

*"Juno was the wife of Jupiter and Queen of the Gods.
 Iris, The Goddess of the Rainbow, was her attendant and messenger." – Thomas Bulfinch*

IRIS

HAPPENINGS IN THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AT CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY



WELCOME MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW DEAN, DR. J. DAVID MACEY!

The Carol A. Ammon College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences is proud to announce the appointment of Dr. J. David Macey as our Dean! Please enjoy the following message from Dr. Macey:

My name is David Macey, and I am excited to join the Carol A. Ammon College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences as dean this summer. I'm new to Central but have worked in higher education since the 1990s as a faculty member, department chair, and dean at the University of Puget Sound, the University of Central Oklahoma, and Fort Hays State University. My academic training and teaching experience are in English language and literature, and I have taught, presented, and published on British and African American literature, literary and cultural theory, and the history of the English language.

I grew up in the Boston area, and it's great to be back in New England. My husband Thomas, who works remotely as an instructional designer for Fort Hays State, and I live in the Elmwood neighborhood in West Hartford with our five cats, and we are enjoying exploring the Central and greater New Britain communities. I look forward to advocating for our college and its programs, to working with Liberal Arts and Social Sciences students and faculty to navigate these challenging times for higher education, and to getting to know each of you on an individual basis. Please do stop by the dean's office or reach out by email (d.macey@ccsu.edu) to say "hello"!

INTERESTED IN GIVING TO CLASS?

Your donations support students' attendance at various conferences and events, fund scholarships, and support classroom equipment needs. We are grateful for your support!



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let us **REINTRODUCE** ourselves



Dr. J. David Macey, Dean



Dr. Kate McGrath, Associate Dean



Dr. Antony Wormack, Assistant Dean



Cristina Conte, Assistant Dean



Leah Skinner, CLASS Advisor



Monica Rivera, CLASS Advisor



*Courtney Rehmer,
Administrative Assistant*



Emma Farrow, University Assistant



Olivia Tuohy, University Assistant

WELCOMING NEW FACES

Assistant Dean, Cristina Conte

Although new to the Carol A. Ammon College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Cristina “Crissy” Conte is certainly not new to Central Connecticut State University. Crissy has been part of the CCSU community for more than a decade and has worked in higher education in Connecticut for nearly twenty years.

Crissy’s passion for higher education began with her own experience as a first-generation college student. After struggling academically during her first semester, an academic advisor recognized her potential and helped her find a path forward. That experience had a lasting impact and ultimately inspired Crissy to build a career centered on helping students find their own path to success.

One of Crissy’s favorite parts of her work is connecting directly with students, whether through the CLASS Living Learning Community or in the classroom teaching CCSU 103. She is a strong believer that every student should feel a sense of belonging and connection to their campus community, and she is excited to bring that belief to her work as Assistant Dean in CLASS.

Crissy holds a Bachelor’s degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Connecticut and a Master’s degree in College Student Personnel Administration from Canisius University.

Outside of work, Crissy is a mom to two boys and their high-energy rescue dog. She loves running, cooking, and exploring the outdoors, but her favorite adventures are the ones she gets to share with her kids. She is rarely afraid to trade practicality for fun because she believes some of the best memories come from simply asking, “Why not?”



CLASS Advisor, Monica Rivera

Monica joined Central in 2023 and has worked with students across a variety of academic initiatives as an advisor in the School of Business and will continue in CLASS. She has been in higher education for eleven years and leverages her experience across advising, Financial Aid, and Registrar services as well as teaching CCSU 103 to help students confidently navigate their academic journey.

Academic advising is more than helping students select courses—it is about helping them make sense of their college experience and recognize the opportunities that can emerge from it. Whether discussing academic plans, navigating challenges, or exploring future goals, Monica believes that meaningful conversations and timely support can have a lasting impact on student success.

Monica is currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership. She is a strong advocate for proactive advising and is passionate about identifying ways institutions can better support students before academic challenges become barriers to success. This interest extends beyond her daily work and into her doctoral studies, where she is researching proactive academic advising models and their impact on student persistence and achievement.

Monica's favorite role outside of work is being a mom to her kids, Joel & Ally, who inspire her to use her creativity to bring people together—whether that's planning LLC events or decorating for new student orientation and parties. Monica believes in encouraging others to be themselves, to embrace their strengths, and to pursue their goals with confidence, and she is excited to bring that energy to CLASS.



MEET OUR NEW FACULTY!



Prof. Mary O'Malley - Art & Design
 Dr. Nina Kelly - Communication
 Dr. Erin Ortiz - Communication
 Dr. Emily Lowe - English
 Dr. Ricardo Friez - Philosophy
 Dr. Giselle Ferguson - Psychological Science
 Dr. Lindsey Cole - Psychological Science

We are very excited to welcome these faculty members to CLASS! Each of them brings a unique set of skills and expertise that will strengthen our departments and support our students as they learn and grow!



CLASS is proud to recognize the following faculty who have been promoted or received tenure for the 2026-27 academic year. Congratulations!

Dr. Caleb Bragg, Promotion to Professor of Psychological Science

Dr. Cameron Brewer, Promotion to Professor of Philosophy

Prof. Jotham Burrello, Promotion to Professor of English

Dr. Haile Eshe Cole, Promotion to Associate Professor of Geography, Anthropology, & Tourism

Dr. Jeanne Criscola, Promotion to Professor of Art & Design

Dr. Heather de Savage, Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor of Music

Dr. Eric Dlugolenski, Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor of Criminology & Criminal Justice

Dr. Jennifer Hedlund, Promotion to Professor of Criminology & Criminal Justice

Dr. Yeojin (Julie) Kim, Promotion to Professor of Communication

Dr. Helen Koulidobrova, Promotion to Professor of English

Dr. Tyler Kynn, Tenure in History

Dr. Eric Leonidas, Promotion to Professor of English

Prof. Brian Prather, Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor of Theatre

Dr. Thomas Rein, Promotion to Professor of Geography, Anthropology, & Tourism

Dr. Carolyne Soper, Promotion to Professor of Economics

Prof. Julien Strong, Tenure in Department of English

Prof. Darren Sweeney, Promotion to Professor of Journalism

CLASS goes *International*

CLASS faculty from the departments of Art & Design, Communication, English, History, Journalism, Political Science, Sociology, and World Languages studied abroad with students in the Netherlands, Italy, Turkey, Norway, Japan, Brazil, South Korea, and Scotland.



From Constantinople to Istanbul: A Byzantine and Ottoman Metropolis
 March 13 - March 22, 2026



"Look to Norway": Teacher Resistance during WWII
 May 17 - May 26, 2026



Discover Japan: Samurai, Hiroshima, and Hello Kitty
 May 18 - June 1, 2026



Culture, Diversity, and Resilience in South Korea
 May 19 - May 27, 2026



UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Southern Italy
 July 10 - August 1, 2026



***Edinburgh Festival Experience:
 Behind the Scenes at the World's Largest Arts Festival***
 July 31 - August 9, 2026

MONTHLY DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures



The **Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (WLLC)** at Central provides students at Central with the opportunity to study a broad range of languages. The department currently offers **instruction in nine languages** at the undergraduate level: American Sign Languages (ASL), Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Latin, and Spanish. It is also in the process of reestablishing the Chinese program. The department currently includes nine full-time faculty and fifteen part-time instructors. At the graduate level, the department offers a fully online Spanish MA and an inter-university MA in collaboration with the prestigious **University of Salamanca** (Spain) that requires our graduates to spend five weeks in Salamanca for one summer.

Our faculty bring tremendous enthusiasm and dedication to the classroom and provide close, individualized advising and mentoring to the students. The quality of this work was recognized last academic year, when every full-time member in the department, along with several part-time faculty members, was nominated for the **Excellence in Teaching Award**. From the very first language course, students are encouraged to use the target language actively, developing not only vocabulary and grammar competence but also understanding of cultures and practices of the communities that speak those languages.

Recognizing the changing needs of today's students and the importance of connecting languages with professional preparation, the WLLC department recently implemented several curricular changes and developed three certificates that combine language proficiency with career-oriented skills and intercultural competence: **Deaf Studies, English-Spanish Translation, Spanish for Healthcare Professionals**.

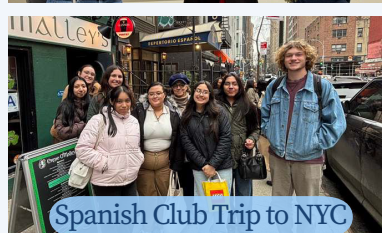
Study abroad opportunities are an essential component of our program. The department currently offers study abroad opportunities in **Latin America, France, Italy, and Spain**. This summer Prof. Simone Puleo offered a faculty-led study-abroad course, WL300: UNESCO World Heritage Site in Southern Italy. Students study Italian language at Accademia Italian Salerno and visit several world-renowned historical sites such as Pompeii, the Royal Palace of Caserta, and the Roman maritime villa of Positano, with visits to Napoli, Vietri, and the Amalfi Coast.

Prof. Rutherford also co-led a study abroad course to **Brazil**, "Brazil and Brazilians: Exploring History, Culture, and Climate Change in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro." These opportunities allow students to experience languages and culture in authentic settings.

Through innovative curricula, dedicated teaching and advising, student organizations, study abroad, interdisciplinary partnerships, and experiential learning, WLLC department prepares students to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries and to apply those skills in their academic, professional, and personal lives in a diverse and interconnected world.

Department Chair Dr. Lourdes Casas Notes:

"Writing this short piece about the WLLC department was more difficult than I expected, not because there is too little to say, but because there is so much! I am very proud of the enthusiasm, dedication and creativity of my colleagues in and beyond the classroom. Nelson Mandela said 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' The most rewarding part of my work is seeing my students experience this transformation."



Any questions or for additional information about our program, reach out to Prof. Casas (casasmal@ccsu.edu).

You can visit the department in Willard-DiLoreto Hall Room 403! For more spotlight information, visit ccsu.edu/class.



IMPORTANT DATES



- **September 7: Labor Day No classes**
- **September 14: Last Day to drop a course without a W**

SEPTEMBER CLUB EVENTS

Black Student Union Meetings: September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
When: 6:00p - 8:00p
Where: Marcus White - Africana Center

Club Leader Training: September 2, 3, 4, 9, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29
When: 11:00a - 12:00p
Where: Student Center - Philbrick Camp Room

Africana Students Organization: September 14, 21, 28
When: 7:00p - 9:00p
Where: Marcus White - Africana Center Basement

Spanish Club Meeting: September 10
When: 5:00p - 6:00p
Where: Student Center - Clock Tower Room 134

SGA Senate Meetings: September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
When: 3:00p - 4:30p
Where: RVAC - Travelers Lecture Hall, Room 105

United Carribean Club Meeting: September 10
When: 6:30p - 7:30p
Where: Marcus White - Africana Center

Fall Involvement Fair: September 16
When: 10:00a - 2:00p
Where: Student Center Circle

Political Science Club Meetings: September 9, 23
When: 4:30p - 5:30p
Where: Student Center - 1849 Room

Albanian Student Union Meeting: September 14
When: 4:30p - 6:00p
Where: Student Center - 1849 Room

Pre-Law Society General Meeting: September 14, 28
When: 3:15p - 4:15p
Where: Student Center - Clock Tower Room 134

WELCOME BACK, CLASS LLC? BUILDING COMMUNITY BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

The CLASS Living Learning Community (LLC) is back for another year, and we're excited to welcome our newest CLASS students! Located on the third floor of James Hall, the LLC brings together first-year students from across the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences to build connections, explore academic interests, and make the most of their first year at Central.

Through a collaborative partnership with **Residence Hall Director Alicia Torello**; **Resident Assistants Ariana Gomez (Journalism) and Skye Parsell (Criminology)**; **CLASS Academic Advisor Monica Rivera**; and **Assistant Dean Cristina Conte**, students have opportunities to:

- Connect with faculty, staff, advisors, and peers
- Build community with students who share similar interests
- Explore academic and career opportunities
- Connect their classroom experience with the larger Central community

Upcoming LLC Events

Murder Mystery Night – Our **second annual Murder Mystery Night**, hosted by CLASS alum and University Assistant Olivia Tuohy, is tentatively planned for **October 20**.

Custom Button Making – Students will get creative with a **custom button-making event** in collaboration with the Graphic/Information Design program.

Giving Thanks – A Thanksgiving gathering and community engagement project focused on bringing students together and giving back to the Central community.

Spring Semester Planning – An interactive program to help students prepare for registration and plan ahead with CLASS advising.

CLASS Hall of Fame – Hosted by our RAs, this program will highlight famous and influential people who majored in disciplines represented within CLASS.

We look forward to creating additional programs throughout the year based on student interests and ideas. Faculty, staff, and campus partners interested in collaborating or learning more about the CLASS LLC are encouraged to reach out to Cristina Conte or Monica Rivera.



Pictured Left to Right:
Crissy Conte and Monica Rivera

