

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES



Dr. Paulette A. Ramsay, BA, MA, PhD *UWI*
Head of Department

INTRODUCTION

The Department commenced the academic year 2014–2015, on a note of great optimism, as we anticipated continued increase in our enrolment, improved student engagement and renewed collaboration with our International Partners, – Embassies and Agencies. Two new programmes especially heightened our expectations for the academic year:

- i) The revised M.A. in Translation (Spanish and French).
- ii) The new Japanese Minor.

Ten (10) students registered for the M.A in Translation (Spanish and French) and eight (8) eager students from across the University registered for the minor in Japanese. The Department considered these numbers to be satisfactory in the inchoate stages of both programmes. Dr. Marie-

Jose Nzengou-Tayo was assigned the challenging task of co-ordinating a group of part-time professional translators to deliver the courses in the M.A., as well as to oversee other administrative aspects of the programme. The Department is heavily indebted to her for her efficient dispensation of this special and challenging responsibility.

CHALLENGES

The major challenge encountered by the Department, particularly in Semester I, was the extremely late arrival of lecturers who required Work Permits in order to commence their teaching. This situation affected the teaching of Spanish and Chinese in the main. Two members of the Spanish teaching team arrived at the end of September and October respectively. Faculty in the Section were put under tremendous pressure as they tried to cover the classes of these two members. While the lecturer for Chinese arrived a little earlier in September, the delay in arrival also created significant concern and stress. The Department is appreciative of the efforts of Dr. Nina Bruni, Mrs. Esmeralda Nunes, Mr. Martínez and other persons who assumed additional duties during this time. We are also grateful to the various individuals who willingly accepted part-time employment at short notice, as we tried to ensure that our students received their timetabled instruction.

The Japanese Section faced tremendous pressure resulting from increased registration and limited number of persons to deliver all the components – communicative grammar, conversation and laboratory/ listening classes.

The Department commenced operations with renewed focus on three main Strategic Plans/Objectives:

- i) Curriculum Review and Strengthening. (Ongoing)
- ii) Attracting qualified faculty. (Ongoing)
- iii) Income generation. (Ongoing)

In an effort to help faculty achieve (i) a three – day workshop was held in August. A number of presentations were made on relevant topics:

- “The New GPA and Marking System”

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Presenter: Mr. Jonathan Archie, Senior Administrative Assistant in Examinations.

- “Managing, Teaching, Research and Personal Life.”

Presenters: Dr. Michael Bucknor, Senior Lecturer & Head, Department of Literatures in English. Dr. Francoise Cévaer, Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages & Literatures.

- “New Demands for Foreign Language Teachers: Engaging Students’ Hearts and Minds through Task Based Learning.”

Presenter: Mrs. Aracelis Anedu, Lecturer, Shortwood Teachers’ College.

- “What Foreign Language Teachers Need to Know about Technology?”
Review of Article from ADFL.

Presenter: Dr. Nina Bruni, Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages & Literatures

- “Generating/Refining/Rewriting Course Rubrics.”

Presenter: Dr. Vivette Milson-Whyte, Lecturer and Course Coordinator, Language Linguistics & Philosophy, The UWI.

Several presenters delivered on important issues related to curriculum renewal and methodology.

Acquisition of New Equipment

The Department was pleased to acquire, as a result of earnings from teaching Spanish to the Staff of IDB, Lunch Time Classes, Translation Services and Summer School – some well-needed equipment to facilitate teaching outside of the lab as well as in the lab. These were two projectors and a laptop.

Quality Assurance Review

In Semester II, the Asian Languages (Japanese and Chinese), were reviewed by the Quality Assurance Review Unit. The Section was commended for the positive response of students, increased numbers

and the efficiency of lecturers. However, reviewers expressed specific concern about the pressure being placed on Japanese Staff to cover hours and numbers in excess of the acceptable standards for Instructors. In Semester II, the Romance Languages, (Spanish and French), were reviewed. (Process to be finalized 2015–2016).

SPECIAL EVENTS AND COLLABORATIONS

Mexican Film Series

The Mexican Embassy screened a number of films in collaboration with the Department. This was well attended by students and other members of The University and the general public. Movies included; *La Rosa Blanca*, *Santa* and *Doña Barbara* and *Pedro Páramo*.

First Year Orientation

This was held on September 11, 2014. Several Lecturers presented on different topics as part of the process of initiating First Year Students and helping them to understand the culture of the Department, as well as how to be successful University students.

Modern Languages and Literatures Day

The annual Modern Languages and Literatures Day was held on March 12, 2015. More than four hundred (400) students from Secondary and a few Primary schools from across the island attended and participated in a wide range of activities. The Department is consciously using this event as an opportunity to raise awareness among students of the importance of learning a foreign language in the age of increased globalization and border crossings and to increase our numbers in a sustainable manner.

Inter-Campus Theatre Festival

Two faculty members, Mrs Esmeralda Nunes and Mrs. Rona Barnett-Passard chaperoned three (3) French and three (3) Spanish students respectively to the Annual Inter-Campus Theatre Festival. Their trip was

supported by the Vice Chancellor's Office, the Office of the Principal, Mona Campus, Office of Finance and the Department.

CAPE Workshop

The annual CAPE workshop in which students are provided additional assistance with literary texts and critical analyses, as well as other main components of the regional examination was organized by Dr. Lindy Jones and Ms. Sharon Clue. The Department is grateful to members of the Department, who willingly gave of their time to realize this important public service. There were fifty (50) students from different High Schools in attendance.

Collaboration with the Alliance Française and the Embassy of France in Jamaica

The Department continued its collaboration with these entities through the Cine Club. The preparations for the Post de' Assistant for Final year and Second year students; and this year, as part of the of celebration of French Language and Francophone Week, Dr. Nzengou-Tayo presented a Lecture in collaboration with the Alliance Française entitled: "Double Perspective on the American Occupation of 1915: Le choc by Léon Laleau and Le joug by Annie Desroy," on March 19, 2015.

Unfortunately, the very crucial collaboration involving the position of a Poste d'Attaché Linguistique will be discontinued after this year. The Department expressed sincere gratitude to the Embassy of France and Ms. Gwenaëlle Huydts who taught in the position for two years and gave generously of her time and linguistic skills.

Homenaje a Gabriel García Márquez

In recognition of the first anniversary of the death of this outstanding Columbian author and Nobel Laurette for Literature, the Department, along with the Embassies of Columbia and Mexico celebrated the life, works and words of Gabriel García Márquez, with an audience of approximately one hundred and twenty (120) persons, in the Multifunctional Room. The programme included students of Literature who read from

their “A” Essays and other presentations on Marquez by faculty members. This was a very engaging, well-attended and successful celebration.

ALARA Conference

The Department co-hosted the Tenth Biennial International/Interdisciplinary Research Conference of The Afro-Latin/American Research Association (ALARA) Conference on August 5–9, 2015. More than thirty presenters from Universities from Spain, Nigeria, Senegal, the U.S.A. and Latin America participated. The panels were presented at the Courtleigh Hotel and at the Regional Headquarters at The UWI.

Collaboration with the Embassy of Spain

The Spanish Embassy has awarded three DELE scholarships and fifteen licences for the AVE Examinations to our students. These are important for giving students additional learning experiences in Spanish. Three students sat the DELE exams and did well.

Third Year Sensitization

This was organized by Dr. Lindy Jones and held on February 17, 2015. Several speakers presented on strategic issues that are important to students, who are getting ready to join the world of work.

Special Colombian Collaboration – Teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language

The Department, along with the Government of Columbia and the Jamaican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, conducted the Foreign Languages class for civil servants from June to December 2014.

Translation Services

The Department continued to earn a small income from our Translation Services. Our main tasks include translating legal documents, technical documents, birth certificates and University transcripts.

Lunch Time Classes

Spanish and French Beginners' Classes continue to provide a small, steady income.

PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Nina Bruni

Book:

- *Ruptura y viraje: la narrativa de Marcio Veloz Maggiolo 1960-1975*. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Secretaría de Estado de Cultura. 450p., 2015

Translation:

- Cowie, "The regional and international impact of The Mighty Sparrow in the calypso arena." Calypso as an instrument of social justice. Ed. Fondazione Adkins Chiti; Donne in Musica. Roma: International Music Council; Fondazione Adkins Chiti; Donne in Musica; Ford Foundation; Editore Colombo, 2007. 65–77. 2015.
- "El impacto regional e internacional de The Mighty Sparrow en la esfera del calypso." *Sonidos ancestrales de América Latina: nuevas interpretaciones*, María Lina Picconi and Everado Garduño, eds. Córdoba, Argentina: Babel Editorial; Círculo Amerindiano; Grupo de Investigación en Musicología. 143–162. [Translation English into Spanish] 2015.

Dr. Marie-José Nzenkou-Tayo

- (In collaboration with Elizabeth (Betty) Wilson). "Translating the Other's Voice: When is Too Much Too Much?" In *Writing and Translating Francophone Discourse: Africa, The Caribbean, Diaspora*. Edited by Paul Bandia. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi. Pp. 127–151. 2014.
- "La plateforme Moodle: un soutien à l'apprentissage du français à UWI, Mona, en Jamaïque." *Le français à l'université* – bulletin des

départements de français dans le monde. 19–04, 2014 (4 pages).
<http://www.bulletin.auf.org/index.php?id=1955>, 2014

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- “Landscape, Place and Belonging in Selected Poems by the Afro-Cuban Writer Jesús Cos Causee.” *PALARA*. Number 18, Fall 2014. 16–32. 2014
- “The Untold Story of Afro-Mexico”. Sunday 25, January 2015. *The Gleaner*.

PUBLIC SERVICE

Dr. Françoise Cévaër

- Member of the Selection Panel. Interviews of Candidates for the French Assistantship Programme, January 2015. French Embassy in Kingston.
- Member of the jury for the French vocabulary contest for High Schools in Jamaica organized by JAFT on Friday June 29, 2015 in Kingston.

Dr. Marie-Jose Nzengou-Tayo

- Guest Lecturer on Gisèle Pineau’s *Un papillon dans la cité* and Aimé Césaire’s *Une saison au Congo*. CAPE French Literature. Manchester High School. April 22.
- Presenter. CAPE Literature Workshop (French Literature). Department of Modern Languages & Literatures. April 11.
- Guest Lecturer on literary commentary and Gisèle Pineau’s *Un papillon dans la cité*. CAPE French Literature. St. Andrew High School. October 31.
- Guest Lecturer on Dany Laferrière’s *Pays sans chapeau*. CAPE French Literature. Ardenne High School. May 01.

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- Member, CAPE Examining Committee.

AWARDS

Dr. Paulette A. Ramsay

- UWI Special Initiatives Grant.
- Emerging Leaders in the Americas Programme (ELAP) Fellowship to University of Western Ontario, Canada.
- Mexican Government Excellence Scholarship Programme for Foreigners to conduct research and deliver lecture on “La identidad racial en la literatura oral de la Costa Chica” at the XV Encuentro de los Pueblos Negros de la Costa Chica de Oaxaca y Guerrero, in Cuajinicuilapa, Oaxaca, Mexico, from 27-29 November 2014.
- French Award: Designated “Chevalier” Knight in the French Order of Merit (“Ordre National du Mérite”).

STAFF /GRADUATE SEMINARS

Staff/Graduate Seminars were again held to encourage graduate students to produce result. Presenters were:

- Dr. Courtney Hogarth. "Time, Thought and Visual Expression – A case for the Visual Arts in Higher Education." On Thursday April 2, 2015.
- Dr. Paulette A. Ramsay. “Landscape, Place and Belonging in Selected Poems by the Afro-Cuban Writer, Jesús Cas Causee.” on Thursday, February 26, 2015.

GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Orientation

Graduate students were given two special orientation sessions to remind them of their obligations and to share research approaches and skills. Students were assigned Supervisors.

Numbers

MA in Translation	10
MPhil	10
PhD	2

AWARDS TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

1. Mr. Devon Yetman was awarded an internship to the Organization of American States, Translation Department from June 4th – August 14, 2015.
2. Mr. Yetman also received an ELAP scholarship to study as an Exchange Graduate Student in the M.A. in Translation at Université de Montreal.
3. Mr. Aldean Ellis, MPhil student was awarded a DFATD Scholarship to conduct research for one Semester at the University of Western Ontario in Canada.

CLUBS

All clubs met regularly and participated in Club fusion. The Spanish Club won several awards.