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DEPARTMENT OF
**World Languages
& Cultures**

أهلاً 你好 Bonjour Hallo Χαῖρε שָׁלוֹם Hola Ciao Salve Hello!

Winter 2017

Winter Term in Spain, Morocco, and Greece

By Susanna Carter

During my winter term this past January I had the opportunity to study and travel to Spain, Morocco, and Greece. These three countries are interconnected in more ways than one, and it was incredibly interesting to see what cultural differences and similarities they shared. The Mediterranean region is at the intersection of Europe, Africa, and Asia, causing it to be one of the most culturally and economically diverse areas in the world. The main focus of this course was to study the impact of globalization on societies in the Euro Mediterranean. Given the rich history stemming from each of these countries, we were able to observe how the continued modern waves of globalization are, or are not, changing their cultural identities.

During our time abroad, we spent a fair amount of time focusing on these countries' social and religious histories. Christianity and Islam date back thousands of years, and their histories have overlapped since their creation. We visited monasteries, cathedrals, mosques, museums, and other ancient sites such as Delphi, the Alhambra and Generalife, and the Royal Palace of Madrid. Each of these unique experiences aided in our exposure to diverse customs, art, architecture, and cultures. A few other highlights included riding camels, visiting the Arab Baths, and learning to cook traditional Moroccan food in a cooking class.

Given the current economic climate in Europe, with Spain and Greece in particular still recovering from the European Debt Crisis, we were able to witness to what extent the EU crisis has continued to affect the work and daily lives of people in these countries. We were fortunate enough to meet with Dr. George Stubos, a former economic advisor at the Bank of Greece, and he laid out for us how Greece got to the economic state that it's in currently and what actions are being taken to try and come out of the crisis. Having the opportunity to visit different Greek cities and talk to locals about how they personally have been affected was a very different experience than reading about this crisis in news articles and seeing it discussed on TV here at home. I am incredibly grateful to Elon for giving me the opportunity to have this amazing and eye-opening experience in just one month!



Meet Susanna Carter! She is a WLC student assistant majoring in international business with a minor in German studies. Her passions include traveling, languages, and experiencing different cultures. She is looking forward to spending the fall of 2017 studying abroad in Berlin.

Student Grants!

The *Lunsford-Ihrle Travel Grant* was established in 2016 in honor of faculty emeriti Dr. Ernest Lunsford and Dr. Maureen Ihrle. It is dedicated to supporting students with wide-ranging study abroad opportunities. The *Romer Grant for Professional Development* honors faculty emerita, Dr. Jane Romer, and it is devoted to helping students fund language enrichment experiences in the United States.

For more information about our WLC student grants, please visit: www.elon.edu/languages



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Winter Term at Elon: French Theater in Production



Claire Gherkins, Ally Bolton, Tori Porter, and Julia Ohanyan work on our sets in the #ElonMakers Hub.



Jordy Baende Eliko Etafe (Caliban) and Brandon Reynolds (Ariel) debate ways to achieve freedom.

As part of this year's Winter Term diversity programming, students in Dr. Olivia Choplin's FRE 349: "French Theater in Production" staged Aimé Césaire's 1969 postcolonial rewriting of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Twelve students, ranging from first years to seniors, collaborated to bring Césaire's *Une Tempête* to life over a period of three weeks, performing for nearly one hundred members of the Elon community on January 24th and 25th in McKinnon Hall.

Their work involved the intensive study, analysis, and all aspects of the performance of the play as well as the study of some of Césaire's theoretical work on colonialism. The students found Césaire's text, which in 1969 held a mirror up to colonial attitudes and demonstrated how they unraveled themselves, highly relevant in January 2017. They drew parallels between the situations of the characters and the current political climate. Anti-intellectualism, messianic self-aggrandizement and a lack of self-awareness plague Césaire's Prospero. Ariel and Caliban debate the best way to achieve their freedom and ultimately choose different paths.

Césaire offers no easy answers, but he does suggest that certain positions become untenable. The students' performance reminded us, as Césaire would have it, that this tempest is *a* storm among many, not *the* storm, and that our world has certainly not finished weathering them all.

"Being able to really get involved in French theater and learn more about the cultural influences that inspired the piece were so different from any other WT class I've taken at Elon. Being able to branch out and work together with classmates - designing the set, memorizing lines in French, and performing - made it an amazing experience."

-Tori Porter '17



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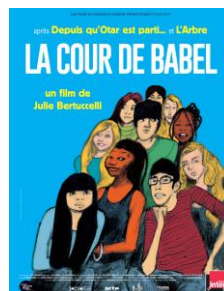
Spring 2017

International LGBTQIA Series

This has been a wonderful year for international films at Elon. In the spring, the Department of World Languages & Cultures initiated an International LGBTQIA film series with the powerful 2009 Israeli film, *Eyes Wide Open*, written by Israeli writer, Merav Doster, and directed by Israeli director, Haim Tabakman. Boaz Avraham-Katz, Adjunct Instructor of Hebrew, showed the film and led a Q&A afterwards with students, faculty, and staff.



Our second event in the series was the screening of the 2004 Hong Kong film, *Butterfly*, based on Taiwanese writer Xue Chen's novel, *The Mark of Butterfly*. The film was directed by Yan Yan Mak and produced by Jacqueline Liu and Yan Yan Mak. Binnan Gao, Assistant Professor of Chinese, showed the film, and it was followed by an engaging discussion led by Carlos Rojas, Professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies from Duke University.



Tournées French Film Festival

Another important cinematic event was our 2017 Tournées French Film Festival organized by Patti Burns, Lecturer in French. The festival was a collaborative endeavor between many different disciplines with Elon faculty and staff introducing the films and leading engaging Q&A sessions afterwards. The films shown were: *Qu'Allah Bénisse la France* (*May Allah Bless France!*), led by Prof. Ariela Marcus-Sells (Department of Religious Studies); *Grigris*, led by François Masuka (Isabella Cannon Global Education Center); *Loin des hommes* (*Far from Men*), led by Prof. Ryan Johnson (Department of Philosophy); *La cour de Babel* (*School of Babel*), led by Prof. Jeffrey Carpenter (School of Education); *L'armée des ombres* (*Army of Shadows*), led by Prof. Michael Carignan (Department of History and Geography); and *Parce que j'étais peintre* (*Because I was a painter*), led by Prof. Evan Gatti (Department of Art & Art History). Thank you to our partners across campus for this fruitful collaboration.

Tournées Film Festival is a program of the [FACE Foundation](#) and made possible with the support of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S., the Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée (CNC), the French American Cultural Fund, Florence Gould Foundation, and Highbrow Entertainment.



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Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Scott Windham

Professor Scott Windham took a winding path to get to where he is today. When he first started his undergraduate education at Davidson College, he planned to major in engineering and Japanese. However, his path in life changed after taking German 101 with an inspiring professor, and after graduating with a BA from Davidson and a PhD from UNC-Chapel Hill, Dr. Windham first began teaching at Elon in 2002.

As Associate Professor of German, his favorite aspect of teaching is seeing his students flourish during their study abroad experiences in Germany, internships and jobs with German companies, research, and graduate school – all because of their knowledge of German.

He says, “For a relatively small program with no major, German at Elon can claim a lot of student success, and it thrills me to see that happen.”

Dr. Windham is working on two research projects. The first, supported by the CATL Scholar Program, is an investigation of how grammar instruction and testing improves student literacy and analytical thinking. In fact, he just recently [published an article](#) for *Teaching German* (spring 2017) based on four years of survey data among students in 100- and 200-level German courses at Elon.

The second is a long-term project examining the factors considered by students when deciding whether to continue their foreign language studies the following semester.



In his free time, Prof. Windham enjoys traveling, playing piano, and watching basketball with his wife and children. He also plays on a Chapel-Hill based soccer team, and he is training for an upcoming triathlon.

Dr. Scott Windham received the Excellence in Teaching Award from the College of Arts & Sciences in 2008. He is an excellent teacher, mentor, and scholar, and he is our faculty spotlight for spring 2017.

Chinese Lantern Festival Celebrated by Community



Marking the end of the traditional Chinese New Year celebrations, Elon celebrated the Lantern Festival on Monday, February 27. The two-hour event attracted approximately 70 faculty, staff, students, parents, and children from the local community.

Students Maria Gant and Kenneth Yu acted as masters of ceremonies of the event. Jacob Bloom, a junior in economics and business, told the audience about the legend surrounding this holiday and how the festival is celebrated in China. The community enjoyed *yuanxiao*, glutinous rice balls with sesame or red bean paste, while playing the traditional Chinese character riddle game led by Professor Binnan Gao. They also listened to a song performed by Ju Jiao, a Chinese music production and recording arts student. At various stations, students taking Chinese taught the community how to do Chinese calligraphy and how to make Chinese knots for bookmarks. This event not only exposed the Elon campus and community members to Chinese culture but connected students learning the language with native Chinese students and with the local community.



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On Tuesday, April 11, nine students formed a dynamic panel to talk about their study abroad experiences in various Francophone countries as part of an informational session for interested students. The panel represented a variety of short-term and semester-long programs: four students discussed their semesters in Montpellier, France; other panelists talked about their semesters in Paris, Lyon, and Rabat, Morocco. One student also discussed her experience on the Winter Term course in France titled: "Eat, Pray, Love: Sacred Space and the Place of Religion in 21st Century France."

First and second-year students from diverse disciplines attended the event. They asked questions and gained first-hand accounts of the various Francophone study abroad programs Elon offers. Some topics discussed were the benefits of the homestay experience versus living in a dormitory or apartment, the course offerings at different locations, and how to make the most of a semester abroad through community volunteer work, pursuits of hobbies (music, dance, and art classes were mentioned, for example), and internship opportunities.

Carlton Hosts French Study Abroad Panel



Students from a variety of disciplines gathered in Carlton Commons to discuss study abroad opportunities in Francophone countries.

Senior Spotlight: Julia Ohanyan



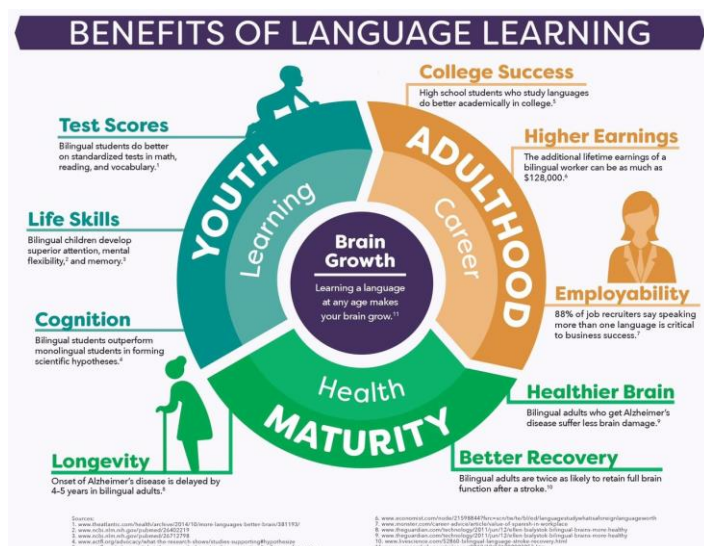
Throughout her Elon experience, senior Julia Ohanyan has found a great passion for both languages and cultures. As an International Studies and History double major with minors in French and Political Science, she was able to experience "The Living Heritage of the Andes" program in Peru during the 2015 Winter Term.

Julia also took numerous classes that greatly improved her French language and intercultural skills, including Professor Olivia Choplin's "French Theater in Production" course this past Winter Term (described on page 2 of our newsletter), where she performed in Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête*.

In addition to French, Julia wanted to experience firsthand the language and cultures of the Arabic world. She fulfilled this desire through a homestay with a Moroccan family in the Rabat medina, during which she also completed part of her Elon College Fellows' research project.

For her ECF project, Julia did a comparative case study on American and Moroccan university students' global knowledge, awareness, and perceptions. One day, she hopes to return to this country that had such an important impact on her life.

Julia says she leaves Elon University and her current role as Head Student Assistant in the Dept. of World Languages and Cultures, with a much deeper understanding of what it means to be an engaged, global citizen. We will miss Julia, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors!



This [infographic](#), published by the Modern Languages Association (MLA) in 2017, highlights the many ways language learning and bilingualism benefit people of all ages by improving academic skills, job prospects, and health.

Hebrew Takes Root at Elon

Did you know Elon University has a Hebrew name? Since the plot of land on which the college was built was filled with oak trees, Elon's founders chose the Hebrew word for oak tree: "Elon."

Hebrew, an ancient Semitic language, is also a modern, vibrant language spoken by over 9 million people. A sampling of Hebrew words that can be found in English today include amen, hallelujah, jubilee, sabbatical, cherub, and many others.

Now the language that gave our university its name has taken root in the Department of World Languages and Cultures. Boaz Avraham-Katz, the department's adjunct instructor of Hebrew, says he can summarize his feelings about teaching at Elon in one word: "grateful." He is *grateful* that this past semester marked the first time students (pictured to the right) completed four consecutive semesters of Hebrew, and many show interest in continuing to a higher level. He is *grateful* that in January of 2018 he will be able to share his knowledge with students as the co-faculty advisor with Prof. Richard Lee for a Winter Term study abroad course, "The Holocaust Journey."

Most importantly, he has been *grateful* for the opportunity to strengthen the Hebrew program that his daughter, an Elon alumna, petitioned to create during her time as a student here.

We, too, are *grateful* that Avraham-Katz has planted seeds for success. We thank him for all he does, and we look forward to watching the program bloom.



Students (left to right) Evan Willner, Noah Portnoy, Maxx Tannenbaum, and Sarah Wasserman celebrate their completion of HEB 222, which makes them the first cohort to complete the four-semester Hebrew program.



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“Café Hebrew” Brings Intercultural Knowledge and Fun

Students studying Hebrew at Elon have formed a community that feels like a family. Our Hebrew professor, Boaz Avraham-Katz, thought of an idea to have all the sections of Hebrew come together to interact and to show Elon that Hebrew students are active on campus. Every Wednesday, we participate in קפה עברית, which means “Café Hebrew.” This event is an opportunity for all students studying Hebrew to get together and put their knowledge into practice through engaging conversation.

At a recent קפה עברית, Avraham-Katz made different kinds of coffee to teach how to perfect the beverage, like it is done in Israel. A lot depends on how long one boils the water and stirs the coffee in order to give it the impeccable texture and taste. Every Wednesday there is a new topic to learn about, and all the students look forward to what will be discussed. Most of all, students enjoy being in the presence of other Hebrew learners, studying language and cultures, and getting to know each other in a fun environment.



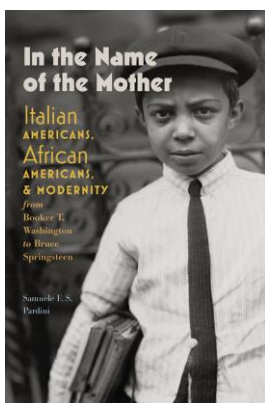
Above: Hebrew students enjoy conversation with coffee from Israel.



Left: Prof. Avraham-Katz reads from the Scroll of Esther.

Faculty Book Publication

Congratulations to Dr. Samuele Pardini, Associate Professor of Italian, on his book publication! *“In the Name of the Mother: Italian Americans, African Americans, and Modernity from Booker T. Washington to Bruce Springsteen”* (Dartmouth College Press, 2017), Pardini examines the cultural relationship between African American intellectuals and Italian American writers and artists, and how it relates to American blackness in the twentieth century. Samuele F. S. Pardini links African American literature to the Mediterranean tradition of the Italian immigrants and examines both against the white intellectual discourse that defines modernism in the West. This previously unexamined encounter offers a hybrid, transnational model of modernity capable of producing democratic forms of aesthetics, social consciousness, and political economy. This volume emphasizes the racial ‘in-betweenness’ of Italian Americans rearticulated as ‘invisible blackness,’ a view that enlarges and complicates the color-based dimensions of American racial discourse.” (Quote from back cover)





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Viewing “The Global Experience” Through a New Lens

By Isabel Treanor



COR 110 students with Prof. Mendoza

In alignment with Elon’s mission to create global citizens, all first year students are enrolled in COR 110, “The Global Experience.” The class aims to teach about globalization and world events through different, unique lenses. In the past, students have looked through the lens of science, art, music, politics, business, religion, or literature to learn about the world. In spring 2017, an exciting new lens was added to the mix: language.

The Core Curriculum and the Department of World Languages and Cultures piloted the first COR 110 class in Spanish taught by Professor Ricardo Mendoza, Lecturer in Spanish. Mendoza designed his curriculum with a regional focus on Central and South America, and all discussions, readings, and projects were done in Spanish. Mendoza reports having had a fantastic experience and says the classroom diversity and other benefits were apparent from the very first day.

While most COR 110 classes may have only a few international students, Mendoza’s section had seven hailing from Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. This led to a very engaging classroom setting because the students were able to compare and contrast the effects of globalization in the United States, for example, with several Spanish-speaking countries.

Firsthand accounts of what life is like in Central and South America allowed the students to understand globalization from a variety of perspectives. “The class’s conversations have been very profound,” states Mendoza. “My international students have been able to share their personal knowledge, and since they come from many different countries throughout Latin America they bring diverse questions and perspectives.”

Diversity is just one of the benefits that all participants gained. For non-native speakers, the class offered an added opportunity for extra practice using the language. Being first years, this class was the first time some of the students were using the language to talk about such complex global issues. With diverse native speakers, the class allowed for a broader variety of perspectives in a setting that encouraged non-native speakers to get accustomed to different accents and expressions.

For native speakers, the class offered a sense of familiarity. Some entered Elon and faced varying levels of culture shock both in their social and academic lives. Having a class taught in their native language eased that slightly and allowed them to be more actively engaged in their learning. Both native and non-native speakers showed great interest within the class and were actively engaged in discussions on the impact of globalization in the past, present, and the potential outcomes in the future.

The success of Mendoza’s COR 110 class has sparked conversations for the future. The Core Curriculum and the Department of World Languages & Cultures hope to continue offering sections of “The Global Experience” in Spanish, and they may possibly be able to open a section in a second language in the near future. The intercultural knowledge and exposure that students in Mendoza’s class experienced seem to indicate that language is a very powerful tool and lens.



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Prof. Meinking Presents at Life@Elon



On April 18th, Dr. Kristina Meinking, Associate Professor of Classical Languages, offered two presentations for [Life@Elon](#), a lifelong education program offered by the university.

In her session, titled “Myth’s Memory: Classical Allusions in Art Across the Ages,” Meinking explored the ways in which the myths and legends of antiquity have influenced art across the centuries.

After introducing the stories of classical mythology – its gods and goddesses, monsters, heroes, and more – she investigated how those fantastical accounts appeared in classical, Renaissance, and Baroque art.

Participants were asked to think about why and how these stories have morphed, been adapted, and given new life in later art and literature, as well as how questions of culture and socio-historic context affect the interpretation of those myths. Engaging discussions about examples of modern myths in history and politics as well as the universality of these stories were highlights of the sessions. Thank you, Prof. Meinking!

Researching Quechua Myth in Southern Peru

Ben Bridges, a senior anthropology major, appreciates the learning that happens outside of the classroom. During his time at Elon, he spent nearly six months in Peru working on his two-year-long Honors and Lumen research project titled, “Navigating Globalization through Myth in Quechua Communities of Southern Peru.” His thesis explored the intersection of myths, or sacred narratives, and different forms of globalization such as tourism and religious conversion among the indigenous Quechua in the Sacred Valley. Following a semester abroad in Cusco, Ben returned to the region in the summer to conduct the ethnographic portion of his project in the Andean village of Huilloc. He says that mornings of pasturing sheep and afternoons of harvesting corn were followed by late night interviews in Spanish with various community members, made possible by the speaking skills he acquired in Prof. Ricardo Mendoza’s upper level SPN courses. Though he completed and defended the written thesis, he is currently developing an illustrated book of Huilloc myths in both Spanish and Quechua to deliver back to the village in an effort to maintain a close, reciprocal relationship with the community.

Reflecting on his experience, Ben recalls: “Some of my greatest learning developed on the linguistic level, rapidly improving my Spanish and basic conversational Quechua through the conducted interviews and participant observation. Yet the power of language acquisition through immersion does not sit at the competency level, but rather

in its aid in building relationships. My host mom and I laughed at the fact that the words I learned most quickly in Quechua, *alalaw* (how cold!) and *chiri* (chilly), both referred to my inability to adjust to the frigid Huilloc weather. Goofily stumbling over language barriers was part of the necessary messiness of ethnographic research, contributing to deeper linguistic and social understanding.”

Upon graduation, Ben plans to pursue a PhD in Folklore at Indiana University in Bloomington. Part of the degree requires fluency in two languages other than English, and he knows his Spanish education at Elon will help fulfill at least one of those requirements. And, who knows, perhaps Quechua will fulfill the second!



Ben with his host family



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Scholars Visit Elon to Discuss Indigenous Rights in Guatemala

On Tuesday, April 4, the Department of World Languages & Cultures hosted a panel to discuss some of the current struggles and challenges of the indigenous populations of Guatemala. The three invited panelists were Dr. Irma Velásquez Nimatuj, an anthropologist and activist, member of the K'iche ethnic community, and a Visiting Professor at Duke University; Dr. Tiffany Creegan Miller, an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Clemson University who has done extensive research on the oral traditions of the Kaqchikel Maya, and Elon's own Dr. Carmen Mónico, an Assistant Professor of Human Services Studies who studies the inter-country adoption of Guatemalan children.

Each guest presented academic research with the public, and then the floor was open for questions and comments. WLC professors of Spanish, Dr. Mayte de Lama, Dr. Federico Pous, and Dr. Pablo Celis-Castillo, organized the event with the support of the Department of Human Service Studies, the Peace and Conflict Studies Program, El Centro de Español, International and Global Studies, the Office of the Associate Provost for Inclusive Communities, and the Office of the Dean of Elon College, College of Arts and Sciences. We are grateful to our colleagues/partners for their support in bringing such a compelling panel to Elon.

French and Spanish Honor Societies Welcome New Members

The newest members of the National French Honor Society, *Pi Delta Phi*, and the National Spanish Honor Society, *Sigma Delta Pi*, were inducted on May 1 and May 3. Inductees attended candle lighting ceremonies over dinner with guest speakers, Dr. Ketevan Kupatadze, Senior Lecturer in Spanish, and Mr. Thomas Prieur of the French American Chamber of Commerce. *Félicitations! ¡Felicitationes!*





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Elon Participates in Marathon Reading in Five Languages

On April 18, Elon commemorated the 50th anniversary of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez. Elon students, faculty and staff, as well as members of a Spanish class from Western Alamance High School, came together to participate in the [marathon reading](#) of the classic novel. UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke University, Meredith College, UNC-Charlotte, El Centro Hispano in Durham and Academia de Castilla in Granada, Spain, also participated in the reading. Each institution hosted three-hour reading sessions that were live-streamed around the world. Participants at Elon read aloud in Carlton Commons in five languages – Spanish, English, Chinese, French, and Italian. Márquez won the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature for his novel, which has been translated in 37 languages.



The reading was organized by Associate Professor of Spanish, Mina García Soormally, who coordinated Elon's [first marathon reading event](#) of *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes in 2016 as a tribute to the 400th anniversary of Cervantes' death. In coordinating marathon readings, Dr. García celebrates the collaborative use of languages outside the classroom and advocates for the value of language study.

Students Receive Scholarships from the U.S. State Department to Further their Studies of Arabic in Jordan and Morocco



We are delighted to announce that Ben Lutz ('17) and Alex Mancuso ('19) have received scholarships from the federal government to further their studies of Arabic, a language critical to U.S. diplomacy and outreach. Lutz and Mancuso are among more than 500 undergraduate and graduate students selected for the U.S. State Department's Critical Language Scholarship Program. The program provides fully funded, group-based intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences designed to increase language fluency and cultural competency. Lutz will be studying in Jordan this summer, while Mancuso will be studying in Tangier, Morocco, at the Arab American Language Institute.

Professor Shereen Elgamal, Lecturer in Arabic, has been an exceptional mentor, and she could not be more proud of her students. We encourage you to read [this article on E-Net](#).



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WLC Faculty and Staff Recognition

The Elon University Chapter of *Phi Kappa Phi* welcomed its newest initiates in a formal ceremony on April 24 in McKinnon Hall. Among [the 2017 inductees](#) were members of the community and Elon alumni, faculty, and staff members including Prof. Ricardo Mendoza, Prof. Scott Windham, and Associate Librarian, Shannon Tennant, who is the outstanding library liaison for our department. Congratulations!

Founded in 1897 at the University of Maine, *Phi Kappa Phi* is the nation's oldest and largest academic honor society whose mission is "to recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others."



On May 10, Dr. Sophie Adamson received the Daniels-Danieley Award for Excellence in Teaching from President Leo Lambert at the annual faculty-staff awards luncheon in Alumni Gymnasium.

Associate Professor of French and Chair of the Department of World Languages & Cultures, Adamson earns high praise from students and from her fellow members of the Department of World Languages & Cultures for her ability to connect with her classes, meld language and culture within curricula, and make lasting impressions upon those she teaches and mentors. In the classroom, Adamson creates an environment that is both highly challenging and thoroughly supportive. After receiving the Elon College Excellence in Teaching award in 2010, her colleagues say she has continued to grow as a teacher and department head, while emerging as a leader in her approach to fusing language learning and cultural literacy in the classroom.

Adamson is the 45th Elon faculty member to receive the award established by President Emeritus J. Earl Danieley '46 and his late wife, Verona Daniels Danieley, in honor of their parents.



Giving

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Newsletter Contributors

Marielle Abrahamson, Sophie Adamson, Ben Bridges, Susanna Carter, Pablo Celis-Castillo, Olivia Choplin, Binnan Gao, Kristina Meinking, Whitney Miller, Julia Needham, Julia Ohanyan, Charlie Perschau, Isabel Treanor

For more information, visit www.elon.edu/languages and check out the [department Facebook page](#)

