HispaNews is the annual newsletter of the Department of Hispanic Studies at the College of Charleston. It details the events of the past academic year and is available in print and Web formats.

Interview with the Chair
Hear from the department chair about the revisions to the lower level curriculum and how the major is being updated. Find out about the successes of Hispanic Heritage Month and Dr. Weyers' thoughts on new initiatives in Spanish programming.

Hispanic Heritage Month
From guest speakers and poetry recitals to a film festival and Tertulias, the second annual Hispanic Heritage Month was another success for the department. This is becoming a tradition that both the department and the College can enjoy.
This altar was on display at the Hispanic Heritage Fair. For more information on the events held this year, See pages 8 and 9.
New president announced for the College

Dr. P. George Benson became the 21st president of the College of Charleston on February 1, 2007. A native of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, President Benson received his bachelor’s degree in Mathematics from Bucknell University in 1968, did graduate work in operations research in the engineering school of New York University, and received a Ph.D. in decision sciences from the University of Florida in 1977. From 1998 to 2007, he was the dean of the Terry College of Business at the University of Georgia. President Benson replaced Dr. Conrad Festa, who served as interim President of the College of Charleston between July 1, 2006, and January 31, 2007.

Dean Hines moves to The Citadel, interim dean announced

Dean Samuel Hines will be retiring from the College after 34 years of distinguished service as he has accepted a position as Provost at The Citadel beginning in July, 2007. Dr. Hines served as Dean of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences since 1991 and then became the founding Dean of the new School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs in January, 2006. Dr. David Cohen, Dean of the Library, will assume responsibilities as Acting Dean of the School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs with the departure of the founding dean. The Department of Hispanic Studies would like to take this opportunity to thank Dean Hines for his continuous support of the Languages Programs and, in particular to the Department of Hispanic Studies, and wishes him the best in his new academic journey.

New faculty members join Hispanic Studies

The department welcomed new colleagues this year. Parissa Tadrissi, who earned her Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her area of expertise is 20th-century Peninsular Literature and Carla Breidenbach, who successfully defended her dissertation last Fall and now holds a Ph.D. in Sociolinguistics from the University of South Carolina. Angelo Rodriguez, instructor, also joined the department but leaves after one year to pursue other endeavors.

Two new faculty will join our Department next year. Dr. Gladys Matthews, who earned her Ph.D. in Linguistics at the Université Laval in Quebec, Canada, will be taking the position of Assistant Professor of Spanish and Bilingual Legal Interpreting; Dr. Samuel Francis holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Purdue University and comes from Colorado State University.

Dr. Vásquez granted tenure

The Department of Hispanic Studies is proud to announce that Dr. Félix Vásquez was granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of Spanish.

Visiting faculty in Hispanic Studies leave

Jennie Porter, Visiting Instructor of Spanish, and Sonia Maruenda, Visiting Assistant Professor, will be leaving the department in search of other academic endeavors.

We wish them all great success in their future professional and personal journeys.


---. "La lucha por el espacio de la enunciación en El seductor de la patria." Revista de Literatura Mexicana Contemporánea. Forthcoming.


---. "Unamuno and Schopenhauer: Art, Imagination and the Relation to Modernism." Confluencia. Univ. of Northern Colorado. To be published in Vol. 23 No.1 (Fall 2007)


Rodríguez-Sabater, Silvia. ‘En una playa de Acapulco, les pregunté a unos mexicanos "¿me decís dónde puedo comprar un zumo?" ¿Por qué se habrán reído?’” in Ewald, J. and Edstrom, A. M (in press). El español a través de la lingüística: preguntas y respuestas. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

In Fall 2006, Dr. Martínez-Gibson completed her commitment to the Duke Endowment Grant that she and Dr. Rodríguez-Sabater were awarded in 2005 in collaboration with MUSC’s Hispanic Health Initiative.

Dr. Breidenbach successfully defended her dissertation on November 28, 2006. Her dissertation is entitled “Deconstructing Mock Spanish: A Multidisciplinary Analysis of Mock Spanish as Insult, Humor, or Racist.” She has earned her Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina.

Azilde Worley, María Andrews, and Cindy Horton, three of our adjuncts, were recognized for their outstanding teaching and contributions to the department in a ceremony hosted by Academic Affairs.

Dr. Rodríguez-Sabater was invited to conduct two one-and-a-half hour sessions for the Medical Interpreter Project for Children's Hospitals on the topic Linguistics for Medical Interpreters on ConferencePlus Web Conference Program on January 10 and 12, 2007.

Dr. Weyers directed Christine Weissglass’ Bachelors Essay in Spring 2007: “El desarrollo del voseo en Argentina: de Martín Fierro a Mafalda.”

Dr. Colomina-Garrigós directed Stephanie Pridgeon's Bachelor’s Essay entitled "La reconstrucción de la identidad femenina en la literatura escrita por mujeres durante la guerra sucia argentina” during the past academic year.

Dr. Martínez-Gibson directed an Independent Study for Cullen Cooke in Spring 2007: “Un estudio sobre los fenómenos fonéticos y fonológicos de la lengua española.”

Dr. Martínez-Gibson was a second reader for Christine Weissglass’ Bachelors Essay in Spring 2007: “El desarrollo del voseo en Argentina: de Martín Fierro a Mafalda.”
New Courses and Changes in the Lower Level Curriculum

On April 24, the Faculty Senate approved our changes to the lower level Spanish curriculum. The changes include (1) adding a high beginner track to the entry level courses; (2) adding SPAN 275 Spanish Skills Review as a new "bridge" course; (3) changing the requirements of the 18-hour minor to include SPAN 275, eliminate 320 and add an additional culture requirement; and (4) increase the SPAN major to 36 hours, which includes SPAN 275. Finally, effective this summer, students will begin to be placed according to their high school transcripts rather than via a placement score.

Master's Certificate for Medical Interpreting

This spring, the Department of Hispanic Studies began a new master's certificate program in Medical Interpreting. The program was proposed to help with language access for the growing number of Hispanics in the area and to provide our students more career opportunities. The current faculty members of the program are: Dr. Martínez-Gibson (director), Dr. Marianne Verlinden, Dr. Marcela Escobar-Gómez, and Professor Claudia Moran. These faculty members, along with others (Dr. Rodríguez-Sabater, Dr. José Escobar, Dr. Marjorie Zambrano, Dr. Virginia Bennaman, Dr. Gómez, Dr. Breidenbach, and Professor Rosalyna Toth), have helped create the courses and/or recordings needed to start this program.

Linguistics Minor Program

There are three new faculty this year: Dr. Breidenbach in the Department of Hispanic Studies, Garrett Mitchener in the Department of Mathematics, and Katherine White in the Department of Psychology.

This year, the Linguistics Minor Program launched a new activity: Linguistic Discussions. This activity is an informal presentation by the faculty to allow those in the area of linguistics to share their ideas and thoughts on different topics. Each month, a faculty member will present a topic of interest or a paper on which they are currently working.

Teaching Load Reduction

A reduction on the teaching load of one class per semester has been approved for the roster faculty and it will be in effect in Fall 2007. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Departmental Workload Committee (Dr. Escobar, Dr. Owens and Dr. Rodríguez-Sabater) that made this milestone change possible.

Lectures and Creative Writing Workshop

The Department of Hispanic Studies was honored to invite Dr. Diana Veneros, from the Universidad Diego Portales, in Santiago de Chile, as a Visiting Professor for the first half of the Spring semester. Dr. Veneros also gave a series of lectures entitled “Chilean Executives in the Twentieth Century” that focused on three of Chile’s most influential political figures of the past century: Salvador Allende, Augusto Pinochet, and Michelle Bachelet. The lectures, entitled “Salvador Allende Gossens. The Unfinished Journey,” “Augusto Pinochet. The Bitter Memories of Dictatorship,” and “Michelle Bachelet. ‘The Impossible Possible’: A Woman in the Chilean Presidency” took place on January 30, February 6, and 13, respectively, with a large attendance record.

Dr. Martínez-Gibson invited guest speaker, Ms. Michelle Minard, of Choice Translating Company in Charlotte, NC, to give a presentation on her business for interpreting and translation on March 14, 2007. The presentation focused on the company’s opportunities for becoming an interpreter and/or translator, and the opportunities available to run this part of their business in Charlotte and/or their newest office in Lima, Peru.

As part of the new series for the Linguistics Minor, Dr. Martinez-Gibson invited Dr. Mitchener from the Department of Mathematics to give a talk on his current research "An Algorithm for Learning the Raising/Control Distinction."
Student awards ceremony held May 11

The School of Languages, Cultures, and World Affairs hosted its 2007 Student Awards Ceremony on May 11, 2007. The Graeser Award was given to two Spanish students: Stephanie Pridgeon and Armanda Sloan; the 2007 Outstanding Student of the Year Award was granted to Stephanie Pridgeon; the Outstanding Student Award within Hispanic Studies was given to Angelina Fletcher-Reséndiz, Samantha Gibson, Melissa Hodgins, Katherine Jasper, John Aaron Kohler, Jacqueline McCarragher, Kimberly Oriscak, Melissa Pierson, Stephanie Pridgeon, Charrissa Riddle, Armanda Sloan, Amy Walters, and Christine Weissglass; the Departamental Honors Award went to Stephanie Pridgeon and Christine Weissglass; the Most Accomplished Spanish Major Award went to Stephanie Pridgeon; the High Achieving Spanish Major Award was granted to Kimberly Oriscak; and the High Achieving Portuguese Student Award was given to Marshall Mundy.

Within Latin American and Caribbean Studies the Outstanding Student Award went to Stephanie Pridgeon while the Departmental Honors Award went to Nakashia Dunner.

The ceremony for Accomplished Students in Spanish (non-graduating students) was held on April 16, 2007. Also on the same day, a reception was held honoring students who have been nominated for nationally competitive awards. These are the Spanish students who were recognized: Fulbright: Stephanie Pridgeon (Spanish; Latin American and Caribbean Studies), Devin Meyers (Latin American and Caribbean Studies; History); William E. Simon: Devin Meyers (Latin American and Caribbean Studies; History); NSEP-Boren: Megan Gainey (Political Science; Spanish); Rotary 2007-2008: Chelsea Blalock (International Business; Spanish); Peace Corps: Emily Simons (Spanish; Biochemistry).

Sigma Delta Pi inducted 27 new members

Dr. Vásquez presided over the Fall ceremony and Drs. Maruenda and Verlinden assisted him with the ceremony. The following 16 students were initiated into Sigma Delta Pi on October 11: Rebecca J. Argo, Kimberly Buder, Amanda Coley, Jessica Chaconas, Rachael J. Felker, Kelsey J. Gilmore, Daniel S. Harms, Nikki L. Howell, Anna Lineberger, Lindsey E. Mayo, Cameron N. Neal, Benjamin A. Parker, Melissa J. Pierson, Laura Clark, Christine A. Weissglass, and Caitlin White.

The Spring ceremony was conducted by Dr. Verlinden on March 29, 2007, and the following students were initiated: Cullen Cooke, Nakashia Dunner, Kathryn DuRant, Melissa Janus, Elizabeth Kolarsick, Julia Mariano, Alison Mercier, Andrea Peterson, Maria Wersinger, Malcolm Wright, Christiana Younts. Kimberly Buder, who had been initiated in the Fall, assisted in the ceremony as the “Vicepresidenta”. Sonia Maruenda kindly served as “Secretaria” and helped with setting up the room. Dr. Avendaño stepped in as “Anunciadora”. Both ceremonies were held in the Jewish Studies Center.

Student has work published in Chrestomathy

An article by Stephanie Pridgeon entitled “La reinvención de una identidad y un lenguaje femeninos partiendo de las interacciones sexuales en Cambio de armas de Luisa Valenzuela” that was extracted from her Bachelor’s Essay has been selected to be considered for publication in Chrestomathy, the journal of the Schools of HSS and LCWA.
Hispanic Heritage Month celebrated

The Department of Hispanic Studies was proud to organize and celebrate its 2nd Annual Hispanic Heritage Month, starting on September 15, 2006. We would like to send our special thanks to the faculty in charge of organizing the events: Dr. Avendaño, Dr. Linares-Ocantos, Dr. Carrillo-Arciniega, Professor Schlau, Professor Porter, and Dr. Colomina-Garrigós. The series of events lasted three weeks and included the following events.

Guest Speaker
Dr. Linares-Ocantos invited critically-acclaimed writer Alicia Gaspar de Alba to give a lecture entitled “Feminicides, Free Trade, and la Frontera: The Desert Bleeds in Ciudad Juárez” on September 22. There was a book signing and reception following the lecture. This was an excellent, well-attended event in conjunction with the Hispanic Heritage Month. Dr. Gaspar de Alba, a well-known writer of Chicana/o Literature and Cultural Criticism, a Full Professor of Chicana/o Studies and English at UCLA, gave the department and the university the honor of presenting her research on the murders in Juárez as well as talking about and reading from her latest novel Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders which was inspired by these murders. Dr. Gaspar de Alba also attended Dr. Avendaño’s Chicano/a Literature class and spoke about Chicano/a literature in general, her life as a Chicana and the creative process. It was a fascinating seminar and the class was very enthusiastic.

Hispanic Heritage Fair
The Second Annual Hispanic Heritage Fair took place on “El día de la Raza,” October 12. Spanish students had the exciting opportunity to participate this year in showcasing some of the Spanish-speaking countries and compete for prizes for the best and most creative displays. Each group of students displayed their country with art, fun facts, food, music and history. A group that showcased Mexico won the contest hands down. Their table included pollo con mole, the tombstone of Emiliano Zapata, and music. Some of the countries showcased were Spain, Brazil, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic. The winner of the Hispanic fair was Mexico (Christiane Camarillo, Jess Drish, Ramia Kamaria, Jerri Mattingly, Catherine Rozyczko, Payal Thakker); Chile was second (Laura Burgess, Jaqueline McCarragher, Cameron Neal, Stephanie Pridgeon); and Ecuador was third (Elizabeth Earle, Marianna Huntley, Sarah Williams). The event was organized by Dr. Avendaño, Professor Porter, Professor Schlau, and Sabine Hagn-Ford.

De Alba spends time with the Spanish faculty after her lecture.
Another year of Spanish Club events

The department would like to thank the Spanish Club and its advisor, Dr. Tadrissi, for another year full of exciting cultural activities for students.

On January 18, the Spanish Club hosted Noche de Salsa with a turn out of over 100 students who ate, danced and were merry. There were dance instructors available to teach Salsa moves and do demonstrations, as well as live music with DJ Luigi Bravo and catered food from El Dorado.

Our end-of-year celebration had a new twist this time as we incorporated the Brazilian element, and Noche Latina / Noite Brasileira was a great success. The Education Center room 116 was packed with students who danced and ate Brazilian food from Amazon Grill. DJ Luigi Bravo played Latin and Brazilian tunes and it was a very festive occasion.

El Día de los Muertos.
Sponsored by the Spanish Club, Professors Toth and Schlau, the event was celebrated on November 2, 2006. Mexican Food was served including taquitos de pollo and guacamole from Santis, home cooked beans, mole, rice, horchata. Decorated with the traditional altar of ofrendas, calacas, calaveras, flowers, candles.

Capoeira Batizado
The event took place on October 28, 2006, with Capoeira Charleston. The free event was sponsored by the Portuguese Club and brought hundreds of Capoeira fans for another unforgettable evening of African Brazilian martial art dance and music.

Viva Brasil!
A concert with Leah Suárez and Banda Toca Toca took place on February 10, 2007, at the Physicians Auditorium. A crowd of more than 500 people gathered to listen to Leah Suárez interpreting one of the most acclaimed Brazilian singing superstars and songwriters, who have performed all over the world.

Capoeira
A lecture and demonstration with Mestre Ariranha, from New York and Graduado Queixo, from Capoeira Charleston was organized by Dr. Moreira and took place on January 26.

Samba Lessons
The Portuguese Club and Dr. Moreira sponsored again another vibrant activity: three workshops of Samba lessons during the spring of 2007: February 1, 15, and 22.

In celebration of National Poetry Month in April, two critically-acclaimed poets were invited to the College. Dr. Carrillo-Arciniega invited renowned Mexican poet Luis Armenta Malpica to read some of his poetry along with some of Dr. Carrillo’s own work as a poet. The event gathered about 80 people including Faculty, instructors and students. A reception followed the recital.

Dr. Gómez invited acclaimed poet Tino Villanueva to give a poetry writing workshop on April 15 and a poetry reading and reception on April 16. Both events were well attended and highly acclaimed. In addition to these functions, Dr. Villanueva also made a visit to Dr. Avendaño’s Spanish 327 class on April 16.
Peter Comfort (Class of 2005) will graduate in August from the Medical Interpreting Program and hopes to start working in the field soon after. This summer he will still be living on Pawleys Island and running surf camps for the fourth summer in a row. After the summer, he hopes to travel to a Spanish-speaking country.

Courtney (Matthews) Deodhar (Class of 2002) continues to live in Georgia with her husband, Kartik, and is currently working at the City Schools of Decatur- Decatur High School. She loves working there as she thinks of it as “an amazing school system.”

Raylene Ferguson (Class of 2005) has recently re-affirmed that “Spanish is my destiny. I don’t recall when I first declared this but since then Spanish has been a part of me.” She is an Immigration Officer and upon returning to her country (The Bahamas) she was assigned to the Department of Immigration’s Refugee Administration Unit. This unit is responsible for prescreening and interviewing persons who have requested asylum in The Bahamas. The majority are Cuban nationals. She has interpreted on many occasions and has enjoyed becoming familiar with the way Cubans express themselves. In addition, she has enjoyed assisting Spanish speaking visitors at the airport. She has been able to assist Portuguese, Brazilian and Italian nationals as well.

“I am passionate about Spanish and surprisingly it has filled me with the desire to share my knowledge with others. I have always been apprehensive about teaching but finally my love for this language has overridden my misgivings. I will pursue a Masters Degree in Spanish Linguistics so that I may be better equipped to share this language with others. I look forward to my destiny: Spanish,” Raylene claims.

Erin Firestone Demory (Class of 2000) got married on May 20, 2006, to Simon Demory, CofC class of 2003 graduate. They have a new baby, Samson Jae Demory, born November 24, 2006. She still works for IDEA, LLC, a Supply Flow Company, specializing in third party logistics, warehousing and distribution, and supply chain consulting, with facilities in Charleston, Honduras, and El Salvador. She serves as Vice Secretary and Arrangements Chair for the organization Charleston Women in International Trade.

Jason Gordon (Class of 2003) recently graduated from Law School at the University of South Carolina. He is presently engaged and will soon marry.

Wyatt Gordon (Class of 2002) is living in Charleston and recently completed an MBA from The Citadel.

Chanda Hughes (Class of 1998) is currently working for 3D Systems Corporation (Nasdaq: TDSC) in Rock Hill, SC, as the Investor Relations Manager. She currently does not have many opportunities to use her Spanish. Last Thanksgiving, she went on a week-long vacation to Peru where she visited Lima, Cusco and Machu Picchu.

After spending a year and a half in Granada, Spain, Amy Lustig (Class of 2004) is now a high school Spanish teacher at Stratford. In the fall, she will begin teaching at First Baptist Church School in downtown Charleston.

Kelley M. Johnson (Class of 2007) was accepted at the Universidad de Puebla, Mexico, where she will begin her graduate studies in the fall.
John Moye (Class of 2005) is starting his 3-year internship with Young Life (www.younglife.com), which is a Christian youth outreach organization. John thinks that after three years he could definitely see himself moving up within Young Life and starting it somewhere else in Costa Rica or Central America, or possibly doing some real estate work in Costa Rica. But he is also considering living in a Spanish-speaking country indefinitely (rather than just for the 3 years).

Leticia Nava-Linares (Class of 2005) is presently enrolled in the Medical Interpreting Certificate Program at the College. She will finish in August and pursue a career in medical interpreting.

JeNe New (Class of 2006) recently earned a Master’s Degree in Spanish Literature from Middlebury College but spent one year with the program in Madrid, Spain. This fall she will begin teaching in a private school.

Mamie Knight (Class of 2006) is currently studying a Master’s Degree in Speech Therapy at the University of South Carolina. There she found a job with a project called “Habla Project.” It was founded to serve the Hispanic community and it deals with the Health as well as with the Social Services Departments. Mamie translates and interprets for the Spanish-speaking workers and customers.

Kim Oriscak (Class of 2007) graduated from the College in December and began a Master’s Degree in Translation at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ.

Rachel Prosser (Class of 2004) has been accepted to the Ph.D. program at the University of Colorado beginning this fall. She has also been awarded a three year assistantship. “My advisor is very experienced in the areas of linguistics and education, which is a perfect fit for me. I am anxious to get out there and start,” she says.

Kathy Ramírez (Class of 2002) got married in Charleston, SC, on May 26, 2007. She is presently applying to law schools to continue her education.

Genna Robustelli (Class of 2006) is living in Atlanta, where she was substitute teaching after graduation. In March, she went to Mexico where she became certified to teach English as a Second Language.

Brittany Rodgers (Class of 2006) is working as a medical assistant in Newton Family Medicine in West Ashley.

Mary Cameron Stark Smith (May 2002 graduate) continues to work as the Director of Christian Education at James Island Presbyterian Church. She has been assigned to a task force of the Charleston-Atlantic Presbytery that is charged with expanding the Presbytery’s ministry to immigrant communities, especially Hispanics. She has organized “Novelas españolas,” a Spanish Novel Club that will meet monthly for dinner and discussion centered around a Spanish novel. This is a great opportunity for students, teachers and graduates to enjoy Spanish with no test attached! If you are interested in joining, please e-mail Cameron Stark Smith at youth@jipconline.org or call 901-9707. Cameron celebrated five years of marriage to Jason this December and has two boys ages 1 and 3.

Leah Strauss (Class of 2003) has spent the last two years teaching English as a Second Language in China. She will be back this year and will begin a joint masters program in social work and international studies at the University of Denver.

Whitney Streker (Class of 2003) is finishing her second and last year of teaching high school Spanish. She has loved the experience, but has decided to try the business world for a bit. She will be moving back to Charleston in July to work for Ferguson Enterprises. She is really excited about getting back to South Carolina but will miss the teaching schedule.

Allison Zimmerman (Class of 2003) is living in Charleston. This year she taught upper level Spanish at Porter-Gaud while a teacher was away on her maternity leave (October-January). She is currently the Development Director of beYOGA, and is teaching group yoga classes and private classes throughout the Charleston area. She is speaking Spanish every chance she gets. She recently returned from a two week trip to Mexico where she traveled to Tulum and visited Mayan ruins. Then she flew to Puerto Vallarta where she rented a car and traveled north and south on the west coast. She says it was beautiful!
Dr. Joseph Weyers is about to start his third year as chair of the Department of Hispanic Studies. This past year has been a particularly challenging one as he set our department on the task of adjusting the lower level Spanish curriculum to the needs of the new student population. This task has resulted in the creation and development of a high beginner track (Span 190 & Span 200) incorporated into the entry level courses as well as the creation of a “bridge” course (Span 275) to enable a smoother transition into the two initial advanced courses, Span 313 and 314. The addition of Span 275 has also made necessary an increase in the number of credits for the major as well as a change in the requirements for the minor.
Colomina: This next academic year, the Spanish curriculum is going to reflect some significant changes, could you elaborate on these changes as well as on the reasons behind them?

Weyers: Of course. There will be two main changes: the first one affects the lower level classes and it addresses the needs of the vast majority of students who had several years of Spanish (since the student profile has changed over the years and more and more of our Spanish students have taken Spanish in high school); the second change impacts the major and minor because we have created a new prerequisite course that will better prepare the students for the challenges of the 300-level. I am very excited that the department can adapt to meet the needs of the new student population. Other non curricular changes involve aesthetics. For instance we have a new website that is very colorful and complete; as for the department building itself, we are trying to make it look as welcoming of a place as its faculty.

Colomina: What are the biggest challenges you see in the near future for our department?

Weyers: Starting next year, the department will begin a dialogue about our Spanish major and some possible changes that might be explored. Personally, I would like to see Spanish majors have a stronger background in culture and history without giving up any fundamental traditional studies that go into a Spanish major.

I also think contemporary issues in the Spanish-speaking world should play a role in the curriculum. At the same time, we need to continue to incorporate practical applications of Spanish like we do with our Service Learning course, with an eye toward creating international internships. In this respect, we have done some interesting things this year. We planted the seeds for a number of possibilities. I visited the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey with our internship coordinator to establish a relationship for sending students to highly acclaimed internship and business programs. Also, in collaboration with Dr. Mueller in International Business, students can study for a summer and/or a semester in Colima, Guadalajara, Baja California Sur and Chihuahua. We have 7 students right now in Colima for a summer program.

Colomina: In the fall of 2005, you started the annual tradition of celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month which has received a tremendous response from the College as well as from the city community. What are your thoughts on what this series of events has brought to the College?

Weyers: I think the department can showcase “lo nuestro” during Hispanic Heritage Month and that is exciting to let our colleagues and students know who we are and what we do. This department by nature represents a highly diverse and very colorful part of the world that deserves recognition. At the same time, it plays to our benefit that Hispanic Heritage Month falls at the beginning of the school year so we literally “hit the ground running” by promoting Hispanic culture.

Colomina: Could you give us a sneak preview of some of the events to come in this year’s Hispanic Heritage Month?

Weyers: We’ll have highly successful events from the past such as the Hispanic Fair and the Film Festival. Regarding the latter, we will try to feature some of the most acclaimed Hispanic films from last year, Guillermo del Toro’s “Pan’s Labyrinth” and Pedro Almodóvar’s “Volver,” but we are still working on it, as well as in bringing some well-known guest speakers. We’ll see… I’d also like to see even more student participation which perhaps could mean Spanish Club events like Noche Latina as well as at least one event that incorporates the Casa Hispánica.
It was a year of changes and additions to our study abroad programs. A new semester program started in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in Spring 2007 and the Cuba program was moved from the Fall to the Spring semester. All of the programs continued to attract students who were eager to immerse themselves in the different Hispanic cultures.

The program in Buenos Aires has opened up another opportunity for College of Charleston students to spend a semester studying abroad. 17 students participated in the inaugural program in Spring 2007 (January 26-May 11). Professor Ruben Marx of the Universidad Nacional de La Matanza coordinated all the academic aspects of the program. In addition to the course offerings in Spanish language, literature and culture, students took classes in Political Science and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Classes were held at the School of Law and Social Science of the University of Buenos Aires and taught by adjunct faculty recruited by Professor Marx with the approval of College of Charleston. Students lived in Residencia Master, a residence for foreign and Argentine students. Students participated in scheduled program excursions to northwestern Argentina, Iguazu Falls and Misiones, and Colonia (Uruguay).

Spring 2007 saw the successful completion of the second Cuba Semester program. 10 students spent almost three months in Cuba studying and getting to know the Cuban people and reality. They took Spanish and political science courses with faculty from the Instituto de Filosofia and the Universidad de Habana. The group lived in a residential district in Vedado in the center of La Habana at the Residencia ANAP, a house operated by the Cuban Small Farmers Association. In addition to daily classes, the group met with officials from a host of cultural institutions and government ministries as well as religious and non-governmental organizations. In March, the group headed out of Havana for an excursion that included stops at Playa Giron — the scene of the famous “Bay of Pigs Invasion”; Santa Clara — where as a result of Che Guevara’s defeat of the Batista Army the Cuban Revolution triumphed; and the historic city of Trinidad — one of the oldest in Cuba dating to 1514 and now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The students trekked the Escambray Mountains and even labored on a small farm. In late April, students attended a biennial conference on “Paradigmas Emancipatorios” held by the Latin American Research Group of the Instituto de Filosofia.

13 students participated in the program where they had the opportunity of taking various courses in history, culture, and literature taught by the director of the program, Dr. Vásquez, and by faculty from the Universidad de Extremadura. There were several excursions throughout Spain, including one to the surrounding areas (to the Roman city of Mérida where they visited the Roman museum and amphitheater); one to Andalucía (that included visits to Córdoba, Granada and Sevilla and many of their most emblematic historical sites including the Alhambra in Granada, the mosque en Córdoba, and the Alcázar in Sevilla); and one to central Spain that included a longer stay in the country’s capital, Madrid (with visits to the art museums of El Prado and y Reina Sofía). Students also enjoyed the history and culture of their hometown, Trujillo. They visited the City Hall where they had the chance to look at the original documents of the Reconquest from the city’s archives; and they experienced the city’s celebrations of the Feria del queso y vino and the Semana Santa during Easter.
Dr. Weyers, director of the program, took 8 undergraduate and 2 graduate students and spent 26 days in Mexico last summer (May 18–June 9), traveling to six different cities to experience the diversity that exists in our very large and important neighbor to the south. The route took them to Guadalajara and Tequila; Zacatecas; Mexico City; Oaxaca; and Monterrey.

“It was a wonderful experience to learn about Mexican culture, both ancient and modern. In fact, we had the ‘pleasure’, if you can call it that, to see democracy in action as all of Oaxaca was nearly taken over — peacefully — by striking teachers. We went to a cooking school, climbed pyramids, learned about mariachi music, enjoyed the Ballet Folklórico de México, and visited the business center of Mexico,” said Dr. Weyers.

Dr. Owens and Dr. Avendaño took a group of 22 students to Trujillo, Spain, to study abroad this past summer. Students lived with host families during their stay and attended Spanish language, conversation and civilization and culture courses. As part of the academic program, cultural activities and trips were included. Not only did students visit cities near Trujillo such as Cáceres and Mérida where they saw the Roman ruins, but were able to take an extended trip to Andalucía where they visited the Alhambra in Granada and experienced a live flamenco show. The six week program ended successfully in beautiful and exciting Madrid.

24 students arrived in Santiago de Chile on August 24 and stayed until December 4. The group attended Universidad Diego Portales, one of Chile’s finest institutions of higher learning, and lived with Chilean families. For the first time, the program in Santiago ran without a College of Charleston onsite program director. The academic aspects of the program operated under the direction of Professor Roxana Orrego, Coordinator of the English Language program at the Universidad Diego Portales. Mr. Julio Espinoza of TopCaribe Travel Agency in Santiago coordinated the logistics of the program. 24 students participated in the program. This program continues to be one of the most popular among our students. Classes were held at our partner institution, the Universidad Diego Portales. Adjunct faculty were hired in Santiago to teach all the classes offered in the program.

In order to ensure a smooth transition for the students into their new environment and culture, Dr. Andrew Sobiesuo traveled with them to Santiago, went through a week of orientation with them and saw them settled before returning to Charleston. In November, he again joined the students for the 9-day excursion to Peru. The design and support for the program, including approval of adjunct faculty, consisted of the Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program (Dr. Douglas Friedman) and the Chair of the Department of Hispanic Studies (Dr. Joseph Weyers).

Above: The Chile group stops for a picture at Machu Picchu.
We would like to hear from you! Please update us on your recent accomplishments, awards or any other news (or pictures) you would like to share. Please complete this form and mail to:

HispaNews  
College of Charleston  
Department of Hispanic Studies  
66 George Street  
Charleston, SC 29424

or e-mail your information to hispanews@cofc.edu.

Name ______________________________________________ Class ____________________________

Degree(s)/Year(s) Awarded ______________________________________________________________

Current/Professional Activities ____________________________________________________________

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How do you use your Spanish or Portuguese? ________________________________________________

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Other comments/suggestions _____________________________________________________________

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