From the Program Coordinator

For the past year (since the last issue of Spell-Out), the linguistics and TESOL programs have enjoyed several successes, not least of which are the eleven students who have completed the Master’s program and three who have completed the post-baccalaureate teacher certification program (see the second page for details). Other successes include bringing the new Linguistics Laboratory (in DiLoreto Hall, room 206) up to full functioning strength and having both faculty and students present our work at various conferences around the globe (see some highlights on page 2).

The field of TESOL continues to grow in Connecticut with our recent graduates finding many teaching opportunities, particularly in the public schools, once they finish the program. We regularly forward job announcements from school districts and other institutions looking for ESL teachers, long-term subs, and tutors. This past August, the number and breadth of school districts that we heard from or heard about seemed to increase substantially. Even so, many of the jobs in K-12 are still in the urban districts, and many of the adult ESL jobs continue to be part-time only.

At a time when many academic programs are struggling to attract students, the TESOL program has seen a steady number of applicants and new students. The stability in numbers of students is good, but it also means that greater demand for TESOL professionals in schools and colleges might not be easy to meet.

Our program is well positioned to grow to meet growing needs. In addition, we are working on several exciting projects for the near future, including a possible resource center for ESL teachers across the state and hosting a prestigious linguistics conference in 2016. More details will follow in future issues as these potential projects develop into new successes for our program.

Dr. Matt Ciscel, Professor and TESOL Coordinator

Save the Date!

Mon 9/29, 5:30-6:15pm, Ling Lab (FD206), TESOL Program Orientation & Reception for New & Continuing Students (All are welcome!!)
Sat 10/25, Annual ConnTESOL Conference, Crowne Plaza, Cromwell; see www.conntesol.org for more information and registration
Fri-Sat 11/14-15, Willard 214, Comprehensive Exams
Wed 11/19, 6:00pm, Vance 105, Guest Talk by Dr. Marie Coppola (Uconn) on challenges facing deaf children in Nicaragua

Tentative Dates in Spring Semester 2015:
Fri TBA late February, noon, Certification Luncheon
Fri-Sat 4/3-4, Comprehensive Exams
Fri April 10, TBA, Annual Guest Lecture, featuring Dr. Silvina Montrul, University of Illinois (UC)

Resources and Links

The links in this issue are related to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which is an excellent tool for conveying units of speech norms and speech variability to your students (and yourselves). If you have suggestions for links and resources to include here in future issues of Spell Out, just send them to Dr. Ciscel (ciscelm@ccsu.edu).

Dr. Lee forwarded the link below, which he got from a friend/colleague. It leads to three internet based games to help students learn and use the IPA symbols most commonly used for American English:
http://www.academic.muohio.edu/the233/ipaarcade/

The IPA is overseen by the International Phonetic Association, whose website also has numerous useful links for recorded examples, fonts, among many other resources: https://www.langsci.ucl.ac.uk/ipa/
Faculty Abroad

Having been bitten by the international bug is a common feature of practically everyone who follows the paths of TESOL and linguistics. For the faculty in the TESOL program this is no less true. Over the past couple of years, faculty members have given numerous papers and workshops abroad: Dr. Zidani-Eroglu in Turkey and Germany; Dr. Ciscel in Romania, Scotland, and Canada; Dr. Lee in Korea, Japan, Myanmar, South Africa, Cameroon, Holland, France, and Canada; and Dr. Koulidobrova in England, Italy, Germany, Portugal, and France. Here is a sampling of some recent paper titles:

- Elena Koulidobrova and Davidson, K., “Check your attitude: Role shift and embedding in American Sign Language.” Formal and Experimental Approaches to Sign language Theory (FEAST) Colloquium. Venice, Italy, June 2014.

If you have a professional abroad experience (teaching ESL or other activity) that you’d like to share, send it to Dr Ciscel for inclusion in the next issue.

Assessment and Accreditation

Over the last two years, the TESOL program has been under heavy scrutiny, as it went first through the process of accrediting the post-baccalaureate teacher certification program (in conjunction with the School of Education and Professional Studies) and then through its first process of external review of the Master’s program.

The post-bacc program was granted conditional recognition in 2013, requiring a further report in 2014. One problem that our report faced was the absence of data from a standardized test, like all other teacher cert programs. Luckily, around the same time, the State of CT began requiring a passing grade on the Praxis II in TESOL for TESOL certification. So, by the next report cycle, we expect to have data from our students’ success on that exam and an easier time satisfying the accrediting organization.

The Master’s program in TESOL is required by the university to undergo a new external review process in 2014. The external reviewer is scheduled to visit the campus in early October and produce a report on our program to help us improve and grow.

Farewell and Stay in Touch!

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

- Spring 2014: Nadia Alhadyan, Philip Cummings, Dragana Marosz, Arleen Ruiz, and Rachel Stevenson, who passed the comprehensive exams.
- Fall 2013: Kaja Cichowlaz, Christina Golgozeanu, Dawn Hambrecht, Davia Leh, and Yiling Qi, who passed the comprehensive exams, and Nilofer Haider, who completed a thesis entitled, “Employment Related Terminology: A study of the Nepali-Bhutanese refugee population in determining their comprehension of work related definitions.”

Congratulations also to the students who completed student teaching and the TESOL post-bacc teacher certification program during 2013-2014: Allison Bullard, Philip Cummings, and Rian McKeag.

Alumni News

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://web.ccsu.edu/english/graduateStudies/tesol/

English Dept, 1615 Stanley St, New Britain, CT 06050
(860) 832-2795, Fax (860) 832-2784