From the Program Coordinator

It has been a couple years since the last newsletter, so a new format and design has been adopted to mark a new phase. It also has a new name, Spell-Out, from the term for the interface between syntax and other components of human language. Along with the new format and name, the newsletter will be going completely electronic in the second issue. So, those who receive this issue by regular mail are encouraged to update your e-mail address with the program by e-mailing me or visiting the English Department website at www.ccsu.edu.

Much has occurred in the program over the last few years. The number of students in the program has increased steadily as demand for ESOL teachers has continued to grow in Connecticut schools and institutions. More students are pursuing first-time State Teacher Certification through our post-bacc program in TESOL than in the past, and many others are taking advantage of the new 12-credit Official Certificate Program (OCP) in TESOL. Even so, the Master's program in TESOL remains our largest program, attracting eight to twelve new students each semester.

The program's faculty has also grown. Two years ago we were granted a fourth full-time faculty position in the program, which was temporarily filled by Dr. Simona Herdan until last spring. This past summer we welcomed Dr. Helen Koulibdorova into that position on the tenure track. There is an overview of her research and teaching interests on the back of this newsletter. Another change is that almost two years ago Dr. Leyla Zidani-Eroglu passed the coordinatorship of the program to me, which has allowed her to focus more on her research and teaching.

Meanwhile, Dr. Seunghun Lee has continued to be very active in both encouraging students to present at regional conferences and presenting his own work at numerous international conferences. During the current academic year, he is on leave from CCSU while he does research in Berlin, Germany, as part of a series of grants that he won. We congratulate him on those grants and are very pleased to welcome Dr. Crystal Akers as his temporary replacement this year.

We have also continued to run our regular annual events on campus, including our Spring guest lecture (featuring Suzanne Flynn in 2011 and Murray Munro in 2012), the Certification luncheon, and other occasional invited talks by linguists and educators. See the calendar box below for information about upcoming events, including a guest talk the Tuesday after Thanksgiving on child language acquisition by Dr. William Snyder from the University of Connecticut.

I sincerely hope that we will see you at this event or one of the others in the spring. I would be very happy to hear any feedback from you about this new newsletter format or about our programs, whether you are a current student, alumnus/a, or a friend of the program.

Dr. Matt Ciscel, Professor and TESOL Coordinator

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Save the Date!

Sat 11/3, Annual ConnTESOL Conference, see www.conntesol.net for more information
Fri-Sat 11/9-10, Comprehensive Exams
Tues 11/12, 4:30pm, Marcus White Living Room, Guest Talk by Dr. William Snyder (Uconn), “Children’s Grammatical Conservatism, and the Nature of Syntactic Knowledge”

Tentative Dates in Spring Semester 2013:
Fri TBA late February, noon, Certification Luncheon
Fri-Sat 4/5-6, Comprehensive Exams
Fri 4/12, 5:30pm, Vance 105, Annual Guest Lecture, featuring Dr. Laura Ahearn (Rutgers) with theoretical and ethnographic perspectives on language and agency, followed by dinner
Community Outreach

For the last several years, the linguistics and TESOL programs have hosted the only Connecticut site of the first-round of the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad (NACLO, www.naclo.cs.cmu.edu). This is a formal competition involving linguistic data problems, which is open to middle and high school students in North America. It also feeds into an international competition. In 2013, we will host the first-round again, starting at 10am on Thursday, January 31, in the Connecticut Room, Memorial Hall. Pre-registration on the NACLO website is required. If you are teaching in a secondary school or working with students of that age, please share this information with your colleagues and students. And feel free to contact Dr. Ciscel (ciscelm@ccsu.edu) with any questions.

Graduate Students Present Papers at Columbia University

Under the mentoring of Dr. Lee, two sets of graduate students from the program have presented papers at the Applied Linguistics Winter Conference at Columbia University in New York City over the past two years. In 2011, papers were presented by Philippa Howe-Ivain, Nicola Joeckel, YuJeong Lee, and Karen Saadeh (Laura Demonte and Klaudia Sienko also had papers accepted, but were unable to attend). In 2012, Deborah Durant, Jonathan Hennessy, Patricia Morin, Erin Moser, Richelle Pinette, Katherine Prigodich, and Kelly Welch presented papers at the annual conference. The program is very proud of these students’ achievements and congratulates them.

New Faculty Member

As mentioned in the coordinator’s letter above, the program is very pleased to welcome Dr. Elena (Helen) Koulidobrova as a new Assistant Professor in the program this semester. She was awarded her PhD in linguistics from the University of Connecticut this past spring and will teach many of the TESOL methods courses in our program, as well as survey courses. Dr. Koulidobrova also holds a Master’s in TESOL from the University of Central Missouri and taught ESL at the University of Missouri-Kansas City’s Applied Language Institute (like our IELP) for seven years. Her research focuses on the syntax and semantics of signed languages and particularly on the (child and adult) acquisition of spoken and signed languages together. Although she has just finished her PhD, she has presented papers at numerous conferences and published several articles already. Please wish her a warm welcome to the program when you meet her.

Farewell and Stay in Touch!

Congratulations to the following students who completed the Master’s degree in TESOL over the past few semesters:

Spring 2012: Adam Burns, Deborah Durant, Jonathan Hennessy, James Lee, Christine Messmer, Patricia Morin, Richelle Pinette, and Stephanie West

Fall 2011: Matthew Brayfield, Jeremy Coster, YunJeong Lee, Karen Saadeh, Klaudia Sienko, Kelly Welch, and Brendon Albertson, who completed a thesis entitled “Facebook Use and Pragmatic/Grammatical Awareness among Japanese Learners of English”

Spring 2011: Cynthia Flynn, Nicola Joeckel, and Elvis Minga

Congratulations also to the students who completed student teaching and the TESOL post-bacc teacher certification program in Fall 2011: Linda Goulet, Eloise Rarey, and Stephanie West.

We love to hear from Alumni/ae! Send us your updated address and contact information, if it changes, and any news that you have of your professional positions and activities. Or just drop a message to say hello (ciscelm@ccsu.edu).

CCSU Linguistics and TESOL Program Website: http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=11859

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