

Newsletter



JOHN JAY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Educating for Justice

The Department of
Foreign Languages & Literatures

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A Message from the Chair

Please join me in congratulating Prof. Raúl Rubio on his promotion to Associate Professor. Prof. Rubio specializes in Cuban and Cuban-American literature, cinema and popular culture. His publications have appeared in numerous academic journals and in the book *Cuba: Idea of a Nation Displaced*. He is currently completing a monograph titled *Imagining Havana: Cuban and Cuban-American Interludes*. He serves on the Board of Directors of the National Association for Ethnic Studies and is a Fellow of the Cuba Project at the Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies of the Graduate Center (CUNY).

I am excited to announce that through my contacts with Prof. Wentzlaff-Eggebert and the Arbeitskreis Spanien–Portugal–Lateinamerika of the University of Cologne, our department has been invited to send up to four students to take part in the Third Conference on “Europa y sus fronteras” (Europe and its Frontiers) to be held in Cluj-Napoca, Rumania, March 11-22. The conference features presentation by scholars and students from universities all over Europe on an invitation-only basis. Presentations are in Spanish.

I would also like to draw your attention to a conference on gender issues that the department is planning for the fall 2011 semester. A brief notice about this appears on page 3 of this newsletter. Anyone interested in further information should contact the event chair, Prof. Raúl Romero at rromero@jjay.cuny.edu.

Finally, but by no means least, I would like to personally thank everyone who helped me in my transition to John Jay College during my first semester here. I am fortunate indeed to have so many friendly people throughout the College willing to offer assistance and it is appreciated.

Silvia Dapía

Japan Exchange & Teaching Program

Thanks to the efforts of Prof. Uhnsook Park, John Jay College students have access to an exceptional opportunity to in the “JET Program.” On October 18, Prof. Park brought to the John Jay campus the coordinator of the program, Ms. Noriko Furuhata, and two former JET participants, Anne Cho and Zully Santiago. Nearly fifty John Jay students attended the information session in which Ms. Furuhata explained the goals and requirements of the program and the former participants discussed their experiences in Japan. A video presentation brought to life the exciting possibilities of living in Japan. The program includes two alternatives, the ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) option which required no knowledge of Japanese and includes about ninety percent of program participants, and the CRL (Coordinator for Research Language) option that requires a high level of Japanese language fluency and includes about ten percent of program participants. Currently, there are over 2,000 people participating in the JET Program from some 36 different countries. Students seeking additional information or application materials can access the program’s web site at www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/JET.



Department Kudos

Daniel Auld is the new Academic Program Director in the Office of Undergraduate Studies and is responsible for all student learning centers including the Foreign Language Lab. Daniel comes to us from Fordham University where he worked as an administrator and is



completing a doctorate in educational psychology. Daniel's most recent publication examined students' motivational approaches to learning and preferences for traditional or online learning environments, which he presented at the June, 2010 American Association of University Professors Conference in Washington, DC.

Edgardo Díaz Díaz has been named music editor of *Voices*, an electronic magazine published by the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College. He has also published "El estilo del contracanto: tres versiones sobre sus orígenes en el Caribe" in a book on Caribbean studies edited by Dario Tejeda and Rafael Yunen and published by the Center for Caribbean Studies and Centro León in the Dominican Republic.

Silvia Dapía published "Borges y la lírica: poesía sin sujeto" in Alfonso de Toro, ed., *Borges poeta* (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2010). She has also been named guest editor for an issue of *Polish American Studies*, published by the Polish American Historical Association, that will focus on the experience of Polish immigrants in Latin America.

Erica Wise was chosen as a recipient of the prestigious Bravo Award, a distinction awarded by Human Resources for excellence in service and contributions to the college. Anyone who has worked with Erica knows that she is well deserving of this significant honor. The



picture above shows Provost Jane Bowers (left) and President Jeremy Travis (right) presenting her with the award at a breakfast on December 13.

Raúl Rubio has been promoted to Associate Professor. Prof. Rubio is a Hispantist and cultural studies scholar who specializes in Cuban and Cuban-American literature, cinema and popular culture.



Liliana Soto-Fernández presented the paper "El mundo que nos espeja: Los latinos y las películas de Hollywood" at the 48th Annual Congress of *Círculo de Cultura Panamericano* held at William Patterson University in New Jersey in November and published the article "La vicisitud de la mujer cubana en el período especial," in *Círculo*, Vol. XXXIX, 2010 (pp. 154-161). She was also elected to the Judicial Committee at John Jay College and will begin serving a term as president of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese beginning January 1, 2011.

Russian Festival



The Russian Students' Club sponsored a performance of *The Queens of Spades*, at "From Russian With Love," its Russian Festival held on November 30. The program featured a variety of Russian folk and romantic songs by the popular trio of opera singers, and demonstrations of various Russian dance styles by Julia Kulakova. A reception followed the performances. The faculty advisor to the Russian Students' Club is Prof. Olga Muratova, and the student officers are: Chilyanora Iskhakov, president; Izgil Mardahayev, vice president; Suzanna Sargsyan, treasurer; Viktoriya Iakoubtchik, secretary.

Symposium on Gender and LGBT

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is pleased to announce that it is planning a gender and LGBT symposium to be held in the next academic year. Under the leadership of Prof. Raúl Romero, the symposium will encompass the fields of Hispanism and Latin American cultural studies. Prominently featured will be the theme of social justice in a wide range of disciplines throughout the Spanish-speaking world. The symposium will include scholars from John Jay College as well as other CUNY and local institutions.

The department hopes to foster relationships with academic, civic, and cultural institutions that have prioritized gender and LGBT social justice issues among their goals.

El Museo del Barrio



On October 22 a group of John Jay students and faculty visited El Museo del Barrio, a noted museum of Caribbean, Latino, and Latin American art, to view the "Nueva York (1613-1945)" exhibit and other attractions. The group included students from the Departments of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Latin American and Latino Studies. Prof. Lisandro Pérez, who authored the chapter "Cubans in Nineteenth-Century New York: A Story of Sugar, War, and Revolution" in *Nueva York 1613-1945*, guided the visitors through the diverse collections and exhibitions that traced the influential role that Latinos and Spanish-speaking peoples have played in New York City across four centuries. The exhibits, and Prof. Pérez's commentary brought to life historical and cultural influences that helped shape New York into the most culturally vibrant city in the world. The museum is located at 1230 Fifth Avenue (at 104th Street).

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