Read about your fellow TESOLers’ experiences with interesting foods from around the world!

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Newsletter Editor: Mary Spanarkel
Long time no see!

Stop by to say hello during our TESOL Opening Reception on August 26!

Come for good conversation and snacks with even better company!

Stay Connected with AU TESOL!

Upcoming Events

TESOL Program Opening Reception
Start the new fall semester with great snacks and conversation!
Tuesday, August 26
Mary Graydon 247
4:30pm-5:30pm

TESOL Socials
Join us on Thursdays in the TESOL Office (MGC 300) to snack and chat with current AU TESOL students, professors, and alumni!

October 30
4:00pm-5:15pm

End of Semester Holiday Potluck
Celebrate the end of the semester and our December grads with AU TESOL students, faculty, and staff.
Thursday, December 4
4:30pm-5:30pm
Mary Graydon 247
Dear AU TESOL Community,

Welcome back for another exciting and busy academic year!

This year, we welcomed a diverse cohort of new Master’s and Graduate Certificate students who represent five continents and nine different countries: Cameroon, China, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Kingdom/Australia, and the US. You can read their profiles on pp. 18-20. This summer, we also launched our new online TEFL program, and we are happy to welcome three online students.

It is also our pleasure to welcome a new TESOL faculty member – Professor Sarah Young. While Prof. Young taught for our program as an adjunct instructor for a number of years, we are delighted to have her join AU TESOL in a full-time capacity. She brings great expertise and knowledge of the TESOL and teacher-training field. You can read about Prof. Young in the Faculty Spotlight on pp. 12-14.

As always, our academic year is full of various professional development events. As we continue our partnership with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), we are thrilled to have Jennifer Himmel and Miriam Burt deliver the workshop “Promoting Oral Language Skills for English Language Learners.” We also look forward to the lecture by CAL President Terrence Wiley in October. And of course, do not forget to join us for our annual pronunciation workshop “Call ’Em As You ’Ear ’Em” lead by our own Dr. Robin Barr on January 24, 2015!

In Summer 2015, we will welcome Dr. Karen Johnson and Dr. Paula Golombek, as they will lead the three-day intensive summer workshop on language teacher education on June 26-28.

We look forward to seeing you at our program events in fall and spring and of course at AAAL and TESOL International conferences in Toronto, Canada in March!

I wish you all a productive and exciting academic year and look forward to seeing you soon.

With warm wishes,

Polina Vinogradova
Program Director
I ate this unusual fruit at a Chinese restaurant in Gaithersburg about a month ago. On that day, my office assistant (a native of Taiwan) treated our office staff to a Chinese buffet lunch to celebrate the promotion of one of our trainees. The fire dragon has a lovely pink skin, with a white interior containing small, black seeds. The fruit has a mild and pleasant taste, somewhat like a peach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Opening Reception</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 26</td>
<td>4:30pm-5:30pm</td>
<td>MGC 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio Session</td>
<td>Thursday, September 4</td>
<td>8:10pm-9:30pm</td>
<td>MGC 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Open House</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 8</td>
<td>6:30 pm-8:00pm</td>
<td>MGC 247</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Workshop</td>
<td>Saturday, October 11</td>
<td>9:00 am-2:00pm</td>
<td>Mary Graydon Rooms 3-5</td>
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<td>TESOL Lecture: Dr. Terrence Wiley</td>
<td>Thursday, October 16</td>
<td>5:00pm-7:00pm</td>
<td>MGC 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Social</td>
<td>Thursday, October 30</td>
<td>4:00pm-5:15pm</td>
<td>TESOL Program Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Semester Potluck and Graduation Celebration</td>
<td>Thursday, December 4</td>
<td>4:30pm-5:30pm</td>
<td>MGC 247</td>
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Upcoming Events

Promoting Oral Language Skills for English Learners: An Interactive Workshop

Jennifer Himmel & Miriam Burt
Saturday, October 11, 9:00 am–2:00 pm
Mary Graydon Center, Rooms 3-5

Co-sponsored by the Center for Applied Linguistics

Speaking and listening skills are essential for English learners in order to participate effectively in the workplace, the community, and at school, and form the basis for English literacy development. This hands-on workshop provides participants with tools to create and implement instructional activities that foster oral language development for English learners of all ages and proficiency levels. At this interactive workshop, participants will practice evidence-based strategies that promote peer-to-peer and teacher-to-student interaction in different content areas and learn how to implement instructional scaffolds to ensure total participation during these tasks. Workshop activities include mini-lectures, demonstrations, guided lesson design, viewing of authentic classroom video, discussion, and reflection. Participants will receive copies of CAL’s Seven Principles for Effective Instruction for English Learners.

Jennifer Himmel serves as Director of PreK-12 EL Professional Development programs at CAL. Her work involves overseeing research-based professional development activities and technical assistance to schools in the U.S. and abroad. She manages the CAL SIOP service line, leading professional development activities with over 50 schools/districts annually and creating education products on the SIOP Model.

Miriam Burt serves as manager of Adult English Language Education at CAL, with over 35 years of experience in adult ESL teaching, program administration, teacher training, curriculum development, and program planning and evaluation. She has provided trainings and research-to-practice publications to institutions working with adults learning English in the U.S. and overseas in refugee camps, postsecondary education programs, and workplaces.

For more information, visit: http://www.american.edu/cas/tesol/news/workshop-fall.cfm

Kangaroo and Emu
[kæŋɡərùw ən ɪˈmyuː]...

Australia must be one of very few countries where you can eat the coat of arms. Although I'm mostly vegetarian this seemed like a great opportunity, and I could partly console myself with the fact that both meats are organic and free-range. The first time I ate emu was in August 2001 - tasty sausages from a farm shop in country New South Wales. I think I had a kangaroo steak for the first time about a year later at a café in Sydney. Both meats are very lean, and very tasty!
Upcoming Events

English as a Lingua Franca and the Need to Incorporate Learner-User Perspectives in ELT Policy and Practice

Dr. Terrence G. Wiley
October 16, 2014, 5:00-7:00pm
Mary Graydon 3

This lecture addresses challenges and issues posed by English in the role of a lingua franca and speculates on its fate in that role. Some predict the coming of a world in which English is the world’s primary second language, displacing the need to learn other languages, and this is happening in some contexts largely as a result of ELT educational policies and practices. Others decry the impact of English when it pushes other languages out of the curriculum, threatens the dominance of national languages, speeds the eradication of indigenous languages, or fails to deliver on the promise of social mobility. In considering these issues, this presentation notes the need to promote ELT educational policies that are sensitive to, and incorporate, learner-user perspectives in order to moderate the potential negative impact of English dominance while encouraging equity and learner-user agency.

Dr. Terrence G. Wiley is President of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC. He also serves as Special Professor with the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland, College Park. Dr. Wiley is Professor Emeritus at Arizona State University, where he served as Executive Dean of the Mary Lou Fulton Institute and Graduate School of Education and Director of the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. His teaching and research have focused on educational and applied linguistics, concentrating on educational language policies; language diversity and immigrant integration; teaching English as a second and international language; bilingualism, literacy, and biliteracy studies; and bilingual, heritage, and community language education. He has won numerous awards for scholarship, teaching, and service.

Intensive Summer Workshop 2015
On Language Teacher Education

June 26-28, 2015
Led by Dr. Karen Johnson (The Pennsylvania State University) and Dr. Paula Golombek (The University of Florida)
Upcoming Events

Pronunciation Workshop

Dr. Robin Barr
Saturday, January 25, 9:00am-2:00pm
6th Floor Butler Boardroom, Butler Pavilion

What's the first sound in unicorn? In apple? [Hint: they aren't vowels!] How many syllables are there in feel or file? Do you think that flour and flower sound alike? How about cot and caught? Writer and rider? Dr. Robin Barr, AU’s Linguist-in-Residence, will show you how to detect invisible consonants and missing vowels, and help you become more aware of the way you actually speak, as opposed to what you think you’re saying. Brush up on your phonetic transcription and features, and learn how to use phonetics as a tool for sharpening your ears and teaching your students more accurately. Then hang on tight as Dr. Barr takes you on a journey beyond vowels and consonants into syllables, rhythm, intonation, stress, linking, and even The Brain! Learn the suprasegmental tricks with rubber bands, kazos, and songs that you can use to help your students become more comprehensible, even if they still have trouble distinguishing ship and sheep, or rake and lake. The workshop features entertaining, low-cost activities that you can use right away in your next class.

Robin Barr holds a PhD in Linguistics from Harvard with concentrations in both Indo-European and psycholinguistics. Her research on morphology involves the relationship between language learning and language change, and she is always happy to hear of new irregular verbs or refinements for wug-tests. Her daughter has been one of her favorite informants, and students are likely to encounter data from her on their problem sets. Prof. Barr is also an avid amateur oboist.

For more information, visit: http://www.american.edu/cas/tesol/news/workshop-pronunciation.cfm
Student Spotlight
From Ukraine to Guyana: A Peace Corps Detour

Kathrina Konfirst and her husband, Matt, were originally assigned as Peace Corps Volunteers to Western Ukraine. She recounts her time in Ukraine and discusses her upcoming move as a Peace Corps Volunteer to Guyana. They left for their new assignment in April 2014.

The views expressed in this article are Kathrina’s own and are not endorsed by the Peace Corps.

When people hear Peace Corps they often envision exotic, far-away lands with mud huts and a lack of electricity and running water. In reality, the Peace Corps experience comes in many shapes and sizes. Peace Corps volunteers currently serve in 65 countries around the world, working in the areas of health, education, youth and community development, IT, agriculture, and environment. After a lengthy application process and months of waiting (and speculating on where we might end up), my husband and I finally received our much anticipated invitation to become volunteers in Ukraine.

Our Peace Corps experience commenced with a 12-week training program, which included daily Ukrainian language instruction, health and safety sessions and cross-cultural and technical training. In addition to four hours of Ukrainian language lessons each day, there was daily homework as well as two or three hours of individual or pair tutoring every week. As part of our training, we also taught two English lessons each week, conducted English clubs at a local university and organized a technology workshop for university English teachers. Our only days off were Sundays, which were usually spent doing homework and lesson-planning, going for a walk, or communicating with family back home.

At the end of our training we were officially sworn in as volunteers at the embassy in Kyiv. Only a few days before, we were all told of our permanent placements. It was like Christmas for all of us! In Peace Corps there are many unknowns. When you apply, you don’t know where you will live and work for the next two years until just days before you move there. Peace Corps always keeps you guessing, giving you one piece of information at a time. It can be exciting and nerve-wracking, depending on the day.

Our Peace Corps placement entailed living in a large city (Ivano-Frankivsk) of 220,000 in Western Ukraine. Our small apartment came with hot running water, high-speed internet, and even a washing machine. I should note that some Peace Corps volunteers in Ukraine take bucket baths and don’t have regular access to water and electricity. So, we were definitely living the “Posh Corps” lifestyle, which, even though it made our adjustment easier, left us feeling almost a bit guilty. We were ready to really make some sacrifices and here we were, wearing the same types of clothes we’d wear at home, eating similar foods to those we have in the U.S., shopping at supermarkets and even enjoying the occasional cup of designer coffee at Street Coffee (a daringly obvious replication of Starbucks) in the downtown shopping district.

Of course life in Ukraine is still different in many ways. Every time we went shopping,
we became painfully aware of how basic our Ukrainian language abilities were (the lady at the bread stand told us the same story every time we bought bread and all we ever got out of it was that it had something to do with the U.S. and the number 35). Even in a seemingly modern city, squat toilets were still abundant and could be found at universities, malls, and libraries. Countless, shin-deep potholes speckled the streets on which jam-packed, falling-apart-at-the-seams marshrutkas (minibusses) carted around Ukrainian citizens.

In addition to cultural differences, many contrasts can be found between the Ukrainian and the U.S. school system. One major difference is that the Ukrainian school calendar is not pre-determined like it is in the U.S. When my husband and I arrived at our site in December just before winter break, not even the Ukrainian teachers knew when the spring semester would officially start. So, without knowing my students, my schedule, or the semester start date, I prepared some generic activities that could be easily adapted for varying levels. Like all of my Ukrainian colleagues, I didn’t find out about my first class until two days before I had to teach it.

My assignment was to work as an English teacher at the national university in Ivano-Frankivsk. Each week, I taught nine 80-minute classes of students between the ages of 19 and 22. I was fortunate to have wonderful students, who were always very receptive and engaged. During my short time at the university I worked with nine different teachers and met each group of students once a week. My lessons were focused on getting students to improve their speaking skills, which were already quite impressive when I met them. In my lessons, I frequently used short stories, news articles on current events, and short videos as discussion starters. In addition to our classroom discussions, we also frequently worked with idiomatic expressions, which is one of my favorite things to teach.

My integration into the university was going smoothly. The political situation in Ukraine was another story entirely. Just a few weeks into the semester, my husband and I got word that we would have to consoli-date with other volunteers in our area. This meant that all of our belongings had to be packed up and labeled (in case we did not return and our things had to be sent home) and we had to leave with an emergency bag (mine was mostly filled with chocolate) within less than twenty-four hours. Even as we cleaned our apartment and neatly arranged our packed bags in the living room, I was almost sure that we would be back soon. Teaching was going well, my husband and I started to become settled in our community and we always felt safe. Why wouldn’t we return? Unfortunately, I was wrong and shortly after consolidating with several other volunteers in a nearby town, we found out that we would be on a plane back to the U.S. two days later.

The plane took off. As I was looking out the window, I noticed the abundance of ugly, grey soviet-style buildings whizzing by below and seemingly out of nowhere a tear rolled down my face. For the first time, I realized that we were really leaving and how much I would miss this place. I would miss my students, who were always so grateful and motivated. I would miss the fresh bread stand right in front of our apartment (including the cryptic story told by the bread lady). I would miss my favorite hazelnut-chocolate bar (with which I indulged in way too often). I would miss the crumbling but beautiful architecture of the old buildings I passed by on my daily walk to the university. I would miss the kind people who took us in for an unforgettable Christmas dinner even though they had never met us before. I would actually miss my new life in Ukraine.

With many wonderful memories of Ukraine still in our hearts, my husband and I are now just days away from our next Peace Corps adventure in Guyana. We will be starting over with another 27-month service during which I will be teaching literacy and my husband will be a health volunteer. Even though we are sad to leave behind our life in Ukraine, we are beyond excited about continuing our volunteer service. We are embracing the change and looking at this as a two-for-the-price-of-one Peace Corps experience!
Dr. Larry Selinker (Class of 1960, MA in Linguistics) discusses his early work in English language teaching and development of the concept of interlanguage. He provides advice to MA TESOL students in this issue’s Alumni Spotlight.

Dr. Larry Selinker, a former AU graduate student who received his MA in Linguistics from our program (then, a master’s program in Linguistics) in 1960, is best known for his work on the concept of interlanguage, but his awareness of interlanguage dates far earlier than his formal research on the subject. Dr. Selinker recalls, as early as age eight, confusion as to why his Yiddish-speaking grandmother could not be understood by her English-speaking grandchildren after 50 years of living in the United States. Such a culmination of social factors, individual differences, and issues of input and inevitability fueled an interest in second language learning and acquisition long before there was even a field.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree in Near Eastern Studies from Brandeis University in 1959, Dr. Selinker then pursued graduate work in linguistics at AU, and later completed a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Georgetown University in 1966. It was at this time that Dr. Selinker, building on the works of preeminent scholars such as Pit Corder and Robert Lado, developed and refined his theory of interlanguage and his work on fossilization. Dr. Selinker’s 1972 work on interlanguage (and corresponding work on fossilization), is still a vital seminal work and theory within the scope of second language acquisition theory and research. Dr. Selinker himself has contributed to a recently published collection of articles, entitled *Interlanguage: Forty Years Later*, which reflects the continuing presence and importance of the concept of interlanguage in second language acquisition theory and research. He also wrote the “Interlanguage” entry for the 2012 *Routledge Encyclopedia of Second Language Acquisition*, where he presents the cover category “Intersystem” which includes interlanguage, interdialec, interculture and maybe, interliteracies.

Through the duration of his career, Dr. Selinker has spent considerable time abroad, both in a teaching and research capacity. He has been the recipient of three Fulbright Professorship Grants to Israel, Scotland, and Germany. All three grants allowed for continued instruction and teaching on second language acquisition and learning. He has, during the time in between those grants and since, chaired and taught primarily in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics departments (the University of Washington, the University of Michigan, and the University of London), but also in language education departments and institutions across the country and globe.

Since departing from his role as Visiting Professor of English Education and Multilingual/Multicultural Studies in the Department of Teaching and Learning within New York University’s Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development in 2005, Dr. Selinker has been at work developing an online consulting startup called Research Production Associates. This company, of which Dr. Selinker is the founder, seeks to provide researchers with advice and guidance throughout the research and data collection process.

When asked to provide some advice for current TESOL students, Dr. Selinker stated, “I can do no better than to summarize the peroration at the end of the 2014 article referenced below; each of the points is developed there.

“Most important, develop ‘doubt as a
critical skill’. Focus on doubt, conceived of not in traditional negative terms, but on developing disciplined doubt as a skill. You can start, first and foremost, by being aware of a subtle but potentially pernicious phenomenon: Be wary of a false consensus manifesting itself as dogma. Take time and ‘see’ the evidence. Data have to be constructed, organized and nursed by disciplined watching, until you actually see evidence. In developing skills of disciplined doubt, you must always question the obvious; ask: How do you know what you know? and, Why do you believe what you believe? Nurture your ‘founding texts’ by politely asking colleagues (and teachers) to state assumptions fully, watching for hidden assumptions. Also, be wary of false equivalencies. The primary example given in that article is falsely equating SECOND language acquisition with FIRST language acquisition. Parallel naming leads one astray. Be wary of all dichotomies, and look for alternative more subtle explanations. In the particular interlanguage case, follow the principles: Observe interlanguage speakers in meaningful performance situations, and Integrate interlanguage semantics in a computational mode wherever possible.

“The interlanguage maxim of relevance here is: Misinterpretations of input by learners is common, maybe the norm. Doubt the putative claims about mind/brain which are set as assumptions. Finally, keep track of all arguments, even where they appear to contradict. This is done in Talmudic thought developed over more than 700 years and is consistent with the original interlanguage work. Have patience and do not move into any orthodoxy. Look for undeveloped areas that may be central to understanding, like ‘interlanguage semantics,’ which we have little of.

“Keep honing your critical skills, especially paying attention to the history of questions asked in this field, finally, learning as much computer science and computational linguistics as you can.”

FROM: Selinker, L. 2014, “Interlanguage 40 years on: Three themes from here.” IN: Interlanguage: Forty Years Later, Editors: ZhaoHong Han & Elaine Tarone; Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

For more information on Dr. Selinker’s work with Research Production Associates, visit: http://www.researchproductionassociates.com/.

“LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK!

Stay up to date on the latest AU TESOL happenings, catch links to current issues in the field, and browse the picture gallery of past events. Put your two cents in as well!

Search: American University TESOL Program on facebook today!
Faculty Spotlight  
A Lifelong Language Lover: Professor Sarah Young

Professor Sarah Young shares how her love of language teaching developed, her past experiences in the English language teaching profession, and advice to current AU TESOL students on the TESOL field and how to improve as professionals.

One of my first forays into teaching was when I was about four years old, and decided to use red crayon to draw a very elaborate map of some kind on my bedroom wall for my imaginary students. (I was supposed to be napping). It was truly brilliant work, and I could not understand why my parents seemed so upset about my burgeoning profession. Although I no longer remember the content of this naptime lesson, I feel incredibly fortunate to have followed this path for a career in language education and teacher training.

After getting one hour a week of basic Spanish in elementary school, I discovered that language was a fascinating thing to study. I remember checking out language learning records from the city library in middle school – old Berlitz materials teaching Hebrew, German, French. I pored over my mom’s high school French textbook, asking her to teach me what she had learned. I ended up taking four years of French in high school, sealing my fate as a lifelong language lover. Many of us can remember a teacher from our earlier years who impacted our lives in a significant way. For me, this was Madame Van Howe, whose French classes featured authentic materials and magazines from France, content-based units on francophone Africa, and a “French-only” classroom policy. Her curriculum and instructional approach was engaging, meaningful, and well-organized – giving us a logical structure to work within while exploring the intersections of language, content, and culture.

I majored in French and minored in Spanish in college, getting certified to teach these two languages in grades 6-12. When I arrived in France to do my semester of study abroad, I was pleased to see that my classroom studies in high school and college had prepared me to function fairly well while immersed in daily life there. Over many years, I was able to experience what I believe to be the fundamental key to effective and sustained L2 learning: A combination of meaningful, structured classroom instruction with immersion in the L2 environment. I always encourage L2 learners to do the same if they can; I also believe that L2 self-study, enjoyable reading and media use, and social/cultural activities do a lot for L2 learning even if you can’t be immersed.

My language learning and teaching goals eventually took me to Cameroon, where I taught English as a Foreign Language for two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer, and to the Monterey Institute of International Studies, where I earned an MA in TESOL. One of my most useful teaching experiences in my MA program was working with a group of Japanese college students who were studying academic English in Monterey for the summer. We used a content-based curriculum that integrated community research skills with academic language skills. Each of our students identified a social issue that they were interested in learning more about in the United States. We helped them develop and administer surveys and interviews to get local residents’ input on the issue, search library and online sources to support their research findings, and write and present reports on the project experiences. I love doing this kind of work with L2 students, because it allows them to explore topics that are personally relevant to them and apply their language skills to communicate things that they truly care about. Content-based learning is also a great way to practice language skills for further education and employment.

In the past 10 years or so, my L2 teaching has focused almost entirely on adult English language learn-
er populations studying in publicly-funded ESL programs in the DC area. Adult immigrants are my favorite group of learners to work with; every class I’ve taught has been comprised of a variety of people from around the world and all walks of life. I can’t imagine a more interesting and rewarding place to be than in an adult ESL classroom. Their life experiences and learning goals serve as strengths in the ESL classroom, while their life challenges can be daunting. It is difficult to learn an additional language as an adult, and the progress sometimes feels painfully slow.

We are experiencing a shift in the adult ESL field from a longstanding focus on “life skills ESL” (e.g., the language needed for accessing basic housing, shopping, employment, transportation, and health care services) to more academically-oriented language for higher levels of education and employment. For many years, adult ESL instruction was concerned with helping learners read price tags, ask for directions to the post office, and write a short note to their child’s teacher. These skills are certainly important for newcomers to the United States, but they do not address the large gap between “survival skills” and the types of educational and employment opportunities that will lead to long-term stability and integration into society. With the advent of the Common Core Standards and the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, we are seeing a much stronger push to integrate language and academic/employment content at much earlier levels in all levels of ESL – and we need TESOL teachers who are prepared to help their learners with language, content, and higher-order skills.

Along with teaching adult ESL, my favorite thing to do is to train language teachers. In the field of adult ESL, many teachers have not had the opportunity to receive formal education or training in TESOL. Since 2003, I have worked as an ESL professional development specialist and consultant for a variety of organizations. At the Center for Applied Linguistics, I worked on several large-scale professional development projects that provided targeted training to adult ESL teachers and language test administrators around the country. I spent three summers in Ecuador, training American and Ecuadorian ESL/EFL teachers in a TESOL certificate program. It was fascinating to see how English is taught in the Ecuadorian context, and we were excited to share new teaching methods with our colleagues there.

Most recently, I have worked as a consultant for the Massachusetts Department of Education, developing Professional Standards for Adult ESOL Teachers (http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/pd/ESOLstandards.pdf) and accompanying workshops, online modules, and training-of-trainers for implementation of the standards across the state. The process of helping Massachusetts determine what adult ESOL teachers need to know and be able to do in order to provide effective instruction to their learner populations has greatly influenced my own thinking regarding graduate-level TESOL teacher training at American University. This ties in very closely to my biggest motivation for joining the faculty in the AU TESOL program: The desire to continue professionalizing the TESOL field, by bridging best practices from second language acquisition research, L2 instructional methods, and applied linguistics. The world needs more language teachers who are well-trained, knowledgeable, and passionate about L2 learning!

In addition to working at AU, I am a PhD candidate in the Linguistics Department at Georgetown University. This fall, I am collecting data for my dissertation, which is a qualitative classroom-based study investigating metalinguistic awareness in low-literate adult English language learners. Previous SLA research on metalinguistic awareness and L2 proficiency has focused almost entirely on highly literate and well-educated L2 learners and has been conducted mainly from a cognitive research orientation. My goal in the dissertation is to add to the body of research by finding out what
metalinguistic awareness looks like for adult English language learners with limited literacy skills, using a sociocognitive research orientation.

To current AU TESOL students: Keep your eyes open for new learning and teaching experiences and opportunities (even if they seem like a lot of work). You never know what you’ll learn from these experiences, and the field of TESOL is really wide-open in terms of work. Be open to opportunities inside and outside the classroom – we need so many good teachers, teacher trainers, materials designers, curriculum developers, researchers, mentors, program directors, authors, action researchers, and professors. Be open to peer collaboration. Be open to a PhD. Be open to travel.

Read extensively. Get to know the key journals, authors, and resources in the field. Don’t spend a lot of time highlighting everything you come across, but skim to familiarize yourself with big issues and recent findings to explore. Pay attention to SLA research. Don’t put it on a pedestal, but look for ways to question it, to apply it, and to add to it.

Pay attention to language around you. Raise your own level of language awareness, and incorporate it into your teaching and your materials development. Look for real instances of language use in a variety of contexts, and use these instances to develop meaningful activities and examples for your students. Encourage your students to join you in this process of exploration and discovery about language. Go beyond a focus on grammar and pronunciation in this exploration, to really uncovering how people use language in real life and how meaning can change with just a few small words.

Online MA in TEFL

The online MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program is designed specifically for students interested in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in secondary schools, universities, and private language schools outside of the United States.

Students take one course during each 8-week session and may complete the MA in TEFL in eleven sessions (less than 6 semesters) of continuing coursework from locations in or outside of the United States.

Please visit www.american.edu/cas/tesol/ma-tefl.cfm for more information and to learn how to apply!
Congratulations to our Spring and Summer 2014 Graduates!

MA TESOL
Ashjan Allhedan
Sharla Branscombe
Michelle Chan
Elise Gorman
Jillian Olsavsky
Paige Reuber
Danny Tsai
Yu Zhao

Graduate Certificate in TESOL
Eda Aladagh Yoon
Anna Beatty
Emily Elliot-Meisel
Vic Fanney
Erin Ross
Yingyan Wang
Maggie Ward

A friend once bought me lunch in Philadelphia’s Reading Terminal Market, where there are all sorts of interesting regional and international foods to try. He told me it came recommended strongly from the vendor. Little did we know, it was crocodile jambalaya—believe it or not, crocodile tastes a lot like chicken.
Recent AU TESOL Graduates

Maggie Ward (Summer 2014)
After finishing her certificate, Maggie moved home to Long Island. She is currently in the process of securing an EFL teaching position and moving back to South Korea. Planning to relocate in February, Maggie is currently brushing up on her Korean and enjoying being closer to her family and friends.

Paige Reuber (Spring 2014)
Paige works at Briya Public Charter School, a family engagement program, in Washington, D.C. She is an adult education instructor and coordinator. In the classroom, she teaches a basic level ESL and child development class.

Elise Gorman (Spring 2014)
Elise is working in Washington, D.C. as an adult education instructor at Briya Public Charter School. She teaches Intermediate 1 ESL and Advanced 1 Reading and Writing.

Emily Vandermade (Fall 2013)
After graduation, Emily has continued teaching academic ESL in the ACLI Program as well as teacher training workshops through the TESOL Certificate Program, both at Northern Virginia Community College. She enjoyed a second summer teaching visiting Chinese professors at George Mason University, and has now just begun her new role as Assistant Coordinator of the ACLI Program at NOVA Manassas.

Ashjan Allhedan (Spring 2014)
Soon after taking the MA in TESOL, Ashjan Allhedan went back to King Abdulaziz University where she became the Chief Coordinator of the Academic Program of the English Language Institute. However, becoming the head of the academic program with all its administrative responsibilities did not make Ashjan forget her passion for teaching, as she insisted on at least three teaching hours per week to be close to her students.

Jillian Olsavsky (Spring 2014)
Jillian is an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) with the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET) in Fukushima-shi. She arrived in Japan at the beginning of August 2014 and currently teaches classes at two senior high schools and one technical high school. She enjoys working with students and fellow teachers and looks forward to experiencing more of Japan.
Recent AU TESOL Graduates

Sharla Branscombe (Spring 2014)
Sharla is starting her first semester out of grad school teaching three classes in American University’s International Gateway Program. She is focusing mainly on listening & speaking skills in the class, and is working on some research on the role of technology in developing these skills. She was also recently voted to be the co-vice president of our local TESOL affiliate, WATESOL.

Michelle Chan (Spring 2014)
Michelle graduated in Spring 2014 after returning from her Peace Corps service as a TEF Volunteer in Jordan. Currently, she is teaching with the Academic English and International Gateway Program at American University, and is happy to be part of the AU community once again!

Emily Elliott-Meisel (Summer 2014)
This past May, Emily graduated from AU with a BA in International Studies and a TESOL Graduate Certificate. In March, she is leaving for Brazil on an English Teaching Assistantship Fulbright. As the departure date gets closer and she gets more nervous, she’s glad to have a solid TESOL background that will help her tremendously when she gets into her own classroom! Currently, Emily is working on campus, taking Portuguese classes, and volunteer teaching at the Washington English Center.

Margarita L. (Lucy) Ruiz (Fall 2013)
Lucy, who graduated from with a Master’s Degree in TESOL in December 2013, is currently an adjunct faculty at Prince George’s Community College teaching Business English.

Danny Tsai (Summer 2014)
Danny recently moved out to Taipei, Taiwan and has applied for an EFL teaching position with a university. He enjoys the thrill of being in a foreign country and is grateful to be abroad again.

Yu Zhao (Spring 2014)
Yu is currently a full-time assistant teacher of the Chinese program of the Intercultural Montessori Language school in Chicago. Yu has been working with the primary students (age 3-6) and finds it both challenging and very interesting since she has never worked with small kids before. Yu is excited to explore how she can apply her knowledge about SLA and language teaching pedagogy she has gained from AU TESOL to this new position.
Welcome to AU TESOL!

MA Bilingual Education

Yunbo Mei
Yunbo is from China and graduated from Henan University in Kaifeng, China with a degree in Teaching Chinese as Foreign Language. She enjoys being a teacher and teaching languages. She is so happy to join TESOL program this year and is looking forward a wonderful life in AU and in D.C.

TESOL Certificate

Erin Mahoney
Erin received her BFA in studio art from James Madison University. She also studied art education at JMU and holds a visual arts teaching licensure. In addition to studying TESOL, she teaches high school art in Fairfax County Public Schools. Erin has a passion for travel, teaching, art, specifically photography and painting, as well as community service.

Recent AU TESOL Graduates

Yingyan Wang
(Spring 2014)
After graduating with her TESOL Certificate, Yingyan is looking forward to experiencing new challenges in the business world. Now she is a graduate student majoring in accounting at American University. She also would like to keep her TESOL practice sharp by volunteering with non-profit organizations.

Vicki Fanney
(Spring 2014)
After several months teaching at CASA de Maryland in 2013, Vicki began teaching in the Intensive English Program at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus, in January 2014. Currently she teaches a beginning speaking/listening class as well as an intermediate reading/writing course. This past summer she spent a month in France doing volunteer work through the online community Help Exchange, www.helpx.net. Vicki recommends this virtual community of cultural and labor exchange to anyone who wants to travel while contributing to sustainable living and sharing real experiences and dialog with speakers of other languages.
Welcome to AU TESOL!

MA TESOL Students

Calsidine Toufo

Calsidine is a Cameroonian citizen and has been in the United State since 2008. She had been a translator and journalist before becoming an MA student in TESOL. Calsidine is passionate about good education and loves learning new things. She also loves interacting with other students from other countries. Calsidine can't wait to be a teacher and apply all the fantastic things she has been learning from her knowledgeable and competent professors.

Erin Haskell Ross

After years of being an expatriate in Europe (London, Wiesbaden and Torino), with the language learning and acculturation that entails, Erin returned to Washington, D.C. in 2008. Teaching ESL to adult immigrants is her way of contributing to the community and making use of the empathy and strategies that grew out of those years abroad. In addition to her academic work in the MA TESOL program, Erin is delighted to be the Program Associate and a volunteer teacher at Washington English Center. The rest of her time is filled with family, dogs, books and cooking.

Haruka Kakizoe

Haruka is from Tokyo, Japan. She earned her BA and MS degrees in neuropsychology at the University of Tokyo, and then worked as a medical translator for 10 years. She came to D.C. in March 2013. This is the first time for her to live outside Japan. So far her experience has been great and she likes it here. The only thing Haruka misses is her cello. She was not able to bring it, because it’s too big. Haruka is also a mom to an eight-year-old girl.

Louise Godley

Louise is a Brit with Australian citizenship, but will always cheer very loudly for England in the cricket or rugby. Before joining the AU TESOL program, Louise lived in Sydney for 12 years, working for an international arts & culture network. Taking Spanish for work prompted Louise to think about the language learning process, and this combined with a nerdy interest in the English language, meant the inevitable next step was an MA in TESOL! Louise graduated from the University of Winchester with a BA in History and Archaeology before some of her classmates were born.
Welcome to AU TESOL!

MA TESOL Students

**Eda Aladağlı Yoon**

Eda received her BA in Translation and Interpreting from Dokuz Eylül University. After she graduated, she worked as a translator and tutored several students in English. Eda got married in 2011 and moved to the US. During the summer semester, she switched from the Certificate to the MA TESOL program. Eda is a full-time graduate student and also working part-time as a TA in the program. Eda is also 5 months pregnant and will have her baby girl, Evrim, in January.

**Duanrui Zhu**

Duanrui is from Beijing, China. This is her first year in MA TESOL program. She loves music, especially the light music. Making friends is the most exciting thing in her daily life and she is really looking forward to that.

**Mona Bin Samih**

Mona is from Mecca and has two sons. She graduated from Umm Al-Qura University and majored in English language. Mona is so glad to be a student in the TESOL program. She hopes to graduate from AU and return home to start teaching English there.

**Valeriya Minakova**

Valeriya first became interested in teaching at the age of 5 when she tried to teach her younger sibling how to read and write. Seventeen years later she graduated from Moscow State University in Russia with a degree in English Philology and Teaching English. She views joining AU TESOL program as a new level of her professional development and hopes it will be a life-changing experience!

**Alina Bosnoyan**

Alina just recently moved to D.C. from California and is excited to explore the city. She loves to read, bake, shop and travel. Alina can speak Armenian, although not fluently, and has attempted to learn Spanish in high school and Dutch as an adult. Thankfully knowing a second language is not a requirement in becoming an ESL teacher. One of Alina’s goals in life is to learn four different languages. For now, she is just ready to start her TESOL journey.

**Maryam Bagabas**

Maryam is so delighted to have joined the TESOL family. She has a BA degree in English Literature. This is her first semester in the MA TESOL program. Maryam’s wish is to become an amazing English teacher! She feels so much joy helping others overcome a difficulty in learning English, and knowing that because she helped them, they were able to achieve their goals. That is what made her decide to become an English teacher.