From the Chair

We are happy to present another Department Newsletter to capture some highlights from the previous two academic years.

2008 had its bittersweet moments. After ten years at Gordon College, Dr. Jennifer Beatson accepted a position at Charleston Southern University in South Carolina. Though we are happy for her and her husband to be back on their home turf, her colleagues and students were sad to see her go.

2008 also saw the implementation of the new major and minor in linguistics. Prof. Graeme Bird, who has taught in Gordon’s English Department, joined us as associate professor of linguistics and classics. We are happy to report that linguistics at Gordon already has 25 majors and counting!

In the spring of 2009, Gordon’s English Department and the Department of Languages and Linguistics joined forces to host the inaugural “Literatures and Linguistics Undergraduate Student Colloquium” (LLUC). The conference attracted presenters from Gordon, as well as from state schools and private colleges around the country.

Last but not least, Dr. Moisés Park, who completed his Ph.D. in Spanish with an emphasis on literary theory at the University of California, Davis, joined our department this fall. We are excited to welcome Dr. Park, an enthusiastic teacher-scholar and a wonderful colleague.

As you know, we love to hear from our alumni. Please send your updates to Gregor.Thuswaldner@gordon.edu and join us on Facebook!

Gregor Thuswaldner

Announcing the New Linguistics Major  

by Kristin Schwabauer Rydbeck

The Department of Languages and Linguistics recently announced its newest addition to the department—an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental linguistics major and minor. Co-directed by Dr. Graeme Bird and Dr. Gregor Thuswaldner, the major provides students with knowledge of the main pillars of linguistics, including syntax, morphology, phonetics, phonology, semantics and pragmatics. This new major sets Gordon apart from most schools in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, making Gordon one of the only schools to offer linguistics as a major.

Bird and Thuswaldner will bring much to this new program—Bird, who was a Teaching Fellow in Harvard’s Classics Department, has a master of arts in linguistics from Harvard; Thuswaldner wrote his master’s thesis on German sociolinguistics at the University of Vienna.
Department of Languages and Linguistics
Fall 2010

A Note from Dr. Graeme Bird, Associate Professor of Linguistics and Classics

I am originally from New Zealand, where I studied classics and mathematics, before heading to the U.S. to focus on jazz piano at Berklee College of Music. Subsequently I studied linguistics and classics at Harvard University, specializing in Indo-European languages and the poetics of Homer's Iliad.

I continue to research Homer’s epic poetry, with an interest in how oral performance can resemble jazz improvisation. My upcoming book deals with “multi-textuality” in Homer and related literature and music. I’m also involved with Harvard’s “Homer Multitext Project,” a group of scholars seeking to publish online resources illustrating the variability of the Homeric text. We recently traveled to Venice to obtain high resolution images of medieval manuscripts of Homer’s Iliad.

In my role overseeing the classics minor, I teach Latin and classical literature in translation. I co-direct the new linguistics major, for which I am teaching courses in syntax and morphology, phonetics and phonology, history of the English language, and poetics; I also teach a course on Chaucer, in which we read much of his work in Middle English.

In order to improve my French, I enjoy regularly attending the Table Française.

Introducing Dr. Moisés Park, Assistant Professor of Spanish

Dr. Park joined the Gordon faculty this fall and teaches Spanish language, literature and film. Park grew up in South America and moved to the U.S. to attend the University of Michigan. After earning a Bachelor of Science, he began a doctoral degree in literature and critical theory at U.C., Davis. This summer, he graduated with a Ph.D. in Spanish, got married and moved to New England to join the Languages and Linguistics Department.

At Gordon, Park’s research will include contemporary Southern Cone literature and films, poetry, Orientalism, critical theory (psychoanalysis, socio-materialist theory and biopolitics) and cultural studies. He has presented papers in the U.S. and in Chile, on his dissertational research, “Desire and Generational Conflicts in Chilean Post-Dictatorial Narrative and Cinema,” and on topics like the politics of martial arts films and Asian American Studies. He hopes to attend several upcoming conferences and incorporate his research into the classroom. Park also enjoys playing music and filmmaking.

See our Language Faculty webpage for more on Dr. Park’s recent publications.
Francophone Week

In March 2009, to celebrate Francophone week, Dr. Vanborre and Gordon’s Cercle Français organized several events around French and Francophone culture. Dr. Vanborre’s Quebec Studies class hosted two guests as part of this celebration. M. Maël-Solen Picard, public affairs director for the Quebec government office in Boston, introduced writer and Montreal native Nadine Bismuth, who joined us to discuss her last book, a collection of short stories entitled Étes-Vous Mariée à un Psychopathe? (Are You Married to a Psychopath?). Bismuth discussed finding material for her books in real life experience, writing about relationships between people—especially couples—and facing criticism for writing short stories as opposed to novels. The conference ended with a question and answer session which continued over a French lunch prepared by Pascal Huguet, French chef, and the dining services staff. Francophone music played while everyone enjoyed the delicious meal and continued discussing Bismuth’s work.

Alpha Mu Gamma Honor Society Kappa Epsilon Chapter Inductions

On February 18, 2009, President Abigail Sawyer inducted four new members into the Gordon College chapter of AMG National Foreign Language Honor Society: Bethany Hoffman, Amy Aupperle, Jennie-Rose Saucier and Karen Littlejohn. Congratulations to these students!

Recent Student and Alumni Highlights

In spring 2009, Brett Wilkes, linguistics ’11, presented at Harvard’s Linguistics Undergraduate Student Conference. Another linguistics major, Anna Gale ’11, gave a paper at the same conference in the spring of 2010. Samuel Kim, Spanish and education ’10, was accepted into Harvard’s Graduate Program in Education. Kathryn Malczyk, German and English ’06, a Ph.D. student in German at the University of Pennsylvania, recently spent a semester doing research at the University of California, Berkeley. After spending a year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Mexico, Mariska Bolyanatz, Spanish ’08, was accepted into the Graduate Program in Hispanic Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
Faculty Publications and Highlights

Monographs

- In Emmanuelle Vanborre’s book, *Lectures blanchiotiennes de Malraux et Camus* (Peter Lang, 2010), she offers a completely new reading of two of the most influential 20th century French authors, André Malraux and Albert Camus. Her monograph is informed by post-modern literary theory and Maurice Blanchot’s highly important ethical and ontological reflections of language.

- Graeme Bird’s forthcoming book, *Multitextuality in the Homeric Iliad: The Witness of Ptolemaic Papyri* (Center for Hellenic Studies and Harvard University Press, 2011), examines a small group of early papyrus manuscripts of Homer’s *Iliad*, known as the Ptolemaic papyri, dating from the third to the first centuries BCE. These manuscripts, although fragmentary, are the oldest surviving physical evidence of the text of the *Iliad*.

Edited Volume

- Gregor Thuswaldner’s edited volume *Derrida und danach? Literaturtheoretische Diskurse der Gegenwart* (Deutscher Universitätsverlag/VS Research, 2008) addresses the somewhat skeptical reception of Derrida’s oeuvre in the German-speaking world and highlights the contribution Derrida made to the field of literary theory. The book also investigates the current state of literary theory in Germany and North America.

Book Introduction

- Pilar Pérez Serrano’s introduction to “Mito y función social: el teatro de Raúl Hernández Garrido” focuses on the four plays included in the volume *Los esclavos* (Teatro del Astillero, 2009) by contemporary Spanish playwright Raúl Hernández Garrido. In it, Professor Pérez Serrano studies the plays’ formal innovations as well as their creative and ethical implications with the use of tragedy and myth as their framework.

Marv Wilson Teaching Award

Damon DiMauro received the Marv Wilson Teaching Award during the spring 2008 Honors Convocation. In Dr. Wilson’s honor, this award is given annually to one faculty member from the Humanities Division or History Department, as chosen by a panel of department chairs, and provides the recipient funds to support his or her study and scholarship.