In doing so, they’ll also work on developing content to infuse their classes with Latin American themes. We’ve already planned the first part of the project, which will take place during the 2015-2016 academic year. Dean Weiner, with input, selected a core of faculty who will work on designing curriculum (lesson plans, units, etc.) and then disseminate information to their departmental colleagues. To this end, we’ve planned a series of talks, workshops, round tables, work sessions, etc. that will address a number of needs. We’ve also designed some events that will be open to the public; visiting scholars will give talks that will provide some historical context as well as hands-on time to develop lessons around. For example, the

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New Hire in American Sign Language — Bridget Taylor

We are very pleased to welcome Bridget Taylor to the International Languages Department. Bridget recently moved here from Northern New Jersey, where she taught American Sign Language at Bergen Community College in Paramus, New Jersey. Originally from New Jersey, she graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a B.F.A. in Graphic Design and an M.A. in Deaf Education from the Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City.

In addition to teaching hearing students at Bergen Community College, Bridget also has experience teaching ASL to hearing students at RIT during her college years as a part-time instructor. She continued attending many workshops and conferences in order to gain professional development in the field of teaching ASL and took several online courses at Gallaudet University.

When she’s not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her husband traveling and exploring American national parks and attractions and visiting family. She loves drawing, oil painting, walking and swimming. Her favorite sports teams are the New York Giants (NFL) and the New York Yankees (MLB). In addition to her favorite leisure activities, she also enjoys reading books on Deaf history, Deaf culture, Deaf Arts and other books authored by Deaf authors.

Japanese Language Students Win Speech Contest

CSN’s Japanese language students are winners of the 11th annual Japanese Speech Contest. All four contestants placed in the top 3 in the levels in which they competed. From left, Mat Ranillo Mendoza (Level 2 2nd place winner), Viktoriya Sosnina (Level 1 1st place winner), Prof. Sachie Karasawa, Salvador Arriaga-Lozano (Level 2 1st place winner), and Matthew Aber (Level 2 3rd place winner.)
Congratulations Valerie!


Hybrid Language Instruction at CSN

Faculty teaching Spanish, ESL, and Italian met on March 6 to discuss their experiences and share ideas regarding best practices for hybrid language teaching. The event was organized by Yolanda Hernandez, who has been teaching hybrid Spanish language classes for several semesters. Topics of discussion included the organization of class time, prioritizing of student language practice in class, and suggestions for avoiding potential problematic situations in the hybrid modality of language teaching. There are plans to continue this discussion in the fall, so if you are interested in joining us, please contact Yolanda: yolanda.hernandez@csn.edu

Spotlight on Assessment

Assessment has been at the forefront of our minds this past semester as we collaborated on the departmental Academic Program review and as the ESL program worked towards CEA reaccreditation. We will wrap up the spring semester by reviewing the three-year plans for each of our disciplines, along with the accompanying matrices.

TEAS Course

The International Languages Department is offering a preparatory course for the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS). ESL 198B focuses on improving student success in Reading and English and Language Usage sections of the TEAS V through explanation of specific content areas and simulated practice. Additional discussions on timed test taking strategies and reducing test anxiety are included to assist with overall student achievement on the TEAS V. For more information about TEAS V, visit [www.atitesting.com](http://www.atitesting.com). For more information about ESL 198B, email shane.dick@csn.edu.

Critical Language Scholarship Winner

Arabic student Erica Valdez was awarded a Critical Language Scholarship to study in Morocco this summer.
“When is this due?” - Writing Assistant

“Ten minutes ago.” - Student

Students often come for help in the Language Lab or the Writing Center at the very end of the writing process -- at the very last minute. At this point, students are often so emotionally invested in their work that they don’t want help (it’s unclear if they truly want help) with content. This is, after all, their work. “This” is what they want to say. Any suggestions regarding content are viewed through the prism of a defensive mind. And it is too late anyway. There is little that the tutors can do at this point other than try and help correct the minor mechanics of a paper.

A better approach exists. This is done by having students get help early in the writing process, either at the brainstorming or outlining stage. Students in my classes this semester have begun to get stamps or signatures from the Language Lab or the Writing Center indicating that they have worked to get help with their ideas, not just with their grammar.

This can be a huge cultural shift for students who, oftentimes, see going to the Language Lab or Writing Center as the end point in the writing process, not the beginning. Students usually expect a red pen, corrections, and little else. As one of the students said to me, “So all we have to do is talk?”

Yes. All you have to do is talk, get ideas for your paper, and have your brainstorming stamped. There are two other objectives at work here. One is to have students engage in authentic communication out “in the wild,” not just in their English as a Second Language class. The other goal is for students to become comfortable with seeking input at the earliest stages when writing a paper.

Our nontraditional students lead busy lives. In addition to taking classes, many work and have family responsibilities. What these students may not realize is that getting help early in the writing process will actually save them time by narrowing down the number of possible topics to write about and help by guiding them in new directions that the student might not have thought of before.

Jenny Nguyen works with ESL instructor and tutor Regina Marshall-Smith in the Charleston Language Lab

Lastly, the writing professionals at the College of Southern Nevada are more than happy to help students at any step of the writing stage:

“It's a pleasure working with ESL students in the Language Lab, West

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The 13th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education (January 5-8, 2015, Waikiki, Hawaii) offered more than 1,500 sessions on topics from ESL to higher education administration. Presenters represented many countries from around the world. In addition to the sessions, there were over 100 poster presentations about topics ranging from retention of male Hispanic students in the community college to designing an international travel program for students. I attended many of the strands devoted to educational technology and learned more ideas for training and retaining online students.

One technique for alerting online students to their responsibilities for keeping up in the class is to have former students make a short video about that class and have prospective students view the video as part of their mandatory online class orientation.

We have also been hearing a lot about the use of “phablets” (phone tablets) in education. Teachers need to remain on this side of the wave, understanding that mobile applications will only increase in importance.

The conference venue was the Hilton Hawaiian Village and its adjacent conference center. The only downside to the conference was the lack of reliable and powerful wifi connections, so presenters could not go directly to the Internet to demonstrate online functions.

Many presenters bypassed this problem by downloading their Youtube and/or other videos to flash drives and using the laptop computers that were made available in the presentation rooms.

The 2014 conference last year also offered more than 1,500 sessions, attracting attendees from 39 different countries, and planning is already starting for the 14th annual conference to be held in 2016. More information about the annual conference can be found at this link: http://tinyurl.com/lkzh9yg
Outstanding Student for International Languages
By Amy Litman

Ms. Ran Tian, an ESL student, was chosen as the outstanding student for International Languages for 2014-2015. She has been a student at CSN since the summer of 2012 and has completed ten courses, eight of which were ESL. She is currently taking one ESL course as well as algebra and psychology.

Ran was raised by her father and grandmother and then opened her own restaurant at age 18. Two years later, she moved to the U.S. to reunite with her mother, a local artist. Upon arriving in Las Vegas with no English language skills, she joined her mother in an art shop at the Stratosphere, where she has since worked as an artist, contributing to her mother’s successful business.

After four years, Ms. Tian started studying at CSN and has discovered a newfound passion for her studies. She is an incredibly talented artist as well as an ambitious and determined student. Ms. Ran completes each assignment as if it were a dissertation, pouring her heart and soul into her writing. She has depth beyond her years and an eagerness to learn that is contagious. She finds humor and lessons in every obstacle and considers herself extremely fortunate to live here and be able to pursue a life that she chooses for herself. Ran Tian is an example of students teaching their instructors about life’s important lessons.

Students Guided
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Charleston campus. When students visit the language lab for something as simple as ‘brainstorming,’ they can get a quick tutorial that helps them to understand how easy and important it is to use this strategy.” - Regina Marshall-Smith

“Tutorial Services/Learning Centers promotes academic self-efficacy and encourages students to seek support from faculty and all college support services. This type of support and encouragement can have a huge impact on a student’s level of achievement.” - Shellie Keller

We all want to help our students achieve, so let's show them ways to develop their overall academic strategies. Encourage them to work with a writing specialist earlier – before the assignment is due.
“This is Las Vegas’s best-kept secret.” My wife, Kristen, was talking about the food fair held the last Sunday of each month from 8:30 to 1:00 at the Chaiya Meditation Monastery, 7925 South Virtue Court. This fundraiser is a non-profit event in support of the temple. On offer are such dishes as Pad Thai, Papaya Salad, Pork Satay, and BBQ Chicken. For dessert, there are dishes such as Sticky Rice and seasonal fresh fruits of the sort not commonly found in your neighborhood supermarket.

My connection to the event is teaching. Every Saturday night the monks learn English from me as they also teach Buddhism both directly and by living example. At this point, it is an open question as to which party has learned more in these exchanges. Myself, perhaps. That is, after all, how karma operates. It was my intention to help the monks with their English, but it is really me who, both mindfully and gratefully, has benefited the most from these weekly English lessons.

The monthly food fair is a delicious sort of torture for the Buddhist monks who can smell the food as it is being prepared in the monastery on Saturday night but who, because of their religious vows, are not allowed to eat after lunch. The monks’ loss is your potential gain. Kristen was right; the monthly food fair at the Chaiya Meditation Monastery is an exceptional local’s secret. All of the food is delicious and the multicultural experience can’t be beat! However, the line for the Pad Thai starts to form at 8:30 a.m., so come early.
On September 4, 2014, Dr. Barbara Bird, professor and lead faculty of CSN’s Italian program, presented a historical lecture to a standing-room-only crowd at the Sahara West Library. In “Discovering Italy: A Cultural Perspective,” Dr. Bird described how she became interested in Dante’s work, notably “Inferno,” while she was studying Italian in Florence.

Her lecture included information about Italy’s religious and political history at the time Dante (1265-1321) wrote his famous work while he was spending the rest of his life in exile in cities such as Verona and Ravenna. “Inferno” was revolutionary in part because it was written in the local dialect of Florence combined with influences from the dialects of other “city states” in the Italian peninsula. Dante’s use of the Florentine dialect is one of the primary reasons that it became the basis for the modern Italian language, which is why he is often considered father of the Italian language. Dr. Bird then described how certain landmarks in Florence appeared in Dan Brown’s The Da Vinci Code and how they are related to Dante’s life and experiences.

The presentation was part of an ongoing series of lectures on Italy that are still being held on the first Thursday of each month at the Sahara West Library. The presentations are open to the public. For more information, contact (702) 507-3631 or log on to www.facebook.com/
Shane Dick (International Languages), in his Postcards From Abroad Lecture on November 16, 2014, demonstrated how important baseball is to high school students in Japan. He showed the movie *Kokoyakyu*, which chronicles the training of two of the 4,000 high schools in Japan in their teams’ quest to make it to the Koshien Stadium, venue for the National Championships. The movie (subtitled) focuses not only on the team members but also on the coaches and the cheerleaders. The vivid images of the agony, the ecstasy, and the crying of both the winning and the losing teams accentuates the importance of baseball for some Japanese high school males and for Japanese society in general.

Shane also provided a slide show of important events in the history of Japanese baseball and presided over a lively question and answer session at the end of the presentation. He plans to present *Kokoyakyu* again this fall as well as other sessions on world culture.
Central American diaspora that since the 1980s has been increasing, and some of whom have made Southern Nevada their home.

In order to be awarded the "Bridging Cultures" grant, the community colleges must partner with a four-year research institution, and CSN has the incredible good fortune and honor to partner with the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Latin American Studies. Pitt has, since the 1960s, been at the forefront of Latin American Studies and not only are they committed to enriching their own programs but to collaborating with other institutions and individual scholars. They have extensive resources on every topic that is relevant to the field. Dean Weiner's putting us in contact with Assistant Director for Outreach, Karen Goldman, who was invaluable in creating a strong grant application.

Pitt also houses the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), the one association that brings together experts on Latin America from all disciplines and diverse fields of study and occupational endeavors across the globe. Every year, LASA hosts its International Congress, which usually features around 1,000 sessions where panels of scholars or other interested individuals present research. This congress also always includes talks and workshops by leaders in the field and allows opportunities for network building, discussion, debate, and collaboration. I've had the fortune of attending LASA for the past two years and will attend again this May. I hope to bring that spirit of discussion and collaboration back to my colleagues who will be working to develop curriculum. So far, my own participation at the congress has been presentation of my work on the representation of murderesses in varied texts from the Mexican literature of the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Wash., D.C., 2013), on early journalistic contributions by women in Mexico (Chicago, IL, 2014). This year, I'll present my preliminary research on two neon signs in Santiago, Chile, as national heritage (San Juan, PR, May 27).

We are striving to achieve many things with this grant. I'm hoping for increased enrollment in our Latin American/Latino Studies program as a result of infusing the curriculum with even more interesting and relevant material, not just for our Latino students, but for anyone interested in learning more about the world's most dynamic region. I'm also looking forward to the cross-disciplinary collaboration that this will allow. Here I'm thinking about my own introductory courses, which will be enriched by bringing in elements from history, sociology, psychology, art, music, etc. that perhaps have not been present. Latin American Studies is by nature interdisciplinary and can only be enhanced and improved by collaborations with colleagues in other departments. I hope that they will also benefit from learning more about the region and its cultures and directly transmit the information to their students. Our students will hopefully also see a faculty that's energized by the chance to present some new material.

We're all very honored by this award because it is CSN's first NEH grant. The fact that it's over $116,000 means that we can provide many opportunities to our faculty.
Late Spring and Summer, 2015

- Narrow the gap between ESL and native speaker reading levels.
- Become comfortable discussing books and using a broader range of vocabulary in conversation.
- Learn appropriate vocabulary and new expressions for academic reading and writing.
- Improve reading fluency and speed.
- Prepare for reading in academic classes and the TEAS exam (for nursing students).
- Make friends and have fun.

New Book Starting April 30 and meeting every two weeks

Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who’s telling the stories. In 1949, four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. "To despair was to wish back for something already lost or to prolong what was already unbearable." Forty years later the stories and history continue. —Amazon

Schedule (in C-167 [inside the Charleston Campus Language Lab]) at 1:30 p.m.

Thurs. April 30: Discuss pp. 1–41
Wed. June 10: Discuss pp. 185–252
Thurs. May 14: Discuss pp. 42–115
Wed. June 24: Discuss pp 185—the end
Wed. May 27: Discuss pp. 116–184

Good readers make good writers and excellent students! This book club is meant to help students become fluent readers, improve conversation skills and meet other like-minded people. The books chosen for this book club are NOT ESL books, but ESL students can learn to read them and develop English reading fluency for life! Students do not have to understand every word in order to be successful readers. They simply have to keep reading. The reading is done outside of the meetings, so that we can discuss the reading assignment at the meetings. The commitment to reading five pages per day. The book club is free to all CSN students.

For more information, contact amy.litman@csn.edu
French Club Meetings

West Charleston Campus
Building I, 301
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

COME AND JOIN US!
on the second Friday of each month
CALL 651-7673

FRENCH CLUB ADVISOR
nathalie.odom@csn.edu