To the Alumni of the Dept. of Foreign Languages and Literatures:

It has been five years since I began as Department Head here at NC State, and I have to say that the past year was the busiest yet. In addition to a regular academic year with all its joys and complications--(and there were many of each)--, the Department inaugurated our new building in October, launched the new German Studies major, hosted a major international literary conference, completed four successful hiring searches—one in Spanish, one in German Studies, and two in Hindi/Urdu--, began our new large-section delivery of FLS 101, prepared a complete revamping of the Spanish major curriculum (which will take effect in January 2009, see below), went through my 5-year Head's review, processed two successful promotion and tenure cases, processed a successful promotion-to-full professor case, and created a proposal for a PhD program in Hispanic Studies. If fall semester was hectic, spring semester was a roller-coaster ride.

We will also remember this year as one marked by both celebration and sadness. We began in August with a great celebration in honor of Dr. Mary Ann Witt (French and Italian) who after 31 years at NC State retired from the Department as Professor Emerita. We ended the year with another festive occasion honoring the retirement of Dr. Louise Salstad (Spanish), who after 21 years at State, also joins the ranks of Emerita. Each of these individuals was a pillar in the Department and leaves us wondering how we will ever manage without them, but we wish them success and happy times in their retirement. Then, just as spring semester ended, the Department incurred a huge loss. After a valiant fight against lung cancer, Diane Adler, senior lecturer in French, passed away on May 9. She was a great teacher and over the years touched the lives of hundreds of students. We in the Department remember her energy and generosity with great fondness and all deeply miss her. Our colleague, Dr. Valerie Wust, has written a lovely tribute to her which you can access at http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/News/2008/adler.htm.

In 2007-08 the Department produced 62 new graduates with B.A.s in French, German Studies, or Spanish. In addition, the Department graduated 15 M.A. students--50% more than last year--10 in Spanish and 5 in French. In April, we held our annual awards ceremony, at which outstanding students in each of the languages we teach were recognized for their efforts and abilities. At that ceremony, we also awarded the Malinowski Memorial Award of $100.00 to Sarah Joanne Dick. (B.A. in Spanish, 08), the Teacher Education Distinguished Alumni Award to Lacey P. Proctor (B.A. in Spanish Teacher Ed, 02), and three Julia Ward Skinner scholarships of $200.00 each to our best students in French, German, Italian, and Russian—Haley Boyd, William Buescher (B.A. German Studies 08), Deborah Rodriguez, and Cathrena Samodurov, respectively.

As in past years, we are proud of the successes of our faculty. Here are some of the achievements:

- Ms. Toby Brody, Director of English as a Second Language, received a Fulbright Scholar lecturing award in Fall 2007. Ms. Brody conducted teacher training courses at the Technological University in Panama City.

- Dr. Greg Dawes, professor of Spanish, published his book Mario Benedetti, escritor uruguayo contemporáneo, with the Edwin Mellen Press.

- Dr. John Mertz, associate professor of Japanese, received two teaching awards: 1) He was named an NC State Alumni Association Outstanding Teacher for 2008; and 2) became a member of the NC State Academy of Outstanding Teachers.

- Ms. Susan Navey-Davis, senior lecturer in Spanish and undergraduate adviser, received the Outstanding Teaching Award given for the first time this year by the First Year Inquiry Program.

- Dr. Mark Sosower, professor of Greek and Latin, was recognized by NC State with the title of Professor of Distinction. He is the first faculty member in the Department of FLL ever to receive this title. To attain this designation, an individual must be "one of the best scholars in his/her
discipline and known and respected nationally and internationally by scholars in their field." They also must have improved the quality of NC State and served its mission through service and involvement in the campus community.


- Ms. Karen Tharrington, lecturer in Spanish and coordinator of Spanish Teacher Education, received a special letter of recognition for her distance learning FLS 102 course from the selection committee for the 2008 Gertrude Cox Award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching and Learning with Technology.

- In addition to the individual books and awards mentioned above, the faculty of the Department of FLL published 15 scholarly articles, 11 book reviews, and presented more than 50 papers and workshops at various national and international scholarly conferences. A number of faculty also published individual poems, short stories, and translations into English from French, Spanish, and Portuguese during the year. Furthermore, five faculty members were successful in receiving monetary grants to pursue their research and/or pedagogical innovations.

Here is some more specific news from some of our individual sections:

**French:**
We have now an Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's (ABM) degree program. It is designed to provide French students in the traditional curriculum (non-teacher education) with a means of completing the requirements for both degrees within a period of 5 years. The combined degree program provides an opportunity for exceptional undergraduate students at NC State to double count up to 12 credits of graduate coursework and obtain a non-thesis Master's degree in the same field within 12 months of completing the Baccalaureate degree. For more information, check our webpage at [http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/MA/abm.htm](http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/MA/abm.htm).

**German Studies:**
- As we begin our second year, we have 20 registered majors after having graduated our first three students with a B.A. in German Studies during the past year.
- In March over 300 individuals came to an event that celebrated the inauguration of the new major.
- We are pleased to welcome Dr. Jonathan Wipplinger, (PhD. UMich) as an assistant professor in our new program.

**Spanish:**
- Starting in January of 2009, the undergraduate Spanish major will have a brand new look. The entire menu of 300-level courses has been revised, and some exciting new 400-level courses have been added. The new curriculum offers a strengthened oral and written skills component, the integration of literature with the cultural-historical contexts that surround it, and a revised numbering system that will be easier to follow for both students and professors. Further curricular innovations are also in the works, such as a stronger Spanish for the professions component.
- Dr. Agustín Pastén (PhD UPenn), an authority on Latin American literature, particularly the work of Octavio Paz, joins our faculty this fall as an associate professor. He comes to us from the University of Nebraska where he taught for the past 15 years. He will be a real asset as we plan for the new Hispanic Studies PhD degree.

**Graduate Studies:**
Our graduate program continues to grow at a modest rate. The total number of students enrolled for the Fall 2008 semester is 44, an all-time high, and up 22% compared to Fall 2007 student enrollment! There are now 13 full or part-time French graduate students and 31 full or part-time Spanish graduate students. Also, support for our graduate students more than doubled between Fall 2006 and Fall 2008. We now provide teaching assistantships to over 75% of our full-time students (13 of 17 students) whereas in the Fall 2006 semester we were able to support only 6 students.

**ESL:**
In June of this year we held our 7th annual ESL Symposium. 350 NC teachers were in attendance to enjoy presentations by NC First Lady Mary Easley, Superior Court Judge Howard Manning, and
outgoing Assistant Deputy Secretary of Education, Margarita Pinkos, among other distinguished speakers.

**Other sections:**
- Hindi/Urdu will see two new instructors this fall, Dr. Sujata Mody (UCal, Berkeley) and Dr. Pankaj Jain (Rutgers).
- Our Arabic program is expanding as well, and to help us grow we have hired Dr. Inas Messiha, formerly at Penn State University. Dr. Messiha will also oversee our French teaching assistants, as her second area of expertise is French pedagogy.

**Staff news:**
Looking forward to leisure time and travel, Linda Zhang, our bookkeeper, retired in February after 12 years in the Department of FLL. We will miss her, but she has been ably replaced by the new member of our office team, Tony Burgin, who joined us in July.

**News about Department of FLL alumni:**

-- *Kodjo Adabra*, (M.A. French, 06), is a PhD student and graduate teaching associate at The University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He has just published his second novel, “Identité.” Both this and his first novel, “L’Exilé”, are in French and published by the Editions Syracuse.

-- *Jennifer Boyd* (B.A. German Studies 08) spent the summer at the Rheinland-Pfalz Technische Hochschule in Aachen, Germany before she begins her PhD in biomedical engineering on a Whitaker Fellowship at Oxford University. During her senior year, Jennifer was a finalist for the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, NC State’s first ever.

-- *William Buescher* (B.A. German Studies 08) has received a Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange Scholarship to spend the year in Germany. He will study for 2 months in Cologne before taking on an internship in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

-- *Karen Coachman* (M.A. 08) and *Zoraya Place* (M.A. 08) will be joining the faculty of FLL as fulltime lecturers in Spanish this fall.

-- *Jason Goodman* (2005) is pursuing an MS degree in Asia Pacific Studies at the Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan. He is on a full scholarship there.

-- *Marie Lechantre* (M.A. 08) was hired as a Student Program Assistant for the CEA (Cultural Experiences Abroad) Paris Division where she will be working with American and Canadian students during their study abroad programs.

-- *Catherine Menneer* (M.A. French, 08) has become a fulltime faculty member in French at Wake Tech Community College in Raleigh.

-- *Tyler Oakley* (M.A. Spanish, 08) has received a fellowship for PhD study in Spanish at UNC-CH.

-- *Olga Sendra* (M.A. 05) is currently pursuing a PhD in Spanish Literature at Princeton. She recently passed her general PhD exams and is beginning to write her dissertation.

**Study Abroad:**
This year our summer study abroad programs continued to provide students with opportunities to experience other cultures first hand. Students raved about their experiences on departmentally sponsored programs in Vienna, Austria; Cairo, Egypt; Burgundy, Lille, and Montpellier, France (3 different programs); Perugia, Italy; Cuernavaca, Mexico; Lima, Peru; and Segovia, Spain. So many of our faculty remember the importance of their first experiences in a foreign country and what the chance to immerse themselves in a foreign culture and language meant for them, that they generously continue to spend their summers bringing similar opportunities to their students.

We are looking forward to a very busy year ahead. As I wrote to you last year, you, the alumni of the Department, remain very important to us. My letter has summarized our achievements this year, but much of how we measure our success is by your achievements in the world. We hope that you will continue to stay in touch with us and let us know about your interests and accomplishments. Many of you have taken the time to fill out our alumni questionnaire, which can be found on our website at [http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/corner/AlumniSurvey.doc](http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/corner/AlumniSurvey.doc) and we thank you for that. If you have not done so, we would appreciate your filling out the survey and returning it to the Department.

As graduates of this Department, you know how important the study of languages, literatures and cultures is, and for that reason, we hope you will want to join us in our continuing efforts to open new doors.
broaden the vision of current and future students at NC State. There are a number of ways in which you can help us. Since our move to Withers, we have been in a “Brick Campaign.” When you think of NC State, you think of red brick, and the walkway in front of Withers Hall is no exception. For $75.00 you can have your name (3 lines of text) engraved on a brick that will lie in our “Walk of Honor.” It’s a great way to commemorate your accomplishments here at State (or to honor someone else) and simultaneously show your pride in and support of FLL. I have enclosed an order form for your convenience. Those of you who have already purchased bricks will be able to see the results in September when the first ones are laid.

But there are also other ways to show support for our department. You read about the wonderful opportunities we have for our students to participate in study abroad programs. Unfortunately, many of our students cannot afford even the most reasonable programs. Last year we set up a new scholarship fund to help students in the Department of FLL be able to study abroad. By contributing to the NC State Foundation, Inc. and writing “FLL Study Abroad Scholarship” on the memo line of your check, you can help students who might otherwise not be able to participate in one of the many study abroad opportunities that are available through the Department and the University.

You may prefer to honor former faculty by contributing to either the Diane Fagin Adler Francophile Scholarship (information at http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/giving.htm) or the Arlene Malinowski Memorial Fund, or give to the Skinner Scholarships. All of these provide outstanding language students with stipends that enable them to pursue their studies and expand their horizons. If you would like more information on any of these partnering opportunities, please email me at ruth_gross@ncsu.edu, call me at 919 515.3343, or go to our website at http://sasw.chass.ncsu.edu/fl/. If and when you wish to make any kind of gift to the Department, you may go directly to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences secure website www.giveto.chass.ncsu.edu.

We will continue to keep you informed of the events and achievements of your Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. If you are ever on campus, please stop by our offices on the third floor of Withers Hall. My door is usually always open, and I would enjoy meeting and talking with you.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth V. Gross
Head, Dept. of FLL and Professor of German