

# Notes from Wescoe

2023





# Chair's Message

by Bruce Hayes



It's hard to believe that 2023 is already coming to a close. It has certainly been an eventful year. In May, Professor Emeritus David Dinneen passed away. You can read his obituary at the end of the newsletter. When I first became chair, David set up a fund with KU Endowment

to provide scholarships to students studying abroad in France. Over the years, I have enjoyed going to see David from time to time and have often brought him thank-you cards from students who benefited from his generosity. I was getting ready to do this again in May when I learned from his family that he had entered hospice care. I was able to deliver the cards to one of his daughters who was able to read them to him. What a legacy. I think David would have approved that I missed his funeral because I was leading a group of KU students through Normandy and Brittany, just as David had done so many times.

Speaking of legacies, also in May I received word that two wonderful alums, Ron Scrogam (MA in French) and Christi Ivers (PhD in Spanish) were setting up a fund in memory of Allan Pasco. The fund is intended to support graduate students, just as Allan had supported them when they were at KU. While Ron was at KU before my time here, I had the honor of serving on Christi's doctoral dissertation committee. This marks the first time I have been involved with a fund set up by a student I have known during my time at KU.

More recently, another former student, Colby Brown, whom I remember fondly from my first years at

KU, reached out to say that he would like to establish a fund in memory of Jan Kozma, the person who led the Italian program for many years at KU, as well as serving as chair of the department. What a treat it was to share stories about Jan with Colby. Once his fund is set up, it will be the first fund that will be exclusively dedicated to supporting students studying abroad in Italy. This is truly exciting. Interactions with people like Ron and Christi and Colby are unquestionably a highlight of being chair. I never stop being surprised and impressed by alumni generosity and I love hearing about the ways that various department faculty had a meaningful impact on their students, an impact that is still felt many years later.

Even in our small department, things ebb and flow with departures and arrivals. Last December we feted Tom Booker's career at KU, and this December we are doing the same for Gillian Weatherley, who is retiring. This past academic year, we conducted a search and were able to hire Sophia Mo, a Francophone specialist who works on North Africa and who completed her PhD at Columbia University this past summer. Welcome, Sophia!



We had another successful French Immersion Day for K-12 French teachers in the region.

Last year I started a series I called 'Final Fridays Research-in-Progress,' which were luncheons held in our department library where faculty and graduate students could share their current research

with the department. We have expanded it to include alumni guests. Last spring, in addition to an engaging presentation about his doctoral research by PhD candidate Ousmane Diop and a fascinating presentation by Paul Scott on the scandalous history of *décolletage* in France, we welcomed Dustin Alkire, an alum who has built an incredibly successful career and life in France and who was back in Kansas visiting family. This fall, in addition to an entertaining presentation on his translation projects by Patrizio Ceccagnoli, we welcomed four more alums. We had the chance to visit with Tracy Rutler, Associate Professor at Penn State, as well as Mary Claire Chao, currently completing a PhD in French at Brown University, followed by Andrea Purdue, who has had a multifaceted career, including extensive translation work, and returned to Kansas recently to embark on a prairie restoration project, among other things, and Helena Buchmann, a campaign consultant and political operative in Kansas. These have been wonderful opportunities for current and past students to exchange ideas, and for faculty to see all the incredible things our alums are doing in the world. If you're interested in participating in one of these luncheons, please let me know!

If you follow us on Facebook, then you know that this has been a year packed with activities, some of which you can see in this newsletter. I would like to give a special shoutout to our graduate students, who have



Our own fabulous alum, Catherine Ousselin, was the keynote for this year's Immersion Day

gone above and beyond this year. They have set up a film series, been active participants at both French Table and Pause Café, and recently put together an evening of cooking French food with the French Club. I am beyond impressed with their many efforts to support our undergraduate program. I also marvel at the energy and efficiency of our administrative associates, Rosalyn Lucas and Wyatt Haywood.

I am very thankful for the tremendous support we receive from our alumni. We appreciate your financial contributions, and we appreciate the ways in which you help support current students by sharing your stories and providing mentorship. To give just one example of this, when a student recently mentioned she was interested in pursuing a career in the U. S. Foreign Service, I was immediately able to put her in contact with an alum who had a distinguished foreign-service career. Those kinds of connections matter a great deal.



Amazing group of students for this year's Paris Summer Language Institute.

I wish you all a peaceful holiday season. Happy holidays!

Bruce Hayes, Chair

Department of French, Francophone & Italian Studies



# Message from the Director of Graduate Studies

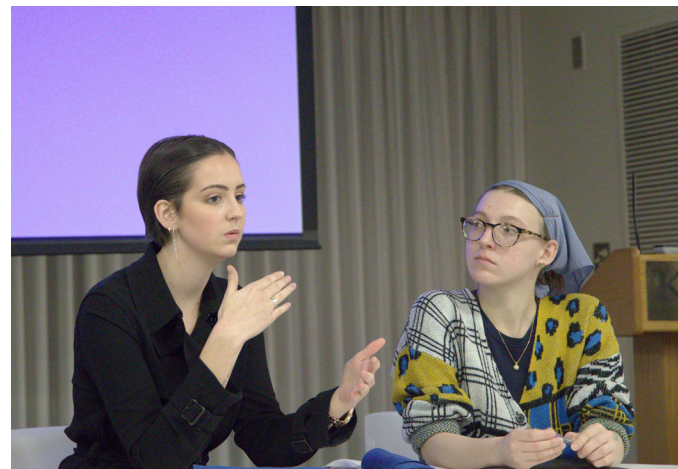
by Van Kelly



As we close the fall semester, it is a pleasure to review the accomplishments of our graduate students in French and Francophone Studies. This fall, we welcomed an outstanding international class of three M.A. candidates and

one Ph.D. candidate: Laurel Aspegren who did her undergraduate degree(s) in French and Italian at KU before entering the M.A. program in French (with a minor in Italian!); John Gorman, aspiring *pâtisserie chef* and creative writer who graduated from KU with majors in French and English; Michelle Roesner, another Jayhawk who received her B.A. in French and Anthropology and who has an outstanding record of community service and teaching; and Kamba Kombat who did his undergraduate studies at the Wineba University of Education in Ghana, and an Erasmus M.A. in French from the Université de Strasbourg and the University of Thessalonike before matriculating to the Ph.D. program at KU. Members of our M.A. class of 2022—Zoe Chan, Cesar Fluckiger, Mathis Philippe, and Seth Middleton, are busy making very good progress on their course work and on the revised (and somewhat shorter) literature reading list for the M.A. comprehensive exams this coming spring. Three members of the class of 2021—Seyram Gawu, Bronwen

Jenkins, and Kodjovi Koulekpató—graduated with the M.A. in French this past spring. Congratulations Seyram, Bronwen, and Kodjovi! Seth Middleton received the award for Excellence in M.A. Graduate Studies in French and Rebecca Wetzel the award for excellence in Ph.D. Graduate Studies at our spring graduate recognition ceremony. Mathis Philippe received the award for Outstanding Departmental Service for his excellent work organizing and hosting the French Ciné Club. Seyram Gawu and Kodjovi Koulekpató, excellent teachers of beginning-level French, received David Dinneen awards for Pedagogical Excellence in French.



Michelle Roesner and Laurel Aspegren present at the 10th Annual Mock Conference.

At the Department's annual fall Introduction to Graduate Studies Mock Conference—held in November at the Kansas Union—M.A. candidates Aspegren and Roesner presented ground-breaking research papers on *La Honte*, an autobiographical text by 2023 Nobel-prizewinning French author Annie Ernaux (France maintains its crushing dominance in the Nobel Prize arena, but that is no surprise!) about her working-class upbringing in Normandy. M.A. candidates Gorman and Kombat, on the other hand, delivered cutting-edge analyses of novelist Boubacar Boris Diop's experimental and labyrinthine African novel *Le Cavalier et son ombre*, on the powers

and dangers of oral story-telling. Ousmane Lecoq Diop, Brigid Enchill, and Rebecca Wetzel are writing chapters of their dissertations (Ousmane, "Navigation et traduction culturelles multidimensionnelles: La question des langues entre Sénégalité et cosmopolitisme au Sénégal contemporain"; Brigid, "Literary and Filmic Representations of Sovereignty, Corruption, and Governance in Francophone Haiti and Western Africa"; and Rebecca, "Montaigne's Other Bodies: Onanism, Animals, and Anthropophagy in the *Essais*"). Just before the start of fall classes, Ellen Collier successfully defended her dissertation on medieval lyric poetry, "Emotional Affect in the Poetry of Eustache Deschamps": congratulations, Ellen, our latest Ph.D. and a proud addition to our long tradition of medieval scholarship.

Our graduate students have been very active in the field of French and Francophone Studies. Ousmane Lecoq Diop travelled to Dakar, Senegal in December 2022-January 2023 to pursue research on his dissertation on contemporary Senegalese languages and literatures. He interviewed novelist and editor Boubacar Boris Diop as well as filmmaker Moussa Absa Sene. Ousmane is studying Arabic this year in KU's Department of African and African-American Studies, as the recipient of prestigious Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships from the U.S. Department of Education. He also presented his scholarly paper, "Oral Tradition as a Palimpsest in the Senegalese Cultural, Literary, Artistic, and Audiovisual Creations of Boubacar Boris Diop and Moussa Sene Absa" at the annual African Association Studies meeting in San Francisco in December. Doctoral candidate Brigid Enchill was named a Digital Humanities Fellow by the KU Institute for Research for 2023-2024, and also received a KU Digital Jumpstart Course Funding award for beginning and intermediate-level French

courses. Brigid will be presenting a paper, "The Dangers of Aid as a Tool of Neo-colonialism: The Case of Raoul Peck's, *Assistance Mortelle* and Makenzy Orcel's *L'ombre animale*" at the upcoming 20th and 21st Century International French and Francophone Studies Colloquium at Villanova University, as will M.A. candidate Seth Middleton, whose paper is entitled "Harnessing Chaos in a Crazy World in Ananda Devi's *Pagli*." Seth also served as the graduate teaching assistant for our pre-pre-Olympics 2023 Summer Language Institute in Paris. Rebecca Wetzel received a KU Graduate Studies Summer Research Fellowship to work on her dissertation on Renaissance essayist Montaigne.

Congratulations to all these graduate students, whose activities continue to be impressive and impactful. They represent us well in the university community, nationally, and abroad. At the graduate convocation in May 2024, we will have many more reasons to be proud of our students, as they further our longstanding excellence in French and Francophone graduate studies.



John Gorman, Laurel Aspegren, Michelle Roesner and Kamba Kombat smile for the camera before their presentations.



# French Undergraduate Program

by Paul Scott

It feels like 2023 has been the first fully normal year since the pandemic. The French program has continued in its recruitment activities such as the French Open House in the fall and on a more personal level with different faculty reaching out and meeting motivated students in the first few semesters of taking French. This provides an opportunity to talk about study abroad and the scholarships we offer, in addition to extra-curricular activities. We continue to promote study abroad, particularly our two sponsored programs during the summer in Paris or a semester



This summer's Paris study abroad group

(even a year) in Angers. In advising, students are sometimes surprised that they can fit in a French major or minor when doing a demanding first major by studying abroad and our generous scholarships have enabled this possibility to become reality for so many students who then get to practise and perfect

their French outside of Fraser and Wescoe.

French Table meets every Thursday during term and has been attracting up to a couple of dozen participants, including members of the local community and French-speaking ex pats. Other events include the weekly Pause Café in Wescoe, the annual Alpine Party, a volleyball game, a pétanque/ bocce icebreaker on Watson lawn, a French vs. Italian soccer match, and a Jeopardy trivia game. French students were also able to take advantage all this year of the Ciné Club organized by MA student Mathis Philippe – our thanks to him for providing such great programming.



Paul Scott and Bruce Hayes catching up with alumna Helena Buchmann in Paris.

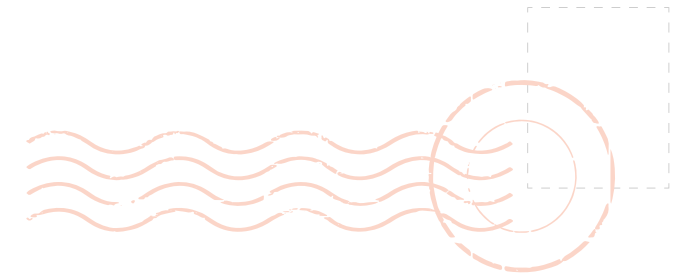
We had a number of visiting speakers this year, one highlight being the April visit of Prof. Simon Bréan from Sorbonne Université, Paris, a world-renowned specialist in French science fiction. Prof. Bréan taught Paul Scott's hybrid undergraduate/graduate class on science fiction, gave a Hall Center lecture, met with graduate students at an informal lunch, and spoke at an outreach event at the Spencer Research Library joined by our alumna Christina Lord, assistant professor of French at UNC Wilmington. He rounded off his visit with a trip to the Tallgrass Prairies with Paul

Scott, Christina Lord, and affiliate faculty Kij Johnson, where he saw bison in the wild followed by his first experience of meatloaf (verdict = "délicieux!").



Professors Giselle Anatol (KU, English), Simon Bréan (Sorbonne), and Christina Lord (UNC-Wilmington)

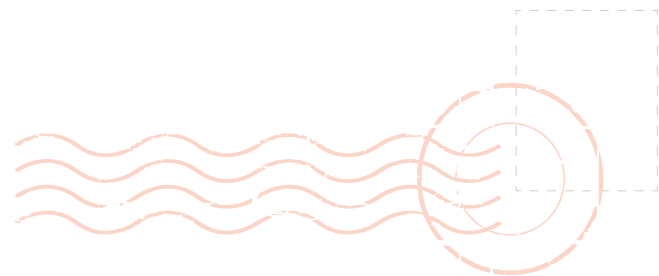
## Postcards from France



I am so grateful to have been able to spend four months in Angers this fall. Through my study abroad semester, I built meaningful friendships, vastly improved my French skills, and pushed myself out of my comfort zone. I know I will miss the boulangeries, the fresh produce, and the convenient public transportation! My time in France has shown me just how transformational travel can be, and I can't wait to return to Europe.

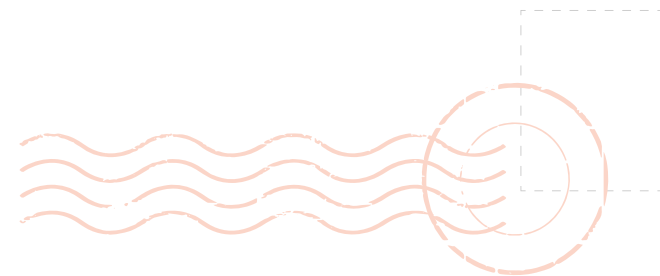
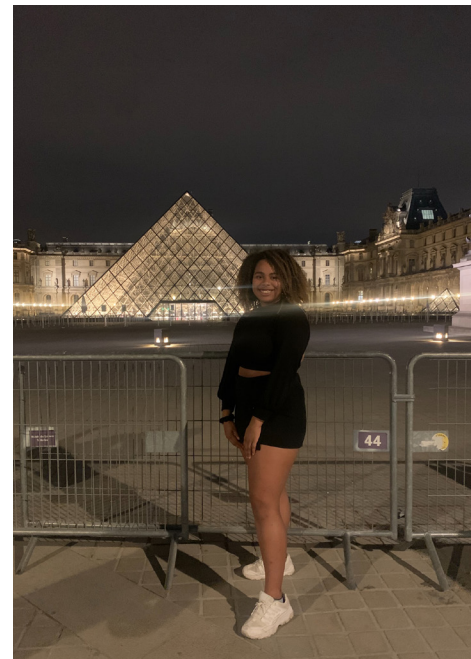
- Naomi James





I can't begin to describe how grateful I am for this program. I took away two very important lessons. First, I am much more capable than I ever thought. It is not easy to be a part of something so new and unfamiliar, but you can and will get through it. Second, the world is filled with opportunity. I had the opportunity to improve my French, learn about another culture, and make so many new friends that I continue to keep in touch with. I encourage others to experience this and hope they have as amazing a time as I did.

Best,  
Alexia 'AJ' Watson



Studying abroad for a summer in Paris was an amazing experience and I absolutely can't wait to go back as soon as possible! Not only did my confidence in French greatly improve, I got to try French food from a legit French chef (my host dad!), see all sorts of amazing things, and meet some lovely people at KU (pictured). Having the opportunity to live in another country for a month, eating the food, living with a host family, and studying at a French language school was absolutely life-changing, and the memories that I've made will linger with me for a long time.

-Lucy Axmann



I have always planned to study abroad in college and I'm so glad that I finally got the opportunity! Spending 4 months in Angers, France has been one of the most fun experiences of my college career. The French classes that I've taken at KU were wonderful, but I've learned twice as much being immersed in the language while studying at the Université Catholique de l'Ouest! While I've enjoyed every moment of the experience, building a relationship with my host family has been my absolute favorite part. This short stay in the Pays de la Loire has inspired me to explore graduate study options in Europe, so I know this will not be my last voyage en France!

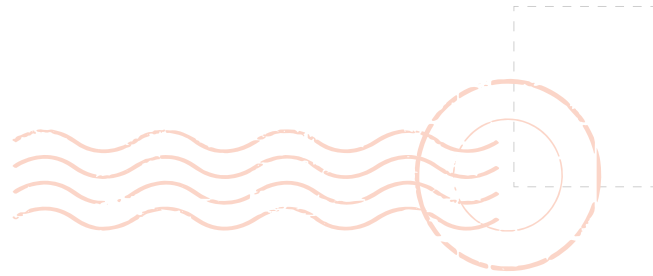
-Tyler Hausthor

This past summer I was able to study abroad in Paris. Despite the program being a month long, I became attached to the city and everything it had to offer. I got to improve my fluency in French and learn about the culture like I never would have in a classroom. I will forever be thankful for my time abroad and I can't wait to visit France again.

- Emily Locke



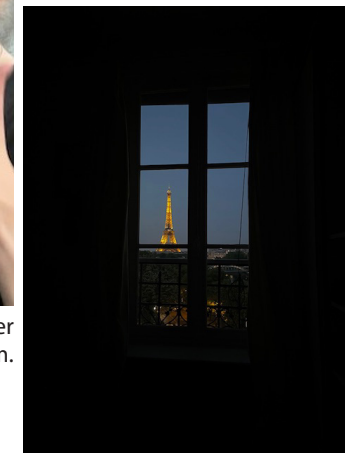




Bonjour from Paris! My name is Mallory Wells and I did the Paris program this past summer. I am still in awe of the experience, and it was such an immense privilege to be a part of this study abroad program. Having the opportunity to learn French by immersing myself in the culture and the language was one of the most challenging but also profound experiences that I have had in my life. From the salty air of Étretat to Monet's sunset water lilies, this trip was full of beautiful moments that I will cherish forever. It was hard to leave Paris by the end of the trip, however I am lucky to have made so many wonderful and enduring friendships with my fellow travelers. I am so thankful to the French department at KU for facilitating this amazing experience.



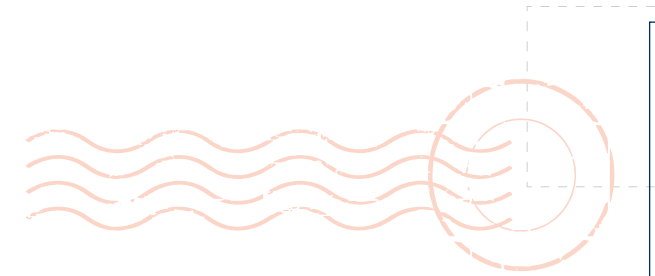
Getting rained on while visiting the Eiffel Tower with a couple friends I met outside of the program.



My bedroom view in Paris.

My time in France was one of the most valuable experiences of my life. It allowed me to not only improve my knowledge of French and French culture immensely but also allowed me to expand my worldview. Finally, I have made many wonderful friends that still remain close to me even after the program has ended.

Best,  
Mahen



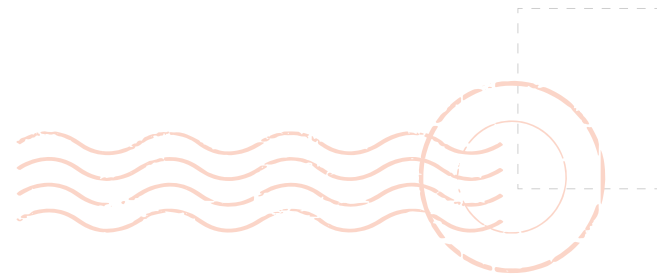
Hello,

My name is Sofia Quintana and I am a student at the Université catholique de l'ouest for Fall semester 2023. Since I was little, I always wanted to study abroad. Studying abroad in Angers, France is truly special. The city and way of life here are truly magnificent. This program has shown me a new culture, new experiences, and has helped my French skills immensely. I'm forever grateful for this program and can't wait to visit France again.

Bonjour de Paris! My name is Dana and I had the absolute honor and privilege to study abroad in Paris this summer. This experience abroad was the only way that I was able to finish my French degree from KU because I work as a teacher and so I cannot take regularly scheduled classes. Living in Paris was an incredible experience and one I am so grateful to have had. I am eternally appreciative for the time that I spent learning and speaking French with my peers, teachers, and my host family. It had been a dream of mine for roughly 20 years to visit Paris and to see the Eiffel Tower, and to have been able to do that AND finish my degree is so special to me. This is an experience I will never forget, and one that I think about quite often. I definitely cannot wait for my next trip back to the City of Lights!







My name is Allison FitzSimmons! I'm a junior Psychology and Theatre Performance major originally from Lincoln, Nebraska. In the summer of 2023, I had the tremendous opportunity to participate in the Paris Summer Language Institute. The five weeks I spent studying (and gallivanting) around France were some of the most transformational and fulfilling of my life. The personal growth I experienced was unlike anything I could've expected; from developing confidence in my independence and learning the intricacies of a different culture to seeing some of the most surreal and beautiful pieces of art and eating bread in a simple park, I saw the world through new eyes. This experience exposed me to the vast possibilities of life, the world, and myself which are three things that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Studying abroad in France was life-changing! Not only did living in France convince me that I should start drinking coffee, but it has helped develop my world view. With the opportunity to study and research Paris, I was able to find parts of my identity and the values that I hold. Speaking French in Paris was fun and rewarding, and it greatly developed the complexity of my French. I definitely want to visit again!

Au revoir,  
Matthew Hoopes



## Italian Undergraduate Program

by Patrizio Ceccagnoli



2023 marked a extraordinary milestone for the Italian Studies Program at KU. For the first time in our history, we received a visit from the Consul General of Italy in Chicago, Thomas Botzios, and the Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in

Chicago, Luca Di Vito. Thanks to them, the Italian Program received the necessary support for the creation of two new online courses in asynchronous mode: Elementary Italian, designed by Dr. Francesca Beretta, and a course devoted to postwar Italian Cinema, designed by Dr. Edward Bowen.



Consul General of Italy in Chicago, Thomas Botzios, and the Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Chicago, Luca Di Vito, look at a selection of medieval manuscripts at the Spencer Research Library.

As is customary, over the course of the year, we organized a series of international events. In April, we celebrated National Poetry Month with a bilingual poetry reading and open discussion on



Faculty, graduate students, and guests meet with Thomas Botzios and Luca Di Vito at the welcome reception held in the French, Francophone, and Italian Library

ecopoetry, translations, and artistic collaborations in the company of Italian poet and scholar Maria Borio and our very own Megan Kaminski (Professor of English & Environmental Studies). In September, we celebrated the release of a book of Italian poetry, co-translated by Dr. Patrizio Ceccagnoli, at the Raven Book Store in Lawrence. Meanwhile, our film specialist, Dr. Bowen organized a couple of events: first, a lecture by Dr. Damien Pollard (University of Cambridge), who spoke about The Political History of the Voice in Italian Cinema, and, then in the Fall, the screening of the Italian documentary *The Jungle*, followed by a Q&A with the director, Christian Natoli.

Like every semester, in collaboration with our dynamic Italian Club, we participated in a various array of initiatives: two film series, outdoor games, and, of course, the Italian Tavola, run weekly by Dr. Beretta at Wheatfields Bakery. The Italian team returned to victory in the fundamental October



Poetry Event at the KU Natural History Museum



challenge as we won the annual competition on the soccer field and we now lead 2 to 1. *Forza Italia!*



Students, faculty and community members gather at Tavola Italiana to practise their Italian Language skills.



Francesca Beretta turns to the camera during the French and Italian Club Volleyball Game.



Poetry reading at the Raven Bookstore with Patrizio Ceccagnoli, Megan Kaminski, and Maria Borio.

Join us for a public lecture on the use of voice and dubbing in cinema

**A Sound with Many Sources:  
The Political History of the Voice in Italian Cinema**

**Tues. April 18  
4pm**

**Hall Center for  
the Humanities  
Conference  
Room**

**Dr. Damien Pollard (Research Fellow, University of Cambridge)**

Sponsored by:  
The Hall Center for the Humanities, Dept. of French, Francophone & Italian  
Studies, KU French Center of Excellence, and the Dept. of Film & Media Studies

Flyer for Damien Pollard's lecture.

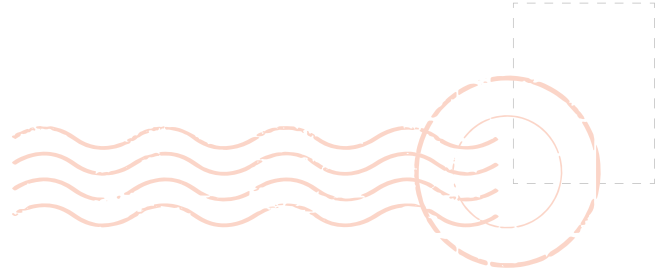


Italian Club achieved victory over the French Club at the annual soccer match.



Students enjoy their time while studying abroad in Florence.

# Postcards from Italy



My summer in Italy is one I'll never forget. I had many great adventures both organized with a group and by myself. There are so many cities and towns within a day's reach that made for great day trips either on weekends or after class. I walked past the Duomo every day for class, and it never ceased to amaze me. All the instructors were amazing and seemed to truly care about their students. I met so many wonderful people, some now lifelong friends, from all over the world.

- Greta Hayden



Studying abroad in Florence was such an incredible and rewarding experience. This program exceeded all my expectations. Our host family was so supportive and welcoming. It genuinely felt like a home away from home. Moreover, our host mom was a fantastic cook! The cultural immersion helped improve my Italian language skills substantially and allowed me to have a more authentic experience of Italian life and culture. With the help of our amazing teacher, Massimo Ferrara, we were able to travel to many different cities in Italy that I had dreamed about visiting! I'm so lucky to have participated in KU's truly unforgettable study-abroad program!

- Alyssa Witzgall







**Christine Bourgeois** has had an enchanted 2023. She was lucky enough to receive a Hall Center Resident Faculty Fellowship for the Fall Semester and this has allowed her to dedicate herself full time to research. Most specifically, she has spent been

moving her monograph through its final phases, and could not be more grateful to her colleagues in FFIT and at the Hall Center for making this possible. Of course, this means that she does not have as much to report on the teaching front as usual. Stay tuned in 2024 for more on her (hopefully) glorious return to the classroom.



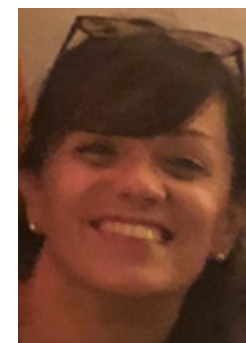
**Edward Bowen** enjoyed teaching ITAL/FMS 331: Mafia Movies in Spring 2023 to a highly engaged group of 52 students. Attendance was strong, in-class participation exceeded all expectations, and students enjoyed conversing

with several high-profile guests. In March 2023, Edward had a wonderful experience giving an invited talk at the University of New Hampshire, titled “Long Takes and Use of Space in Ettore Scola’s Films”. In April, he received the Jessie Marie Senor Cramer & Ann Cramer Root Research and Teaching Award. He would like to publicly thank the donors for these generous research funds, which allowed him to buy a new computer and conduct research in Rome for over a week at the Luigi Chiarini Library. From mid-June to mid-July, Bowen

co-directed the study abroad program in Florence. Some highlights included visiting the Opera del Duomo Museum, seeing a Luca Giordano exhibit at the Palazzo Medici-Ricciardi, and spending a beautiful day exploring the Tuscan hill town Arezzo. In September, Edward submitted the manuscript for a forthcoming volume that he co-edited with Damien Pollard titled *Film Exhibition: The Italian Context* (Oxford: Legenda, 2024). He is currently working on a new online course, FMS/ITAL 332: Studies in Italian Cinema, that will be offered this coming summer.



Visit to the Opera del Duomo Museum



**Francesca Beretta** joined KU in the Fall of 2022, and since then, she has been devoted to reshaping lower-division language curricula. She is particularly interested in applying micro-learning and human-centered design

to enhance the post-COVID student experience. A significant portion of her time this year was dedicated to developing the online asynchronous Italian Elementary course (ITAL110), set to launch in the Spring 2024. Additionally, she collaborated

on the textbook *Dieci for English Speakers* by Alma Edizioni, a leading Italian publishing house specializing in books and materials for teaching Italian to foreigners. The volume was unveiled at the ACTFL conference held in Chicago in November 2023. During the Summer of 2023, Francesca co-directed the KU Study Abroad program in Florence alongside Dr. Bowen. She eagerly anticipates the opportunity to guide students there once again in the Summer of 2024. #rockchalk



**Patrizio Ceccagnoli** is glad to report a very productive year as he published three books (one edition and two translations) and one article. In Spring 2023, along with former MacArthur fellow Susan Stewart, he co-authored the first English

translation of Antonella Anedda’s most recent book of poetry, *Historiae*, which was released with New York Review of Books. Almost at the same time, in Milan, two other books were released: Ceccagnoli’s edition of Anne Carson’s masterpiece *Glass, Irony and God* (*Vetro, Ironia e Dio*; Crocetti Editore) and the first Italian translation of Carson’s *Decreation* (*Decreazione*; Utopia Editore). In Summer 2023, he published an article on the most celebrated poem by Anne Carson, *The Glass Essay*, which appeared in *Poesia*. In May, he was thrilled to attend a symposium in honor of his *amica geniale* (“brilliant friend”), Susan Stewart, at Princeton University. Ceccagnoli was selected as the recipient of the Hall Center Professorship for 2023-24 and 2024-25.



2023 was a fairly eventful year. In March, **Bruce Hayes** was able to attend the annual conference of the Renaissance Society of America held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A highlight was getting to meet the actor Peter Weller, aka Robocop,

who also holds a PhD in Italian Renaissance Art History. Dr. Weller also has a Lawrence connection, having visited our town multiple times to see his friend William Burroughs, whom he played in the film version of *Naked Lunch*. Future collaborations are in the works. In April, he published “Rabelaisian Satire and Conciliation in the *Satyre Menippe*” in a volume in honor of the French Renaissance scholar Jean-Claude Carron. At the end of May, he was able to take a group of students to France for the Paris Summer Language Institute, his first time to co-direct the program since 2016. In October he traveled to Austin for a weeklong visit as a Big XII Faculty Fellow at the University of Texas, where he had the chance to do a presentation on the department’s recruiting and retention efforts. He has just submitted a chapter for the forthcoming Brill Companion to Humour in Early Modern Europe on Laurent Joubert, who was the personal doctor of



Hanging out with Dr. Peter Weller at the Renaissance Society of America conference.



Catherine de' Medici and Henri III, as well as chancellor of the School of Medicine in Montpellier. In 1579, Joubert published the first-ever treatise on laughter, a fascinating and forgotten document. In January he will be heading to Philadelphia for the annual MLA conference, as he will be starting a five-year term on the executive committee of 16<sup>th</sup>-century French studies.



You never know where the next adventure in medieval studies will take you... This year was yet another busy one, and while most of **Caroline Jewers's** free time was spent in the archives, there was some travel, too. In the spring semester she attended the Renai in San Juan, Puerto Rico with Professors Bruce Hayes and Jayhawk alumnus Jeff Kendrick (VMI), where she spoke on Renaissance novels based on medieval romances

of chivalry. In San Juan, she even got to see a rare example of medieval architecture in the New World. In May she attended the Mediterranean Studies conference in Brno, Czechia and spoke on a new line in research on the rise of French detective fiction, and the contemporary mystery writer, Fred Vargas. Finishing up old projects and seeding new ones took up about all the available space in 2023, and she looks forward to new articles and projects in the New Year.



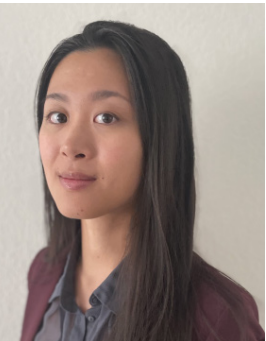
**Mary Byrd Kelly** continues teaching courses on 300-level French grammar and is enjoying teaching phonetics as well this fall. She looks forward to teaching her course in English on France and the French this spring. It is always satisfying to

share French history and culture with a broad range of students, even some who do not speak a word of the language. In addition to her teaching, Mary worked this past summer on the translation of a journal article written by a French magistrate on the scientific and cultural uses of sealed evidence by the Memorial Museum of Terrorism, which is planned to be open in Paris in 2027.

**Van Kelly** attended two professional colloquia, the 20th and 21st Century International French and Francophone Studies in March at the University of Arizona, where he presented his paper



"The Language Desert: Jubilation and Barrenness in Saint-John Perse's *Anabase* and Lorand Gaspar's *Sol absolu*," and in November the African Studies Association convention in San Francisco, where, aside from having a much-anticipated *céebu jën* at Bissap Baobab®, he presented "National Healing and Spirit Possession Ceremonies: *Ndëpp* as Model for Individual and Collective Action in Ken Bugul's *Cacophonie*, *Rue Félix-Faure*, *Aller et Retour*, and *Le Trio Bleu*." In the spring he taught one of his favorite courses, Francophone Postcolonial Cinema, to a class of excellent French majors, minors and French graduate students, and in the fall he taught the celebrated French 326 where twelve French majors and minors received their introduction to French drama, novel, and poetry (especially poetry).



**Sophia Mo** is a new faculty member at KU. She very much enjoyed teaching an enthusiastic group of undergraduate students in her intermediate conversation course. Her mixed graduate and undergraduate course, Roots &

Routes: Francophone African Literature, was also a great source of intellectual fulfillment for Sophia. She looks forward to teaching her next graduate course.

As for her research, Sophia has been concentrating on securing external funding for her book project, *Rescripting Liberation from the Margins: Women's Emancipation and the Global Anticolonial Struggle in the Revolutionary Periodicals of Algeria*. This is a feminist historiographical study of periodical print culture during the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962) and

Algeria's first post-independence regime (1962-1965).



**Paul Scott** directed the Paris portion of the Paris Summer Language Institute this summer with 15 students. The Paris SLI began a month earlier from its traditional start and will continue to take place from late May to the end of June

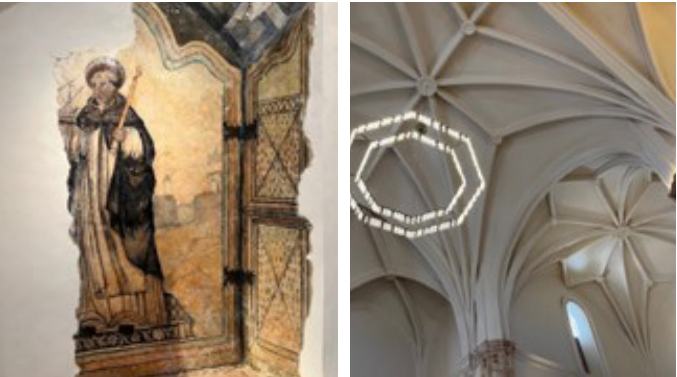
because of the record-breaking summer temperatures in recent years. After the summer program, Paul spent 7 weeks in Iceland on two writing residencies at the Gullkistan Center for Creativity in Laugarvatn and at the UNESCO Cities

of Literature residency at Gröndal's House in Reykjavik. He was able to see July's spectacular volcanic eruption at close quarters only a few hours after it appeared. This year saw Paul's promotion to full professor. He was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society in recognition

of his continuing work on South Korean science fiction and he has been actively learning Korean this year in anticipation of next summer's research trip to Busan (a fitting location for a zombie scholar!). He was appointed as a KU Honors Faculty Fellow in the fall and has been closely involved with the activities and mission of the Honors Program. Paul's publications in 2023 include an article titled "Décolletage Disputes in Early Modern France"



Paul's visit to the newly erupted volcano during his Iceland residencies.



Top: Medieval architecture in San Juan. Bottom: Bruce Hayes, Caroline Jewers, and Jeff Kendrick in San Juan.



and a critical edition of a 1649 play in an anthology found in other Francophone regions/countries. on provincial theater published by Garnier (Paris).



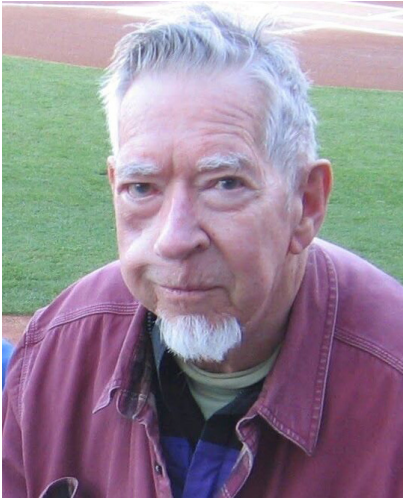
**Kim Swanson** serves as the Language Program Director for French, and she really enjoys working with the TAs who teach our 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-year French courses. This past year has included major curriculum changes and innovations in 1<sup>st</sup>-year French, with the move to a new textbook and online system. This new textbook/system not only offers enhanced activities and updated content, but is also more cost effective for students. At the same time, Prof. Swanson has begun development of a fully asynchronous sequence of our lower-level courses, beginning with first semester (FREN 110), which will be ready by spring, and second semester (FREN 120) will be ready by Fall 2024. These asynchronous courses will allow us to reach new groups of students, including those who are doing fully online degrees at KU, and high school or college students from other institutions. She continues work on her newest project in conjunction with KU's Open Language Resource Center, a French phonetics textbook/online program entitled "*Que/ accent ?!*" that will be open access, free for use by both university and K-12 teachers of French. The activities will be interactive and provide learners with immediate feedback, also making this a very useful resource for those who are learning French independently, outside of a classroom. While the program focuses on Standard/International French, as the version that is recognized and understood by Francophones around the world, it also presents variations



**Gillian Weatherley** continues to enjoy working with Kim Swanson, primarily supporting the instructors at the intermediate level. Their work with their students and the effort and care they put into their teaching is wonderful. As do all the professors, instructors focus on finding new ways to engage with students and to support the activities offered by the department. Dr Weatherley continues to get a kick out of teaching and loves to see students relax and improve. Using TalkAbroad has been a wonderful tool to encourage students to use the language they are learning with native speakers. The open access book Le Pont has been a success and more and more people from other institutions have inquired about it. It encouraged her to modify it significantly to provide an open access fourth-semester text *Communiquons*, which provides additional grammar practice as well as listening and vocabulary exercises. This year also was the occasion for the first family holiday in twenty years with all members meeting in Colorado. Lovely not to have the humidity!

# David Dinneen

David Dinneen earned a BA in French from Queens College in 1952, an MA in Romance Languages from the University of Kansas in 1954, and a PhD in Linguistics from Harvard University in 1962. While earning his doctorate, he worked on machine translation at MIT with Noam Chomsky, whom he respected as a linguist and came to agree with on geopolitics as the 1960s and 1970s unfolded. David was a Professor of French and Linguistics at the University of Kansas for four decades, serving as Chair of the Department of French and Italian, Chair of the Department of Linguistics, and energetic critic of administrators. He mentored hundreds of graduate students in the art and style of teaching foreign language and led multiple summer study abroad trips for undergraduates; he remained in close touch with many former students throughout his life.



David hated traveling. He was quite the worrier. But he loved living in new places. Summer sojourns as a youth at Camp Rising Sun in upstate New York cultivated his appreciation for cultural diversity, and he sought that for himself and his family throughout his adulthood. He lived and worked in France, Spain, Corsica; traveled throughout Italy, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Ireland, the United Kingdom, North Africa; he and Nancy eventually bought a home in the village of Kersell, on the coast of Brittany, France, where family, friends, students, and colleagues enjoyed Muscadet, langoustines, croissants, and rousing games of boules with the neighbors. Though Nancy's disability cut short their Kersell years, David's affinity for the region never faded. In the weeks before he died, in fact, he finished translating the memoir of a priest from the village who had worked with the French Underground during the German Occupation.

To read full obituary go to [warrenmcelwain.com/obituary/david-allen-dinneen/](https://warrenmcelwain.com/obituary/david-allen-dinneen/)





## Department of French, Francophone & Italian Studies

✉ [frenital@ku.edu](mailto:frenital@ku.edu)

🌐 [frenchitalian.ku.edu](http://frenchitalian.ku.edu)

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