co-editing a volume on filmmaker Ettore Scola. He traveled to Rome in May 2017 to gather documents from Scola's private archive and to conduct interviews for his essay in the volume.

After serving for three years as Advanced Lecturer, **Christine Bourgeois** is thrilled, this year, to have officially joined KU faculty at the rank Assistant Specialist. Aside from carrying on her ongoing research on medieval saints, medieval stags, and occasionally the intersections between the two, she enjoyed designing and teaching a new course this fall, *Medieval Saints and Modern Sinners*, in which students examined the surprising connections between medieval and modern culture. She is also proud to have taken on the role of faculty advisor to the KU French Club. In the fall, Christine helped the club bring together students and Lawrence community members for a macaron-cooking lesson with local chef Claude Aoun and, just a few days ago, to bring students into Wescoe afterhours for a movie night, complete with popcorn, candy, and that perennial classic of French film, *Les Choristes*.



Patrizio Ceccagnoli, Assistant Professor of Italian, started the year by attending the Modern Language Association (MLA) conference in Philadelphia. He delivered a paper on the major romanticist Italian poet, Giacomo Leopardi, and his anti-anthropocentrism expressed through anthropomorphic forms. It was the most important conference in Ceccagnoli's life. While in Philadelphia, he proposed to his colleague Dr. Christine V. Bourgeois. They then married in NYC in May, the day of the Venerable Bede, patron of scholars. If that isn't romance... Now they are both working on the completion of their first monographs.

Marina de Fazio, in her second year of phased retirement, devotes most of her working time and energy to directing and promoting the Italian Program. While cherishing her lively and lovely advanced students, she is most grateful for her delightful colleagues that make French and Italian such a great place to be, and looks forward to handing in the reins of the program to a worthy successor.

Nicola Di Nino has joined the Department in August where he now teaches Italian language and culture. In the last two years, he has published several articles on Italian cinema and contemporary Italian and European literature.

Bruce Hayes has had a productive year. He completed his book manuscript on post-Reformation polemical humor in France and co-edited an issue of *Yale French Studies* that will be published next fall. He presented papers at the Renaissance Society of America annual meeting in Chicago and at the Mediterranean Studies Association conference in Malta. He was also able to spend a week biking through Champagne with his son this past summer.

Caroline Jewers had a busy year on all fronts: she published an article on a twelfth-century encyclopedia, and gave a paper on the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Liber floridus* at the Mediterranean Studies conference at the University of Valletta in Malta. She is also (she hopes) wrapping up an edition of a page-turning romance called the *Roman de Giglan*: Hollywood has not called yet, but she remains optimistic. She taught favourite undergraduate and graduate classes on French literature in translation and medieval French, and is planning a new course for fall 2018 on French mysteries. She continued her role as associate director of our new School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, and was acting director this fall – she sees this as a wonderful opportunity to advocate for the fields we study, and to promote interdisciplinary dialogue. Here she is with Bruce Hayes, KU alumnus Louis French, and Robert Clark from Kansas State University, who also attended the conference (See photo above.).

Faculty News cont'

Mary Byrd Kelly spent much of 2017 working with Gillian Weatherley to design our new courses in French oral and written communication, French 301 and 302 (good old French 300 is now history). She then spent a couple weeks in Paris where she gave a talk on one of her book translations and sampled the offerings of the city's most illustrious pâtisseries and chocolatiers with her daughter. This fall she translated an article about Rabelais that will appear in Yale French Studies.

Van Kelly especially enjoyed teaching a course on Francophone post-colonial cinema in spring semester 2017. He spent a month in Senegal during the summer, including research in the National Archives of Senegal and an official trip to Saint-Louis du Sénégal to help finalize the renewal of the official KU agreement of cooperation with Université Gaston Berger. He presented papers on Francophone film, literature, and urban spaces at the African Literature Association meeting at Yale University, at the 20th and 21st Centuries International Colloquium in French and Francophone Studies at the University of Indiana, at the African Studies Association annual convention in Chicago. In spring semester 2018, he will be Keeler Family Intra-University Professor in the Department of African and African-American Studies at KU, where he will begin a digital humanities program on Senegalese cities, the Dakar-Ndar Project.

Since publishing his *Balzac, Literary Sociologist*, and while waiting for the reviews, **Allan H. Pasco**, Hall Center Professor of Nineteenth Century Literature, was interviewed by Nataliya Shpylova-Saeed on the New Books Network and lectured at the Maison de Balzac in Paris. He is cur-

rently hard at work on his next, eleventh book: "Masterpieces in Miniature: The French Short Story," where he hopes to offer insight into reasons for the genre's surprising power.

Paul Scott has been working on TV zombie shows from different countries, including the French series *Les Revenants*. In teaching and research, he has been exploring how these shows act as social commentary on issues such as gender, race, and identity. This was his third year teaching French 177, part of a successful KU initiative to increase retention and encourage critical thinking for first-year students.

Over the past year, **Kim Swanson** has created two new major/minor-level courses in the area of French linguistics to add to our expanded offerings for our undergraduates. FREN 441 (The Story of French) focuses on the linguistic and social evolution of the French language from its origins in Latin to Modern French. FREN 443 (French Inside Out) is an introduction to French linguistics. At the graduate level, she helped develop the Certificate in Second Language Studies that interested MA and PhD students

can add to their degrees. She had an article appear in *The French Review* in spring 2017 entitled "Dictées in the French Second Language Classroom: Prevalence, Perceptions, and Findings", and she continues her research on that topic, as well as on acquisition of pronunciation. Her current project entails two follow-up studies on dictation at the first- and second-year levels of French.

This past year **Gillian Weatherley** was able to work with texts which formed the basis for her dissertation. She was delighted to present a paper at the Hall Center on La tyrannie des fees détruite, and to have the opportunity to study some literature with a FREN 326 class. She continues to co-ordinate the 200-level sections, and has spent a good part of the year redesigning FREN 300 with Madame Kelly. The "boot camp" class is slowly turning into a glass slipper!

During the fall semester 2017, **Antje Ziethen** was a Fellow at the KU Hall Center for the Humanities. The Fellowship provides an office space as well as release time from teaching and service for one semester to focus entirely on research. While at the Hall Center, Antje was working on her new book project *Heteropolis: The Urban Americas in African Literature*. As a recipient of the Hall Center Faculty Travel Grant, she also travelled to Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, Brazil, to learn more about the Afro-Brazilian community and their links to the African continent.