

Alum Teachers *Bethany Pasma*

Imagine walking into a classroom in front of 28 grade 8 students. They're all excited to see each other after the weekend, and are generating a lot of noise in their excitement. Kids are still coming in to the room, others are scattered around the classroom, having various discussions (or even eraser wars). There's a group off on one side discussing the movie they want to see next weekend; some girls are huddled off to a corner discussing a note that's been passed to one of them from a boy in the other class. It is your job to teach these students French. Oh, yeah – and they have no choice about taking French, so some of them really don't want to be there.

If you found yourself in this situation, what would be your response? Fear? Nervousness? Excitement about the challenge? When I enter that classroom, about to begin teaching French, I probably go in with a little of all those emotions, but mostly with love. I love my job, I love the school that I teach at, and, above all, I really love the kids that I get to spend so much of my day with. I'm not just being effusive, either. I'll admit to having been a little worried at graduation that, after spending five years at Calvin, I might not have picked the right job. However, God prepared me in many ways for this job, and I have been very blessed in working here.

I've taught for two years now at John Knox Christian School in Oakville, Ontario, and while the job has held many challenges, it has also stretched me and caused me to grow as a teacher and as a person. I have a grade 6 homeroom class, but I am also responsible for the French instruction for grades 6 & 8, and more than half of my teaching time is done in French. As a student at Calvin, I strove to do as little French speaking as

possible in class and even – to my later regret – to speak as little as possible while studying in France. There is a certain irony, then, in spending more than half of my day speaking French. Of course, I'm speaking to middle school students, so it's not as challenging as it might be, and I need to find other ways to continue to develop my communication skills in French.



Probably the biggest obstacle that I have to overcome in the classroom is the students' own attitude toward learning French. Not a week goes by when I don't have to deflect questions like, "If the British won the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, then why do we have to learn French?" I try to instill an appreciation of culture, and we spend time learning about Francophone culture around the world. I find ways to keep my own excitement and passion for French shining through in class, even when we're spending a third (or fourth, or even fifth!) tedious week learning the *passé composé* and *Marché* is nowhere in

sight. I also try to incorporate ways to enable the success of each student, especially those who really struggle with second-language learning. This sometimes takes the form of some different means of assessment, or even including matching sections for vocab on tests, just to allow students to prove their familiarity with the words that we've spent an entire unit on.

For new ideas, I owe a debt of gratitude to my friends from Calvin who also went on to be teachers. Sharing ideas over email has worked really well – once I even borrowed a whole project outline from a friend that fit in perfectly with what I needed to do. Sometimes just being able to express myself to someone who really understands what I'm going through after a stressful day makes me remember why I love my job, even through the hard times.

So what can I say to sum up my experiences thus far as a teacher? It's a lot of work (more than I had anticipated when I was still a student!), it's the most challenging thing I've ever done, and it's by far the most rewarding thing I've ever done. At the end of the school year, when I can see how much my students have learned and I can reflect back on what a good and enjoyable time we had while we were together, I'm excited about the chance to teach again the next year, to add to what I've done and make it better, to put into practice the new things I've learned about learning a language or about working with kids, and most of all, to meet a new bunch of students to get to know and work with over the following year. This is not a job where I can ever think I have all the answers, or sink into complacency, or do "what worked last time" – my students will always keep me on my toes!

Alum Teachers Susan Rouston

I never planned on teaching. Coming from a long line of educators, I knew how much work teaching was. At Calvin, I obtained a French major, but pursued youth ministry (in my mind, that was SO not teaching). Unsatisfied, I turned to the corporate world. As a secretary for an outsourcing company, I was trained as an implementation specialist (read: teacher). I loved it, until our outsourcing company was outsourced (ah – the irony!). I went back to Grand Valley State through their Graduate Teacher Certification program after deciding that becoming a teacher was inevitable. The program leaves the student three courses away from a Masters in Education.

I student-aided and student-taught with Lorraine Miles at Forest Hills Northern in Grand Rapids. In January, while student teaching, I was hired at Forest Hills Eastern Middle School. I currently teach French and psychology



at Eastern Middle and High School. I teach only the beginning levels, but will hopefully teach the upper levels someday.

While at Eastern, I have integrated iPods/mp3 players into my classroom. I am creating a curriculum integrating iPods into French I as part of my GVSU Masters project. I have been fortunate to present this at several conferences

Professors at Work 2006-2007

Professor Glenn Fetzer

The 2006-2007 school year marked a milestone of sorts—the twentieth year that Prof. Fetzer has taught in the French Department



(although he claims it seems only half that long). During the fall 2006 semester he directed the Semester in Hungary Program and had a (mainly) wonderful time being with 21 of Calvin's finest students. While in Budapest he taught a course on Twentieth Century Eastern European Literature which, although a challenge, proved to be very rewarding. Excursions with the semester group to the Transylvania region of Romania, to Krakow and Auschwitz, to Prague and

Bratislava, and to Sarospatok and Debrecen were among the highlights.

In addition to teaching familiar courses in a familiar setting in the spring semester, Prof. Fetzer turned his attention (and a great deal of energy) to preparing for the Fall 2007 Semester in France program and its 26 participants (anyone needing to register with the pre-student visa online CampusFrance program should contact Prof. Fetzer, who now considers himself an expert in navigating the CampusFrance site's pitfalls!).

On the scholarship side of things, Prof. Fetzer saw the publication of two articles this year: "Echos d'Héraclite chez Jean-Claude Renard," in Jean-Claude Renard, « *L'Hôte des noces* » : *aspects du lyrisme contemporain*, Ed. André Alain Morello, (2007) ; and "Claudel et la rhétorique de la haine," in *Paul Claudel Papers* (2006). He presented the following papers at professional conferences : "From the Melting Pot to the World: Recent Trends in Fostering Multicultural Competence," at Károli Gáspár University of the Hungarian Reformed Church, (Budapest), November 2006; "Contrepoints rythmiques et sonores chez Jean-Michel Espitalier et Lorand

nationwide and would like to continue to do so. Podcasting not only improves my students' aural comprehension, but also keeps my French current!

I also am taking over the Strasbourg exchange. This ten-year program matches French students with American students. French students stay in Grand Rapids for two weeks attending school and taking special field trips. It is a community-led project where parents really take the lead!

For me, the student-to-teacher transition came naturally. Being at the front of the classroom felt right. The only thing I didn't anticipate was how much fun it is. I almost feel bad taking money, because I get to play every day – as my job! Yes, some days are especially hard, but no other job is that rewarding. I am a blessed woman. I am not just a teacher. I'm a "Madame."

Gaspar" at the MLA (Philadelphia) in December; and "Stratégies adjectivales chez Guillevic" at the Colloquium "Guillevic et la langue", Université de Rennes II Haute Bretagne, in February of 2007. This past summer he spent some time in the IMEC archives of the Abbaye d'Ardenne (right outside of Caen) looking through manuscripts and editorial archives related to several texts by Lorand Gaspar.

Prof. Irene Konyndyk

Professor Konyndyk continues to work in the area of "Foreign Language Learning and Learning Disabilities." During the 2006-2007 academic year she was on a half-time sabbatical to begin work on a book explaining the various aspects of her Multisensory Structured French sequence. The chapters she focused on were metacognition and multisensory teaching. She also applied for a large Department of Education grant with a colleague at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her McGregor fellow from the summer of



~ continued on page 3

Professors at Work 2006-2007 continued from page 2

2006, Christina VandenBosch, presented a paper "Musical Manifestation of Dyslexia" at the Michigan Academy in March, 2007. Professor Konyndyk was second reader on a Calvin Masters thesis titled: "¡Yo Puedo! How Students with Learning Disabilities Can Complete the High School Foreign Language Requirement." She also taught another wonderful group of students who continue to inspire and inform her work.

For 2007-2008 she has been granted a Calvin Research Fellowship to continue work on her book. She will work on chapters about the structured aspects of her teaching, as well as the "best practices" that make her French sequence a successful learning experience for her students. She plans on submitting an article to a major research journal, and has had a paper titled "Reimagining Educational Excellence in a Beginning Foreign Language Classroom for Students with Learning Disabilities" accepted for a Kuyers Institute conference in October, 2007.

For relaxation, Prof. Konyndyk likes to head up north with her husband to spend time at their newly constructed cottage on Lake Cecelia. There is still a long list of projects to complete, but she also takes time out for spending time with family and friends, kayaking, swimming, reading, and playing board games. Her husband continues to enjoy fly fishing in the nearby Pere Marquette River (pronounced "Pier", not "Père"!), Baldwin Creek, and other bodies of water that call to him.

Her children continue to be an important part of her life. Abby ('05) who has spent the past year in the Washington, DC area, employed as a social worker, will be returning to Michigan in late August when she begins her MSW program at the University of Michigan. She hopes to do an international internship somewhere in Africa or Europe. Liesje ('01) lives in Kalamazoo, MI, where she has enjoyed the change in her teaching duties from Math to French at Loy Norrix High School, as well as being assistant swimming coach for both the girls' and boys' teams. She also joins

her father fly fishing on a regular basis. Jeremy ('99) and his wife, Hilary O'Connor, moved from W. Africa (Guinea – a French-speaking country) to Uganda last summer where they continue their international development work. They love to travel throughout the world and are planning on visiting India in the near future. A trip to Uganda is on Professor Konyndyk's schedule for the summer of 2008.

Professor Leslie Mathews

A highlight of Professor Mathews' academic year was creating the Mediterranean Crossings Interim course with Professor Slagter of the Spanish



Department and then following, along with twenty-four students, the journey of Arab Muslims who emigrate from North Africa to France and Spain in search of educational and employment opportunities (see related article).

Another area of interest which she often has the opportunity to share with students is her involvement in the field of translation. Prof. Mathews entered this field when she opened the first translation agency in West Michigan in 1980. She has worked since then with both local and international firms on projects that range from patent applications, to foreign press releases, technical bid specifications, to the occasional personal request for family genealogies or a love poem. Last year she traveled to Little Rock to interpret for the plaintiff in litigation involving a major French private jet manufacturer. In preparation, she translated from French and studied the "In-flight Testing Report" for the automatic pilot systems and learned such terms as "Arthur isopositions loads law" in French.

Prof. Mathews translates documents from French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian into English. She also acts as a project manager for a wide range of requests from clients for translation into Mandarin, Swedish, Arabic, or any other language requested, by contract-

ing with professional translators who are members of the American Translators Association. She has been active in this national professional organization for many years, as well as serving as a co-organizer of the West Michigan division of the Michigan Translators and Interpreters Network (MiTiN).

An on-going project which combines her experience as a project manager and a believer in the Reformed tradition is the managing of translation for a large share of the publications of the Reformed Church of America, including producing the Book of Church Order in Spanish, Mandarin and Korean as well as the majority of the resources found on the RCA website.

She frequently advises students expressing an interest in a career in translation, providing them with information on translation certification programs and networking opportunities for job leads. The French for the Professions class which she teaches is another chance to expose students to the benefits of a translating background in international careers. This past fall, her students translated technical texts from sales literature of an international office furniture company based in Grand Rapids and subsequently visited its headquarters for a seminar in French with the Director of International Sales.

Professor Otto Selles

2006-2007 marked for Prof. Selles his tenth year at Calvin College. During the fall semester, he taught French 201 for the first time along with a section of 202 and then French 122 with Prof. Char De Jong in January. The Interim class gave the time to spend each day watching the French news and to begin to pick out the various candidates who were aiming for the 2007 presidential elections. For the spring semester, he taught French 216 (grammar and composition) and a special topics course on French film.



Francofiles fall 2007 issue

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Professors at Work 2006-2007 continued from page 3

The film course covered French film from its beginnings with the Lumière brothers to contemporary productions.

Prof. Selles served as department chair this past year and was busy with various administrative duties. With Prof. Vos-Camy, he began preparations for a departmental review and strategic planning that will take place in 2007-2008.

He continues to serve on the steering committee for Calvin's Festival of Faith and Writing (April 17-18 2008). This past year he joined "The Emmaus Readers," a faculty book club organized by Profs. Susan Felch and Gary Schmidt (English Dept.). The book club is preparing two books of introductory essays on contemporary novels. For the first volume, to be published in 2008 by Paraclete Press, he wrote essays on Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* and Leif Enger's *Peace Like a River*. This year he will prepare an essay on Kate DiCamillo's *The Tale of Despereaux* (the kids' novel he thinks everyone should read).

An article he wrote last summer on "Francophiles and Francophobes: In Search of the Real France," appeared as the lead article in *Books and Culture* (May/June, 2007). A series of poems he wrote to accompany photographs by Prof. Jennifer Steensma-Hoag (Art Dept.) appeared in the new Christian literary journal *Ruminant* (issue 3, spring, 2007). He continues to write short reviews and articles for *The Banner's* "Tuned-In" section.

He gave a paper on Voltaire's attitude to French Protestants during the 1750s at a conference in Edinburgh, Scotland

in September 2006. Thanks to a summer Calvin Research grant he participated this past July in a round table discussion on the Huguenot author Laurent Angliviel de La Beaumelle at the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference held in Montpellier, France. After the conference, he stayed for a week in Montpellier to work in the departmental archives. His research there focused on a Huguenot sect of the 1720s known as "les Multipliants."

Professor Jolene Vos-Camy

Prof. Vos-Camy completed her tenth year teaching at Calvin. She has very much enjoyed those ten years and looks forward to many more. This year she again taught Advanced French Conversation, a course that all majors and minors must take. She values the opportunity to get to know the students better and she always hopes that they come out of her classes unscarred by having to speak French in front of others. Her fall teaching load also included a French Drama course covering plays from the Middle Ages to the present. In the spring, Jolene taught French 102 where it is always exciting to see students go from a very basic ability in French to being able to write paragraphs. In addition to 102, she taught the upper level course French Prose I in the spring in which students studied



narrative classics from the Middle Ages to the 18th century.

Prof. Vos-Camy continues to be active in mentoring undergraduate research in the humanities. She was granted an Alumni Association Grant to fund McGregor Scholar Paula Kielstra's trip to the North American Christian Foreign Language Association conference at Asbury College in Kentucky in March. In July, she attended an institute by the Council on Undergraduate Research where she met with others interested in promoting undergraduate research opportunities in the humanities.

Prof. Vos-Camy received a Calvin Research Fellowship for the summer 2007 to write a pedagogical article on Agnès Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri's play *Cuisine et dépendances* that she had included in her French Drama course the previous fall. She also presented a paper titled, "Cuisine et dépendances: Christian Values in the French Kitchen," at the North American Christian Foreign Language Association conference at Asbury College, in Kentucky in March.

In her research area of 17th century French literature, she saw the publication of an article titled "L'amour et la foi catholique dans *Les Malheurs de l'amour de Catherine Bernard*" in the journal *Papers on French Seventeenth Century Literature*. She also presented a paper titled "L'amitié et l'amour dans « Eléonor d'Yvrée » de Catherine Bernard," at SE17, the Society for Interdisciplinary Seventeenth-Century French Studies at the University of Iowa in October 2006.

Assistants in France 2006-2007

by Dani Peterson

Bonjour tout le monde! After graduating from Calvin in May 2006, I had the wonderful opportunity to be an English language assistant in a high school in Compiègne, France.

What impressed me most during this stay in France was the willingness of the French people (and some expats) to make my stay a learning, worthwhile, and enjoyable experience. I met one woman in the first month with whom I met once or twice a week for the entire seven months. Of course the pretext was tutoring, but I learned a lot more than conversational French, including awesome yet cheap vacation spots, the wonderful food of the

by Matthew Sandefer

When I heard about the *Assistants de langue* program in France I applied immediately and received a placement in an elementary school in Belfort, France. During my nine months there I gained teaching experience, improved my French, and learned a great deal about children. Fortunately, upon arriving I discovered a close-knit community of Mennonite youth, who welcomed me into their circle. With the friends that I made from that small group, I went to my first League 1 soccer game, to various



by Sarah DeVries

As I reflect on my year in Marseille, memories jump to my mind that are as diverse and varied as the city of Marseille itself. I



Picardie region, and certain rules of etiquette needed when invited to a student's home for supper!

Then there was my church family. The families in the church made sure that I was never alone for any of the major holidays, including Thanksgiving. It was fun to explain to a French family what Thanksgiving means to us in the United States.

And the teachers! What a wonderful group of people. At first, I felt a little awkward speaking French with the English teachers, until I realized that they felt the same way speaking English with me! It was fun to watch and partake in their many animated discussions of politics, both of France

music festivals, and had the chance to just hang out, something that the faster-paced US lifestyle does not always allow.

Also during my year in France, I had the unique opportunity to experience an election year as an inside observer. Seven years after the world's entry into the 21st century, France continues to search for her new identity, to redefine herself and her role in the nascent united Europe and as a major player in this age of globalization. Today France must choose between the American model of booming economic growth with its attendant marginal-

think of my work as an English language assistant, leading hour-long conversation and culture sessions with French high-school students. I suspect these teenagers, many of whom came from Muslim, North African families, taught me just as much about Ramadan and soccer as I taught them about Thanksgiving and football. I think of moments spent with new friends, like



and the United States. During the Senate and House elections in the Fall, there were many discussions around the computers in the teachers' lounge, but that didn't even compare to the heated debates around the coffee tables when it was down to "Sarko" and "Ségo" in the second round of presidential elections in France!

The seven months in France were a great opportunity to meet people and learn new things about the French culture. With the memories of food, wine and conversations still filling my head, it is hard to concentrate on living in the United States again! I could not have asked for a better time or to have met better people.



izing effects, and the Scandinavian model of slower economic growth with more social equality.

After returning this time to the US, I did not feel what one may call "culture shock." Rather I experienced excitement at the prospect of returning one day to a place that has become, in many ways, a second home.

regular Monday morning breakfasts with some German assistants, lazy Sunday afternoons with missionary families, and excursions to the chalk-white hills around Marseille with my Moroccan neighbors. And I'll always think fondly of the

dynamic, gritty, yet charming Mediterranean city of Marseille that for seven months I called home.

Alumna mourned

Members of the French Department were saddened to learn of the death of a French Department alumna, Esther Hart ('91), this past April. Esther lived in her hometown of Toronto and is fondly remembered by a wide

circle of friends and acquaintances who fought hard to make costly cancer treatments accessible to her. She is survived by her partner, David Roy and by their three-year-old daughter, Sophie.

Mediterranean Crossings Interim in France, Spain, and Morocco: January 2007 Part I

by Leslie Mathews

Was this a real or surreal experience? That was the question the twenty-four Calvin students and their French and Spanish professors asked themselves as they sat in headscarves in the madrasah education room of a mosque in Marseille, listening to the imam, who had just allowed them to attend the 3:00 prayers normally reserved for Muslim males. As the group sampled the cakes offered in Mediterranean style hospitality, the imam described for them (through an American missionary translator) how the circumstances which had caused French Muslim immigrants to riot just the year before were not events related solely to local circumstances, but were linked to the problems of identity arising out of the clash between Muslim and Western cultures.

This was just one of the revelations awaiting the participants in the "Mediterranean Crossings" Interim last January. As Prof. Mathews (French) and Prof. Slagter (Spanish) chose the title for this new Interim course, they had little idea of the impact that their own Mediterranean crossings would have on its participants. While the impetus for the new course was the desire to explore and better understand the root causes of the riots and terrorist activity that had been the subject of recent headlines in France and Spain, the vast range of questions which would be explored in gaining this understanding could not have been anticipated at the outset. Issues as diverse as the crisis



of illegal immigration, lack of employment and exploitation of immigrants, the role of government in providing resources for them, the tenets of the Muslim religion, the tension created by the demands of the new homeland to assimilate in a secular state, the extremist tendencies arising out of a desire to remain loyal to one's original identity, as well as the political correctness of evangelizing Muslims came to light.

The course objective was to trace the historical and current migrations across this sea linking Morocco, Spain and France. The group's journey followed closely in the footsteps of these migrations. Beginning in central southern Spain, the students visited several sites in the Cordoba region where well-maintained vestiges of the Islamic empire which ruled the region beginning in the 8th century can still be seen. A ferry crossing from Algeciras at the tip of Spain to Tangier, the gateway to Northern Africa, brought students to the homeland of many of the immigrants. Wandering through the medina (the old town of steep winding streets), past colorful mosques, and stopping in the souks with their vast array of wares gave the group a glimpse of the culture of origin of the North Africans.

Following the return trip to Spain, the group made their way to Granada where a French filmmaker shared his documentary comprised of interviews with four North Africans who had recently made the same crossing, but illegally, and with grave consequences for both their physical safety and their chances of survival in an alien culture. Working their way up the Costa Brava (with seaside stops), the Calvin students spent three days in Barcelona acquainting themselves not only with the vibrant architecture and spirit of this seaport and Olympic site, but also the work that Egyptian and American Christians collaborate in to make life easier for Muslim women and children who join their husbands looking for employment along the Spanish coast.

Crossing into France through the Pyrenées by bus, the Calvin group arrived in Marseille, the principal port of entry into southern France, where



they spent a day with Arab World Ministries, learning of their work with first and second generation Arabs, before the group of twenty-six set off on a prayer walk through the immigrant neighborhoods to reach the mosque and their appointment with the imam.

After hopping on the high-speed TGV to travel along the Rhone to Lyon, the students met with a young Arab scholar and musician who gave them a tour of the urban development and community center he has helped to revitalize for its second and third generation immigrant residents, many of whom consider themselves essentially French, despite the hesitancy of many French to accept them as such.

Paris was the much-awaited final destination, where strolls along the Champs-Élysées and losing themselves in the treasures of the Louvre were favorite activities of the students. They were also fascinated by Farida, the 60 year old Algerian missionary serving out of an outlying Parisian church who had escaped sure oppression in her own country, returning now on a regular basis to serve Muslim women there.

Along the way, students enjoyed trying out their developing French and Spanish skills, sampling Moroccan couscous, riding a camel, attending a flamenco show, climbing to ancient seaside fortresses and nibbling at *foie gras* soufflés. Students and professors alike agreed that these experiences enabled them to better understand the interplay of the cultures of the populations involved in Mediterranean crossings.

Mediterranean Crossings Interim in France, Spain, and Morocco: January 2007 Part II

by Bethany Duemler

This past January I had the opportunity to travel with a group of Calvin students to Europe where we explored cities in Spain and France and spent a day and a half in Tangier, Morocco. As a class we studied the growing Islamic influence in Spain and France primarily as the result of immigration from North Africa.

In Spain the government struggles to control illegal immigrants coming into the country over the narrow Straits of Gibraltar which separate the Spanish peninsula from the African continent. The complex economic ramifications parallel in some ways those the American government faces over the border with Mexico. In France the issues of immigration are less direct. The country saw a large influx of North African Muslim immigrants approximately two generations ago, but the children and grandchildren of immigrants today continue to struggle with social acceptance and racism. Also France's secular government clashes often with Muslim communities, sparking tension, protest, and in some cases, radical Islam. During our trip to these countries we were able to meet with missionaries who work with immigrants teaching language and providing a much-needed bridge between different cultures.

Interim in Mali

by Brenda Katerberg

This past interim brought four French majors on an adventure to Mali, West Africa. Paige Alexander, Heather Balon, Marc Ysselstein and I interpreted for a medical mission team with Francophone Ministries for Christ, an organization based in Port Huron, MI. Mali is a large, Muslim country in West Africa, and is the fourth poorest country in the world.

Jean-Pierre, a Malian pastor, ministers in the capital city of Bamako and in the nearby villages. He has brought in several medical teams in an effort to build relationships and trust with the people in the villages, which has opened a door for him to later return and evangelize.



With the medical team, we went to three villages to hold clinics. When we arrived in the morning there were already people waiting to see the doctors, many of whom had never seen one before. The patients would describe their basic maladies to the nurses at triage, then, depending on the problems described, they would go on to see a doctor, go for tests in the lab, get medication from the pharmacy and get eyeglasses.

French is the national language of Mali, but only those who have received an education can speak it. While in the capital city of Bamako we did not have a problem communicating because most people spoke French, but out in the villages almost no one did. A group of Malian college students that work with Jean-Pierre joined our team and interpreted between Bambara and French for us while we interpreted between French and English for the doctors and nurses. It was interesting learning how to ask the Malian interpreters questions in different ways to make sure that we would be getting the correct response from the patient.

As a student of French I loved the chance to dip my toes in French culture and use my basic understanding of the language to order food and ask directions. Language barriers served to remind me how much I had left to learn and how much I wanted to learn it. Traveling with a group of students who collectively spoke bits of both languages helped enormously.

During the trip I was overwhelmed with the beauty of the European landscape. As we traveled by bus through central Spain I found the mountainous hills covered with olive trees and dotted with cacti had a rugged appeal. In the exotic drive along the Mediterranean I was aware how the salt smell of the sea mingled with the citrus of orange groves and how the mountain cedars mingled with swaying palm trees. Around Marseilles there was a wild beauty in the craggy sea cliffs washed by waves and topped with the magnificent Notre Dame de la Garde.

The cities had a different beauty in historic architecture and in museums filled with painting and sculpture. The entire trip was an incredible experience that took me far outside of the west Michigan box enhancing both my education and my life.



We caught on pretty quickly to terms like *le paludisme* (malaria), and *les vers* (worms).

In the evenings we were able to spend a lot of time with the Malian interpreters as well as several locals who have a shop nearby where we stayed. This was a great opportunity to speak French while learning about different aspects of the culture, history, politics, and religion of this beautiful country.

The three weeks that we were in Mali opened my eyes to a small piece of this beautiful country, and I will never be the same.

French Majors and Minors Celebrate at Senior Breakfast

Seventeen French majors and minors gathered with their professors for the annual French Department Senior Breakfast at the Cherie Inn on May 19. Students and professors alike enjoyed the opportunity to get caught up on one another's academic activities, celebrate the students' achievements, and learn of the graduates' plans for the future.

A highlight of the breakfast was the announcement of Elise Haffer and Melody Joachim as the 2007 recipients of the French Department Outstanding Senior Award. The award is granted each year to the student(s) with not only a high GPA but also a strong record of participation in departmental activities and an indication of great potential for a career involving French (see photo).



This year's graduating majors and minors gave the following reports about their future plans:

- Josh Ankerberg will teach as an *assistant* at the Lycée Professionnel Commercial Colbert in La Celle-Saint-Cloud, near Versailles. While there, he hopes to do some volunteer work as well.
- Rebecca Bajema will be teaching second grade at Redlands Christian School in Redlands, CA. She hopes to incorporate French and a love for learning foreign languages into her classroom.
- Danielle Cutter is currently working for Cadence International in Heidelberg, Germany where she is the assistant for the Asian/European field director. She will either join the Peace Corps in March (working in an African francophone country) or will go to grad school on the west coast for international relations in August.
- Jeff DeMaagd has taken a job with Biomet and sells orthopedic implants in Grand Rapids.
- Elise Haffer will be teaching in a preschool which incorporates daily French lessons.
- Melody Joachim will serve as an *assistante*, teaching English conversation classes at the Lycée Jean-Baptiste Decrétot in Louviers, France, near Rouen.
- Kristin Kingma and her husband will be going to China where she will teach third grade and he will teach PE.
- Mary Beth Myhren recently moved to southern California where she will be teaching French I-IV at Valley Christian High School. She plans to stay there at least three years and then would like to be a part of a long-term missions team ministering in a francophone area of western Africa.
- Ryan Poling will be working in the psychology field for a year before going to grad school for a Psy.D. degree in Clinical Psychology (even though, he notes, his heart will always be in Paris).
- Kathy Spencer has just moved to New Hampshire where she will teach high school French this fall.
- Caroline VanderLoo will be spending the fall in Grenoble and then return to Vancouver to work.
- Jacqueline VanderMale is currently in Pontlevoy, France (an hour and a half west of Paris) for a marketing and development internship at an old abbey. She will be moving to Aix en Provence in September to begin courses at the Institute for American Universities where she will finish her French degree by December.
- Lauren Van Enk will be attending George Washington University in Washington D.C. for a Masters in Public Health. She hopes to work overseas in francophone regions addressing health policy and health program development.

Enrollment Trends by Otto Selles

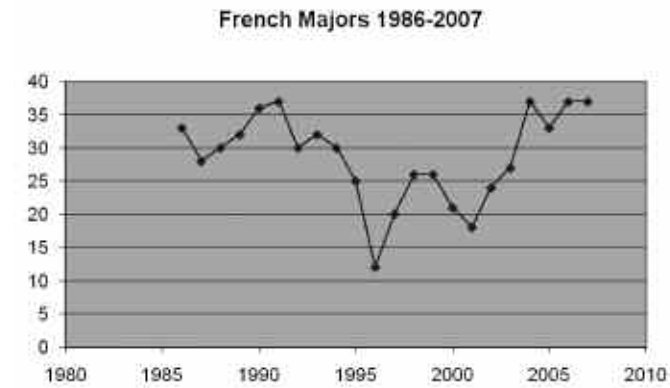
“How is the French Department doing?” alumni often ask. One way of answering that question, of course, is by looking at the numbers from the past twenty plus years.

During the late 80s, the number of students enrolled in French core classes dropped significantly, from a peak of 430 students in 1987-1988 to 301 students in 1989-1990 and 250 students in 1992-1993. The drop in enrollment in the late 80s was no doubt tied to the increased interest in Spanish.

Since the early 90s, the total number of core students has remained in the 200-290 range. Higher numbers reflect large groups in French 201 and 202, as well as the introduction of a double section of French 111-112-113, a sequence for at-risk students.

One thing the numbers do not tell is that the majority of students coming to French 101 have had at least a semester of French in high school—very few

come to the class as true *débutants*. Also, French 101 often attracts students who have already mastered another language like Spanish,



German, or Latin and want to “try out” French for a semester.

As to the number of French majors, both education and regular, numbers dropped in the mid-90s, to bounce back during the past six years. This change is clearly linked to introduction in 2001 of the Study in France pro-

gram. In 2006-2007, the department boasted thirty-seven majors (including seven French Education majors) and twenty-six minors (including three French Education minors).

As students often need to complete at least one course upon returning to Calvin, enrollment in on-campus advanced culture, literature, and business courses is good. In short, and in numbers, *le département va bien*. We are encouraged by the interest students continue to show in studying French, on campus and abroad, often with the goal of pursuing a career in missions, politics, or development work.

Such interest in French, however, depends greatly on the good health of elementary and high school French programs. So support your local French programs. And to all Calvin alum French teachers—keep up the great work!

French Department Tutoring and Conversation Group Programs by Leslie Mathews

Comment puis-je vous aider? Beginning and intermediate level students in the French Department may hear this question from advanced-level students who take on roles as:

- tutors, assigned to a particular class section and working on a one-on-one on-call basis outside of class time to help beginning level students by answering their questions, practicing grammatical and conversational skills and helping them prepare for tests. Reports are made to the professor on the student's progress.
- conversation group leaders, meeting with groups of 3-4 students in weekly half-hour conversational sessions based on materials devised by their professor. These sessions allow for lively, sustained conversation practice in a more relaxed setting.

Aside from the obvious benefit to students, the overall benefit to the French Department is much broader:

- Advanced French students, particularly those who have returned from studying abroad, are eager to have the opportunity to maintain their speaking skills and sharpen their knowledge of the language by tutoring other students.
- The students who are tutored often come to see their tutor as an ally and confidant in the language-learning process, allowing them to ask questions and share frustrations in a non-threatening setting.

c) In their individual and conversation group interactions, the tutors share and model effective language-learning strategies for their novice students. Students often remark on how impressed they are with the dedication and enthusiasm their tutors bring to language learning.

d) The positive feedback and experiences that tutors receive in their work make them aware, often for the first time, of talents they have in the area of teaching and have led several to consider a career in education.

e) The cadre of tutors and conversation group leaders is a natural source of leadership for other roles in the department. Many step up to lead French Chapels and serve as teaching assistants for the Interim core courses.

f) The relationships established between tutors and supervising professors are mutually rewarding. Professor Leslie Mathews, director of the department tutoring program, appreciates this opportunity to get to know upper-level French students. While most of her interactions are with core level students, her work is enriched by the ties developed with the tutors who also serve as an important link between students and other professors in the department.

French Professors and Student Present at NACFLA 2007

Last spring two French professors and one French major participated in the North American Christian Foreign Language Association (NACFLA) conference that took place at Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky in March. Professor Irene Konyndyk participated in a panel on teaching foreign language to students with learning disabilities. Professor Vos-Camy organized and chaired a double session on

French Cinema in which she also presented a paper. And third year French major Paula Kielstra presented a paper, "Love and Friendship in Catherine Bernard's Les Malheurs de l'amour." Paula's paper was the product of a McGregor Fellowship in the summer of 2006 in which she worked closely with Professor Vos-Camy on the topic of Catherine Bernard, a French writer of

the 17th century. Paula actually wrote two versions of her paper: she submitted a French version to the Women in French Undergraduate Essay Contest and she read the English version at the NACFLA conference. Paula's travel expenses to the conference were covered by the generous support of the Calvin Alumni Association and the Calvin College French Department.

Study in France 2007 by Glenn Fetzer

This fall marks the fifth time that the Semester in France program takes place. From August 31 until December 22, twenty-five French majors and minors will study in Grenoble, taking language and culture courses at the *Centre universitaire d'études françaises*, at the *Université Stendhal*, Grenoble III. In addition to the courses at the university, students take two courses from the Calvin professor directing the 2007 program, Glenn Fetzer. One of the courses is linked with several group excursions which include a visit to Paris, short day trips to destinations close to Grenoble, and (hopefully) a tour of parts of Provence.

While in Grenoble, the students live in French homes. Most of the students will not actually live in Grenoble but in the surrounding area, in towns with names like La Tronche, Fontaine, Seyssinnet, Echirolles, and St-Martin-d'Hère. Each student is in a different home (to maximize French-speaking opportunities), where, in addition to breakfast daily, they eat dinner with the host four times per week.

Although Grenoble is not far from the Alps, the city and its neighboring towns are situated in a valley, where the summer heat and humidity can settle. Consequently, the students have to anticipate three distinct seasons, and plan for them accordingly—no small matter in packing!



The group consists of three men and twenty-two women. Internationally, it is a diverse group, comprised of students whose families live around the world --Canada (4), Ghana (1), Italy (1), Switzerland (1)-- the remainder of whom are from the US.

Wish us all well this semester!

2007 Study in France students:

Karin Abma
Amma Aboagye
Jessica Arden
Hannah Bormann
Liz Brush
Joey Breems
Devin Byker
Astrid Callegaro

Hannah Engle
Lindsey Geelhoed
Sarah Hadley
Kelsi Jewell
Michelle Jonker
Carina Kooiman
Renee Meadors
Nunana Nyomi
Sarah Petersen

Jenna Rensink
Anita Rice
Jordan Scott
Alison Troast
Kyla VanderHart
Jo Vander Linde
Caroline Vanderloo
Stacy Van Dyk

Guest Lecturers

During the spring semester of 2007, the French department hosted two public lectures given by visiting professors.

On Thursday, March 1, 2007, with the Meeter Center, the French department sponsored a lecture by Prof. Hubert Bost, from the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes* in Paris, entitled "Pierre Bayle, Freedom of Speech and



Censorship." Prof. Bost outlined the details of Bayle's life (1647-1706), a Huguenot from the south of France who settled in Rotterdam just before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Prof. Bost also presented Bayle's conflicts with the French-speaking Reformed church in Rotterdam over his publications, particularly his *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, a major work of the French Enlightenment. Meeter Center director Prof. Karin Maag is to be thanked for her brilliant on the spot French-English translations during the question and answer period.

Then on Thursday April 5, 2007, with the help of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the department hosted a lecture by Prof. Paul

Benhamou, from Purdue University. Prof. Benhamou spoke on "The New Anti-Semitism in France in the 21st Century." He described recent violent acts of anti-Semitism in France. Prof. Benhamou then critiqued the slow reaction of government authorities and also the public.

Both lectures brought together students, faculty, and community members around a theme related both to French culture and broad societal issues. Through similar co-sponsorships, the department hopes to host other visiting lecturers in the future.



French Film Festivals

The Department of French and the Calvin Film Forum sponsored a Festival of French Films by Women Directors during February and March, 2007. Thanks again to a grant obtained by Prof. Selles from Tournées, a program of the French American Cultural Exchange, all films were open to the public and free of charge. The five films shown were *Depuis qu'Otar est parti* (Julie Bertucelli, 2003), *Comme une image* (Agnès Jaoui, 2004), *Carnages* (Delphine Gleize, 2002), *Quand la mer monte* (Yolande Moreau and Gilles Porte, 2004), and *Bord de mer* (Julie Lopes-Curval, 2002). Each of the films was introduced by a Calvin professor, with Carolyn

VanderLoo (2007) assisting. The films were all shown in the Bytwerk Video Theater on Calvin's campus. The French department has planned a third film festival, this time during September/October, 2007, on the theme "French Without Borders." (See poster at right.) Please check the department's website, www.calvin.edu/academic/french/ for details.



Claude Beauclair presents *Un récital poétique*

This fall, Claude Beauclair's *Inter-Europe Spectacles* returns to West Michigan to present a "Récital poétique." Beauclair will recite more than 40 poems from authors such as 16th century poets du Bellay and Ronsard, 17th century poet la Fontaine, 19th century poets Desbordes-Valmore, Lamartine, Hugo, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, 20th century Apollinaire, Prévert, Queneau, Sédar Senghor and others. Anyone wishing a complete list of poets and texts should contact the French Department (js28@calvin.edu, 616-526-6361).

The poetry recital will take place on Monday, November 12, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. in the Gezon Auditorium located in the Spoelhof College Center. Tickets will be available from the Calvin College Box Office in October. Alumni in the area are heartily welcome to attend. *Venez nombreux!*

CALL course: Madame de Lafayette and 17th century France

Professor Jolene Vos-Camy will teach a CALL (Calvin Academy for Lifelong Learning) course in October 2007 on Madame de Lafayette's influential novel *La Princesse de Clèves*. Published in 1678, it is generally considered the first modern novel of French literature because of its careful treatment of character psychology. Though set in 16th century France, the novel gives fascinating insights on the court of Louis XIV, the Sun King (1643-1715), and set off heated discussions about love and passion among the readers of her day. The course will also look at how 17th century France had a lasting influence on French culture and literature.

The course will be taught in English with all reading in English translation.

The course will be offered on four consecutive Thursdays in October. Please see the CALL website for more information: www.calvin.edu/academic/call/

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