

# THE AMBASSADOR

Department of World Languages and Cultures

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*Welcome to the Year of the Tiger.*

## Notes from the Chair



**Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends,**

It is with a deep sense of gratitude for the excellent and meaningful work that our faculty, staff, and students perform at The University of Scranton; and with intense joy that I write this column as interim chair of the Department of World Languages and Cultures (WLC) in Spring 2022. My hope is that the

first signs of warm weather in Northeastern PA combined with the slowing down of the disruptions caused by the spread of the omicron variant would provide for us the ideal setting for a renewed sense of being, living and learning which is at the core of who we are and what we do as faculty, staff, and students at The University of Scranton.

I had the pleasure of attending, recently, the Asian New Year

Festival and Workshop spearheaded by Dr. Ann Pang White and the Asian Club at the University. WLC was proud to participate in the celebration of the Lunar New Year and two of our very talented and devoted teacher-scholars, Chun-Sheng (Peter) Su, and Kentaro Fubuke gave presentations on the origin of, and traditions associated with, the Lunar New Year in East Asia. They also organized interactive and informative hands-on activities related to the Year of the Tiger. The audience was treated to an assortment of delicious Asian dishes and invited to take part in workshops on Chinese calligraphy, Japanese origami, and to participate in a fast-paced and delightful chopstick competition which was intense at times and punctuated with warm applause and colorful prizes for the talented winners.

In addition, I am happy to state that our students are learning and thriving, and many are still planning to study abroad in the summer of 2022 or next year individually or through our faculty-led programs which we hope to resume at the end of the pandemic because, as you probably very well understand, our students want to see the world and learn about languages and cultures so that they can be “women and men for others” in the Jesuit tradition. In fact, each week, it seems, I receive an inquiry from a student who is deciding to declare a major, minor, or concentration in Arabic, Chinese, Classics, French, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese, and I have enthusiastically supported their decisions and signed their Change of Curriculum Forms. Each signature was accompanied by the conviction that our students are genuinely interested in embracing diverse thoughts, perspectives, and cultures and eager to “develop a restless desire for excellence grounded in gratitude and [to] discover and embrace who they are called to be.”

On March 3, 2022, our students (and certainly some faculty and staff too) will be singing and dancing to the melodious rhythms and sounds of Middle Eastern music. Get ready for *Dabke*, a Levantine folk dance! The event will be hosted by the Arabic Fulbright Teaching Assistant Belal Elkurd who will discuss the history, significance, and styles of *Dabke* in Palestine. Belal will teach the audience how to perform *Dabke*, a popular dance at weddings and other joyous celebrations in Palestine. Listen to the sound of the Oud (lute), then take small steps, stamp your feet, and enjoy an evening of circle dance and line dancing.

I invite you to peruse our Spring 2022 issue of *The Ambassador* and to discover and delight in the richness of the activities that our department is deeply engaged in each day. I would like to thank you all for the rigor and passion you bring to teaching, learning, scholarship, and service; and I am inspired by and proud to work with a wonderful team of dedicated educators and citizens of the world. Happy Spring 2022!

**Dr. Habib Zanzana, 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, and German.**

## Faculty Scholarship

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### Dr. Habib Zanzana

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Dr. Zanzana published a peer-reviewed article on, *Don Quixote and the Construction of Dulcinea*, in a book titled, *Cosmic Wit: Essays in Honor of Edward H. Friedman*, published by Juan de la Cuesta, 2021. He presented a research paper titled, “*Contemporary Women’s Writings and Medical Humanities*” at the Center for the Study of Contemporary Women’s Writing at the University of London Virtual Conference (July 2021). He will be presenting two research papers at the Northeast MLA conference in March 2022, in Baltimore, Maryland: a) “*Cinema and the Contemporary Quebeçois Family in the films of Xavier Dolan*” and b) “*The Intersection of Migration and Gender in Contemporary Arabic Literature and Cinema.*”



### Dr. Virginia Picchiatti

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Dr. Picchiatti, Professor of Italian, organized two panels, entitled "Texts in Their Times" for the conference of the American Association for Italian Studies, to be held virtually in May 2022. Dr. Picchiatti also created the course, *Black Italy: Afro-Italian Identities*, to be offered in Spring 2023. “Black Italy” (*Black Italia*) is a term used today to designate the group of first- and second-generation Italians whose identity lies at the intersection between “Italian” and “African.” In Dr. Picchiatti's course, students study how Afro-Italian artists engage their cultural production as a means of actively contributing to the shift away from an antiquated and artificially fixed notion of “Italianness” and towards the development of a broader and more socially reflective multicultural, multiethnic, and transnational Italian identity in the late-20th and early-21st centuries. Students explore the platforms Afro-Italians use to engage such topics as hybrid and translational identities, race and racism, gender and sexuality, class, Italian colonialism and its legacy, and citizenship rights and status.

### Dr. Marzia Caporale

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Dr. Caporale wrote the Book Review for *Études Francophones*, Spring 2022 issue. *La Langue qu’elles habitent. Écritures de femmes, frontières, territoires*. Eds. María Carmen Molina Romero et Montserrat Serrano Mañes. Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2020. Dr. Caporale was also responsible for the following conference papers: "Popular Culture as Pedagogy: Teaching ‘Il Canto di Ulisse’ from Dante to Jovanotti in the American College Classroom," accepted for Dante 700 celebration conference, University of Florence, Italy, January 2022. “For a New Poetics of Gender in *banlieue* Cinema: From *La haine* to Today.” NeMla 2022, Baltimore, March 2022.



## Faculty Scholarship Cont.

### Dr. Roxana A. Curiel

In January, Dr. Curiel presented her paper, “Illegible Lives: Blackness, Indigeneity, and Femme Bodies in Mexico” in the *Race and the Aesthetics of Refusal in Contemporary Latin America/Hemispheric Americas* panel at the Modern Language Association convention in Washington, D.C. The Summer Research Grant she received last year at the U of S founded this project. In addition, Dr. Curiel and her colleagues, Dr. Shantee Rosado from Rutgers University, Dr. Prisca Gayles from the University of Nevada, Reno, and Dr. Sarah Bruno from Duke University, proposed the panel “Embodying Race and Performing Blackness in Las Américas: A Black/Latinx Feminist Cypher,” for the 2022 Annual American Studies Association meeting. During this performative session, scholar-performers will provide clips of concerts, music videos, or dance to open their pieces. These video clips serve as one connective space in the cypher. Scholar-performers will then perform original pieces that weave together art with scholarly analysis. They will collaborate in the session (e.g., during the Bomba performance, one scholar-performer will take on the role of drummer while other acts as the dancer).

In February, Nancy Cázares and Dr. Curiel organized and led the virtual event “Drag King sin fronteras,” along with her drag collective, ManaDrag King in Mexico City. The discussion included drag king/queer performers and activists from the U.S., Argentina, Nicaragua, and Mexico. In addition, Mexican painter Ana Segovia invited his drag collective to work on an exhibition that will take place in the fall at the Karen Huber Gallery in Mexico City. The project aims to question violencia machista and hegemonic ideas of masculinity. Dr. Curiel also turned in the manuscript of her chapter “(Un)Documented Narratives: Immigration Enforcement, Trauma Porn, and Migration Stories.” This work is part of the forthcoming edited book *The Latinx Experience: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, under contract with Sage Publishing (2022). Moreover, with the support of the Faculty Success Program of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, sponsored by the Provost, she is currently working on a paper entitled “*De la Roma a Juchitán: Intimacies and Colonial Gaze in Alfonso Cuarón’s Roma and Graciela Iturbide’s Photography.*” She will submit it to the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* this summer. This paper is part of the second chapter of her book manuscript, *Machorras: Embodying Identity Against Mexicanidad*.

Finally, the most important thing that Dr. Curiel did was to get visa approval to visit her family in Mexico City for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020. She spent the holidays with her dogs, parents, aunts, and abuelita. She ate many tacos al pastor and was amazed to see her city respecting all the COVID sanitary restrictions in an unpolarized and collaborative environment.



*Dr. Curiel with her mother in Mexico City.*



## Alumni: Familiar Faces in New Places



“I wish to continue improving my Spanish so I can use it in my medical career.”

**Madison Ziobro**, class of 2021, majored in Biochemistry and Hispanic Studies. Currently, she is Program Coordinator at a School-Based Health Center in Oakland, CA.

### What motivated you to pursue a language major at the University?

My passions for traveling and for learning about different cultures were a great influence.

### How was your experience taking language classes at the University?

I initially had doubts about my ability to complete my first semester Spanish class. I was unable to speak a complete sentence in Spanish in front of my class without shaking with nervousness. However, my apprehension did not inhibit me from reaching my goals. Semester after semester, I noted the gradual improvements in both my language skill and my confidence in using Spanish. Ultimately, I was granted the Prof. Joseph G. Brunner Award for Excellence in Foreign Languages.

### Has learning this language helped you? How?

I work with a predominantly Latino community. It has made me realize how difficult it would be for non-English speaking patients to receive healthcare without bilingual services. I wish to continue improving my Spanish so that I can use it in my career as a medical professional.

“You will not regret if you minor or major in a foreign language.”



**Erika Leppla**, class of 2018, graduated with a double major in Accounting and French. She is a Senior Associate at CohnReznick an advisory, assurance, and tax firm.

### What motivated you to pursue a language major at the University?

I came to Scranton with 6 French credits, and I figured maybe I would minor in French. Once I learned how many credits I could earn by studying abroad, I decided to major instead. I knew that being proficient in a language would help me in the business world and throughout life.

### How was your experience taking language classes at the University?

I really enjoyed my classes with Dr. Caporale. They were always very small, which is ideal for learning a language, and once I got past advanced French the classes became more interesting. For example, I took *Intro to Business*. It was very practical and it will come in handy if I decide to do a secondment with my firm. I also liked learning about the francophone history and culture.

### What advice would you give to any student who may be interested in studying a world language?

If you're considering a major or minor, go for it. You will not regret it, and the University makes it so easy to double major or obtain a minor, especially if you study abroad like I did.

# Recent & Upcoming Events

**The World Languages and Cultures Department**  
*Spring 2022 Events*

**February 17**  
**Cultural Event: Taiwan**  
Location: Leahy 235 Kane Forum  
Time: 7:00PM- 8:00PM

**March 3**  
**Cultural Event: Palestine**  
Location: Leahy 235 Kane Forum  
Time: 7:00PM- 8:00PM

**March 31**  
**TA Talk: Spain, Palestine, & Taiwan**  
Location: Brennan 509 The Rose Room  
Time: 11:30AM- 1:00PM

**April 11**  
**Cultural Event: Germany**  
Location: Leahy 235 Kane Forum  
Time: 7:00PM- 8:00PM

**April 28**  
**TA Talk: Germany, Japan, & France**  
Location: Brennan 509 The Rose Room  
Time: 4:30PM- 6:00PM

Contact Hannah Jackson at [hannah.jackson@scranton.edu](mailto:hannah.jackson@scranton.edu) or 570-941-4711 for more information

*\*Events are subject to change\**

## Faculty Spotlight

### Visiting Instructor Chun-Sheng (Peter) Su

Nihao, I am a Chinese teacher from Taiwan. I had been teaching American students for many years in Taiwan and received a Master's in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language in Michigan last year. I'm glad to have the second chance to come back to the US and teach Chinese. It is my pleasure to share the life in Taiwan and Chinese culture with you as well as help you learn the language. Please feel free to contact me, if you have any Chinese language or culture questions!



*Chun-Sheng Su has been teaching Chinese in Scranton since Fall 2021.*

**What made you interested in teaching languages?** When I was learning English in high school and at university, I thought about how I would like to teach Chinese, my mother tongue, to foreigners. Twelve years ago, I attended different Chinese teacher training programs and began teaching. Teaching Chinese is a very meaningful job because it makes an impact on the students. When I see students' smiles because of language improvement or hear that they received the scholarships or found jobs in Taiwan, I feel so fulfilled.

**Would you recommend studying Chinese to a student of The UofS How long does it take to become fluent in Chinese?** I highly recommend to study Chinese. Our university provides an Asian Studies Concentration and a Chinese minor. For students who want to have a deeper understanding of and exploration into the Chinese field, many classes are available, including Business in China, History of China and Chinese Philosophy. I have taught many students and my experience tells me it is a case by case situation. Learning a language requires effort. I believe that students who utilize correct learning methods and work hard can speak fluently within two years.

**What tools do you use to bring the Chinese culture to your students?** In our textbook, each lesson includes a cultural introduction unit. Sometimes, I will go through it to give students basic ideas of different Chinese customs. We also held an Asian Open House event where I discussed the cultural topics with students, and offered them referral resources. Students were able to learn about Chinese culture whilst making the display board. In addition, I introduced them to traditional Chinese festivals; last semester we tried moon cakes and spoke about what Chinese people do during Moon festival. I also brought tea sets, tea tools, and tea leaves to let my students try to brew tea. Students really enjoyed this kind of cultural activity.

## Faculty Spotlight

### Visiting Instructor Kentaro Fukube



*Kentaro Fukube is the new Japanese Language and culture instructor at The University of Scranton.*

#### **What made you interested in teaching languages?**

I was studying English in Japan and it sparked my joy and broadened my ways of thinking. I realized that the more you learn different languages, the more various people you can meet. This certainly enriches your life. Later, I found that my passion lies in helping learners achieve this as well as learning languages by myself.

#### **Would you recommend studying Japanese to a student of The University of Scranton? Why?**

Absolutely, yes. Japan has the third largest economy in the world. Learning Japanese brings you great business opportunities. Also, it makes watching anime and playing Japanese games a lot more fun!

#### **How long does it take to become fluent in Japanese? Is learning the Japanese characters a big challenge?**

If you take Japanese for two years, you will be able to communicate with native Japanese speakers and travel

through Japan on your own with some help. Our writing system is a little bit complicated, but you will get a swing of it once you figure out the patterns.

#### **What tools do you use to bring the Japanese culture to your students?**

I present a lot of cultural photos and videos of Japan throughout the course. Also, I occasionally bring some Japanese foods into the classroom to have my students experience the culture and practice the language. One day, I made miso soup and brought it for my students in the beginner's course. All of them liked it and we practiced some Japanese greetings that we use before/after meals.

#### **Is the college experience in Japan very different to the one in the USA?**

Yes. In Japan, students don't study much compared to those in the U.S. I am impressed by their hard work.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Hi! こんにちは！ My name is **Kentaro Fukube**. I was born in Ehime, which is on the southwestern island called Shikoku in Japan. After high school, I mostly lived in Kansai region such as Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe, where there are numerous traditional buildings and fantastic local foods. What I have done after college has been quite adventurous. I started my career in business as a purchaser, but I switched to education. I completed my Master's in Education in Australia and stayed there for two years after the "salaryman" life. As part of my teacher training while doing my master's in Australia, I taught English to international students and refugees, and Japanese to Australian high school students. After teaching English back in Japan at high school and vocational college for five years, my international marriage brought me to the U.S. All of these experiences have empowered me as a bilingual language teacher and also as a global citizen. I am honored to teach Japanese at The University of Scranton this year.



## Recent Events

# Julia's Game of Cards & Bars

By Julia Illarramendi



Julia Illarramendi with the traditional Spanish card deck.

Last October, FLTA Julia Illarramendi hosted the event **Spanish Game Night** in the Leahy Forum, Julia introduced the students, staff, and faculty that attended to the bar culture and card games in Spain, where she is from. This is her story.

Cards have always been part of my life. I would never forget the day my grandfather taught me how to play *la Brisca* [a card game] or the sunny summer days when I played with my friends for hours and hours, or how many New Year's Eves I spent playing with my parents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. However, besides my personal bond with it, playing cards was a huge part of Spanish bar culture and its traditions. Most of our grandparents grew up in small villages where their relatives often played in bars card games such as *Tute* or *Mus*.

At Spanish Game Night, students had the opportunity to learn about bar culture in Spain and the differences between the U.S and Spain. Spaniards typically go to bars with family and friends as a pastime. It is for us the best place to gather and celebrate. Even so, traditions are changing in favor of social events such as *Juevintxo* o *el tardo*, where young people talk, eat, and drink. There has been a noticeable decrease in the custom of playing card games in the bar scene. For this reason, during the cultural event Spanish Game Night, we honored this tradition by playing two games *El Orón* and *El Mentiroso*. We used the traditional Spanish deck, which is also played in Latin America. Attendees had a wonderful time laughing, playing (and competing).



Illarramendi instructs students on how to play Spanish card games.



Spanish Game Night attendees played two different card games.

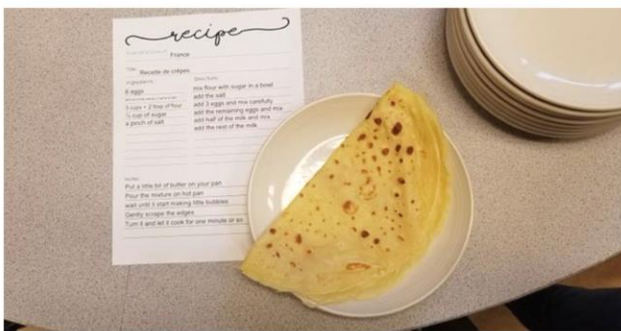


Left, the traditional cards used in Spain.

## Recent Events

# Crêpe Cooking Class

By Claudia Campo Mirabent



*FLTA Nawel Kahouaji, right photo, taught students how to cook the famous French crepes. It was a really hands on experience (see top photo) that produced some succulent results (left).*



Nostalgia and fond memories of Nawel Kahouaji's hometown in Northern France fueled her idea to cook the dish she shared with her loved ones at home, except this time, she shared it with students, faculty, and staff at The University of Scranton.

“My sister likes [crêpes] differently,” Nawel said, “but I usually make them with rose water to add extra flavor.” Nawel explained to the 50 plus people who attended her presentation the various ways in which anyone can prepare a crêpe to make it more personal and tailored to taste. “That is the beauty of crêpes,” she added. “They can be made however you want.”

For purposes of keeping the ingredient list simple, Nawel provided a basic four-ingredient recipe: eggs, flour, sugar, and milk. Students were taught how to make crêpes and given the opportunity to try making one themselves. The event was full of enjoyment as attendees tasted their crêpes and shared in the experience. “Crêpes are a staple of French culture, and they have always been important to me. Now, [students] can go home and share this recipe with their family and friends,” Nawel said.

**WHAT:** A night of French culture through a piece of its gastronomy.

**WHO:** Conducted by **Nawel Kahouaji**, the current FLTA from France.

**WHEN:** November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**WHERE:** DeNaples Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

## Recent Events

### Line Dancing Palestinian Style



*Belal Elkurd and some members of the University's community practice the Dabke dance during the night of Palestinian culture.*

When one thinks of line dancing, it often conjures traveling to some joint with country music and funny people dressed in cowboy boots and hats. Those members of the University's community who were Thursday, March 3rd at Collegiate Hall in Redington Hall will dream now of line dancing in a completely different context, the context of the Arabic cultural world. This vision was Introduced by **Belal Elkurd**, the current Palestinian FLTA of WLC, who held a presentation about *Dabke*. *Dabke* (Arabic: دبكة) is a folk dance that combines circle and line dancing. It is widely performed at weddings and other joyous celebrations. The word *Dabke* is believed to derive from the Arabic word *dabaka* (دبكة) meaning "stamping of the feet." This form of dance has its origins in the community's effort to repair the roofs of houses made of mud and tree branches. The mud would crack and community or family members would come and patch it by forming a line and joining hands, while stomping the mud into place. Then came the music and songs, a tradition that has been passed through centuries as a reminder of the importance of community and tradition. Nowadays, *Dabke* also signifies the aspirations and struggles of the Palestinian people.

"I chose *Dabke* for my presentaion because it is one of the most important forms of art in Palestinian culture. It unites us and makes everyone happy when we dance together. *Dabke* is one of the things that identifies us as Palestinians, from which we derive joy and it energizes us. When I hear the song *Ally Elkofjiye* sung by the Palestinian singer Mohammed Assaf, I get goosebumps and that makes me want to dance *Dabke* especially with my friends and family," explains Belal Elkurd.

According to Elkurd, there are five main components of *Dabke* in terms of instrumentation. They include the lute, the *tablah* (a small hand drum), the *mijwiz* (similar to a reed clarinet but with two pipes), the *daff* (like a tambourine), and the *arghul* (like the *mijwiz* but with finger holes only on one of the tubes).

"If you want to dance *Dabke* I recommend these songs: *El Dalaana*, *Ya Zaref Eltool*, *47SOUL*, and *Ally Elkofjiye*," says the Palestinian Fultbright Teaching Assistant.



## Recent Events

# Chinese Paper Cutting Anyone?

By Rosa Wang

**WHAT:** A chance to learn about how the Lunar New Year is celebrated in Taiwan, the history of red envelopes, & how to make Chinese paper cutting art.

**WHO:** Conducted by **Chun-Sheng (Peter) Su**, Chinese Visiting Instructor from Taiwan.

**WHEN:** February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

**WHERE:** Leahy 235 Kane Forum.

To welcome the arrival of the Chinese Lunar New Year, The University of Scranton's Professor Chun-Sheng Su, held a paper-cutting activity and presented the culture of red envelopes, the meaning of fish, and how people celebrate the Lunar New Year in China. Also, he showed a wealth of paper-cutting works. Paper-cutting is a traditional Chinese arts and crafts product. The art of paper cutting (Chinese: 剪纸) in China may date back to the 2nd century CE, when paper was invented by Cai Lun, a court official of the Eastern Han Dynasty.

"Paper-cutting", as the name suggests, is a form of folk art in which patterns are cut or carved on a piece of paper to decorate objects or traditional folk festivals and activities. Visually, it gives a transparent feeling and artistic enjoyment. Chinese paper-cut art, through a pair of scissors and a piece of paper, can express all kinds of joys and sorrows in life. For beginners, it is very beneficial to know the steps of making paper cuttings.

The night, however, was not only about paper cutting. Those who attended the event also learned how the Lunar New Year is celebrated in China, and the history of red envelopes. The class allowed attendees to use the red envelopes to make lanterns and goldfishes in an environment of real joy and cultural immersion.



*Chun-Sheng (Peter) Su taught students how to cut the paper Lantern and Goldfish.*



*Some attendees show their work before the cultural night at the Kane Forum came to an end.*



## LLC Spotlight

# A Farewell to Our Graduates

By Samiel Torres



*Caitlyn Maurer*



*Destiny Carpitella*



*Crysta O' Donnell*



*Emily Allen*



*Daniela Salcedo*



*Katia Ramirez*



*Paola Santa Rosario*

*Jessica Goldschlager*



The Department of World Languages and Cultures and the Language Learning Center (LLC) would like to honor our dear graduates who have worked as language tutors for the past few years. They have been an essential part of the LLC. The impact of their efforts and contributions has made the LLC what it is today. We would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication to their job. We also would like to congratulate them on behalf of everyone for their accomplishments at the University and wish them luck in their future endeavors. We would like to recognize the following students:

**Emily Allen**, Bachelors in Biology and Hispanic Studies, Minor in Biochemistry; Spanish and ELS Tutor.

**Destiny Carpitella**, Bachelors in Early and Primary Childhood Education; Chinese Tutor.

**Jessica Goldschlager**, Bachelors in Neuroscience and Hispanic Studies; Spanish and ESL Tutor.

**Caitlyn Maurer**, Bachelors in Nursing and Minor in Arabic and Leadership; Arabic and ESL Tutor.

**Crysta O' Donnell**, Bachelors in International Studies and Hispanic Studies, Minor in French, Concentration in Latin American Studies; Spanish, French, and ESL Tutor.

**Katia Ramirez**, Bachelors in History and Hispanic Studies, Concentration in Latin American Studies; Spanish and ESL Tutor.

**Paola Santa Rosario**, Bachelors in Physiology and Minor in Psychology, Spanish and ESL Tutor.

**Daniela Salcedo**, Masters of Business Administration and of Health Administration, Spanish and ESL Tutor.

# Recent and Upcoming Events



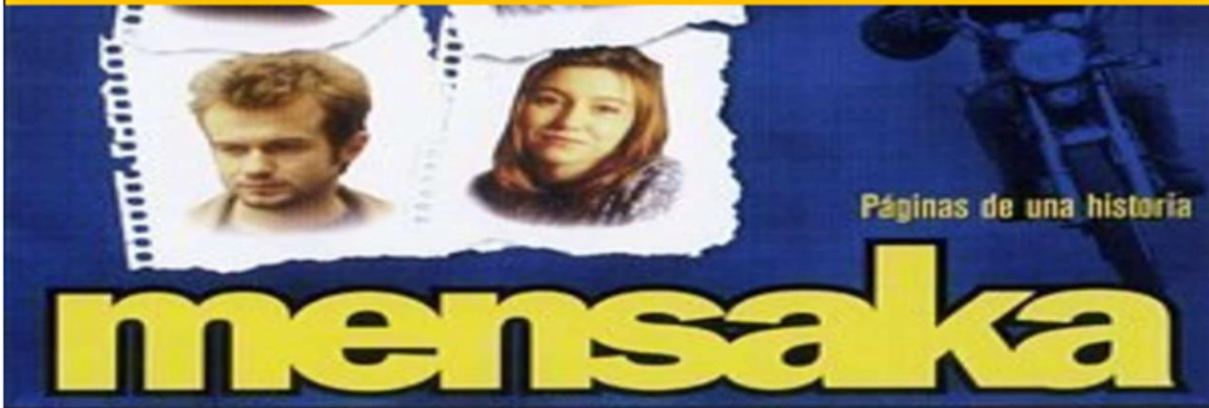
## Spanish Movie Nights 2022

Time: 7 p.m.

Whom do you know?

Place: O'Hara 306

- Monday, 2/21— *Perfectos desconocidos* (Álex de la Iglesia, 2018)
- Monday, 3/21— *Sentimental* (Cesc Gay, 2020)
- Monday, 4/25 — *Mensaka* (Salvador García Ruiz, 1998)





# LLC Spotlight – New GA and Student Director

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## Fostering Language and Culture

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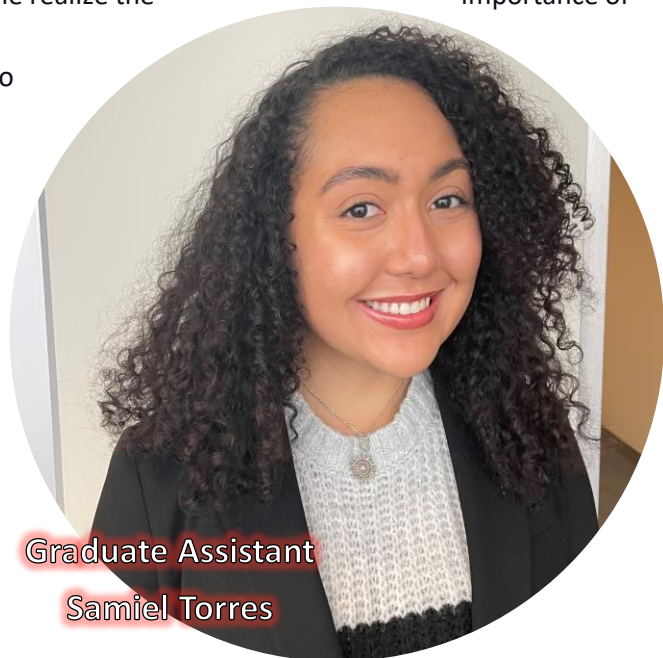
Being a Graduate Assistant (GA) and Student Director of Language Learning Center (LLC) has given me the greatest opportunity to learn and utilize new skills that have truly helped me grow not only as a graduate student but as a person. I graduated from The University of Scranton this past May with a bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and a minor in Spanish. I'm currently continuing my education at the University and pursuing my Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Growing up in a Cuban-Puerto Rican household in New Jersey gave me the foundation for the Spanish language and culture. Working at the LLC has helped me gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for not only my language and culture but so many others. This position has broadened my perspective and made me realize the importance of learning a foreign language.

Learning a foreign language gives you the ability to communicate and connect with a wider range of people. Being able to communicate in another language exposes us to and fosters an appreciation for the traditions, religions, arts, and history of the people associated with that language. Foreign languages expand one's view of the world and awareness of cultural diversity.

One of the most rewarding and fulfilling aspects of being a GA is further educating others on the Spanish language, helping them to practice their speaking skills and cultivate a deeper understanding of the culture, and seeing them progress over time. Here at the LLC, we are dedicated to enhancing the quality of language

learning and teaching at The University of Scranton. The LLC offers language conversation hours and language tutoring for all University of Scranton students and community members learning Spanish, French, Italian, German, Chinese, Arabic, and ESL.

This position has also given me the chance to meet and connect with so many people in the Department including the faculty, Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants, and all the undergraduate work study tutors that work alongside me. They all have contributed to such a welcoming, positive work environment. They have been such a support for me that I always look forward to arriving on third floor O'Hara to work. Working as the GA and Student Director for the LLC gives me a strong sense of purpose because of the vital work we do to educate others on the essential role language and culture play in one's life and the world. I'd like to thank Dr. Yamile Silva, Department Chair, and Ms. Hannah Jackson, Director of the LLC for choosing me for this position. I'm truly honored to be a part of the Department of World Languages and Cultures and the LLC and promote its mission to the University and the community. I look forward to meeting and assisting you all in any way that I can; please don't hesitate to contact me at [samiel.torres@scranton.edu](mailto:samiel.torres@scranton.edu).



Graduate Assistant  
Samiel Torres

# 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!



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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SCRANTON**  
A JESUIT UNIVERSITY