

September 5, 2008  
Summer Issue



*Andrea: Ten years of service!*

## *Welcome! First Years!*

By **First Years**

### **Corina Goodwin**

My name is Corina Goodwin and I graduated from Arizona State University with a BA in Psychology and in German. I am primarily interested in language acquisition.

### **Jungmin Kang**

Hi, I am Jungmin from Korea. I did my undergraduate studies at Dongguk University in Seoul. My major was English Language and Literature. I've just finished my MA program (English Linguistics) at the same school. I am interested in Syntax.

### **José Riqueros Morante**

I am from Lima (Peru). I studied Hispanic Linguistics at Universidad Católica del Perú (B.A.). Last year I finished my Master in Hispanic Linguistics at University of Arizona. Now I am interested in working on Syntax. I like everything about Spanish grammar.

### **Lyn Tieu**

I'm from Toronto, Canada. I did my undergraduate and MA degrees at the University of Toronto. My MA thesis was on the syntax and heritage acquisition of non-referential verb use in Chinese. I am interested in syntax and acquisition, and am looking forward to continuing my studies at UConn.

### **Ting Xu**

I'm Ting from China. I got my BA and MA at Tsinghua University, Beijing and in the past I worked on the acquisition of passives in Mandarin. I'd love to continue my work in acquisition at UConn.



Guess who is who?

## Ling News

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## The UConn Graduate Certificate in College Instruction

By **Cynthia L. Zocca**

Although university professors may disagree on methods and theories, they will all tell you the same thing regarding the job market: it's tough. In the "publish or perish" academic world we live in, publications and conference presentations seem to have become just part of the minimum requirements for all applicants. UConn students, however, now have the opportunity to add a competitive edge to their CVs: the Graduate Certificate in College Teaching.



*This year's best TA award goes to Nina Radkevich!*

More and more job ads include in their requirements phrases like "demonstrated teaching effectiveness", "higher education teaching experience", "commitment to undergraduate education", "proficient in new education technologies" and so on. Even after the job is yours, you still have to prove you are worthy of tenure, and part of the worthiness comes from the good results of student evaluations. In short, the relevance of a person's teaching ability has been growing. Yet, as graduate students, we receive very little, if any, training to become teachers. On the contrary, we are usually encouraged to focus on our research and leave teaching as a mere source of income.

The new UConn Graduate Certificate in College Instruction, offered by the Graduate School and the Institute for Teaching and Learning, is a credential that can not only perk up your CV in order to get a job, but also provide some tools for continuing development once you are a faculty member. To qualify for the certificate, students need to take core course, GRAD 5915, and 6 more credits in recommended courses, some focussed on specific disciplines and some more general.

I was one of the participants of the core course, which was offered for the first time this past summer. We had sessions on designing courses, creating syllabi, using technology, dealing with diversity, understanding current college students, engaging students, plagiarism, copyright, evaluation, and many more areas. In case you are wondering if the course is worth taking, here are some questions for you to consider. How can some professors create interactive and engaging classes to 300-student lecture halls, while others cannot raise the interest of even the most motivated learners in a 12-student room? Do students prefer courses which require them to work hard or the ones that guarantee an easy A? Why are students nowadays so different from when you were a student? And what's the deal with all the texting and instant messaging? Is curving a good practice? Are we inflating grades? If you really think such a course is a waste of time, remember what it feels like, as a student or instructor, to be in a course that goes smoothly as opposed to one that drags and you just want to get rid of.

There are very few, if any, natural-born teachers. Being a good instructor involves elements of nature, but also of nurture. In other words, you need to work on your skills, and that involves not only knowing your subject matter well, but also, among others, being aware of your strengths and weaknesses, knowing your target audience, setting clear objectives, and using evaluation mechanisms that will give you more than just a grade. It feels at first that doing all that will just add extra hours to your already full work load. However, in the long run, it pays off, because effective practices start becoming automatic and end up saving you time and trouble; not to mention that teaching feels like a lot less of a burden when the classroom experience is pleasant. Finally, an engaging course can be a factor in an undecided undergraduate's choice of a major, which means more brains to our field and more interest in extra courses that can get us extra funding.

One last thing to mention about taking the courses that lead to the Certificate is the possibility of having contact with other students from other departments. It is always healthy for a researcher to step outside his or her area of expertise from time to time and see what is going on in the rest of the academic world. A bird's-eye view can provide new insights for the field, and meeting new people is a good way to start.

To conclude, let me reiterate that yes, getting this Certificate will involve extra work and maybe even distract you a little from your own research. Still, I highly recommend the effort as a step in the process of becoming a well-rounded faculty member, better prepared to face the new challenges of academia.



*Cynthia's teaching workshop*

*For more information, visit <http://itl.uconn.edu/tas/courses.htm>.*

**"Being a good instructor involves elements of nature, but also of nurture."**

## *UConn Alumni Association introduces new Husky Alumni Network*

By **Lisa R. Lewis**

Executive Director, University of Connecticut Alumni Association

The University of Connecticut Alumni Association recently launched a new website with the help of University Communications, the UConn Foundation, and the School of Business. Part of this website redesign is the newly expanded online alumni community, re-branded as the \*Husky Alumni Network\*.

In addition to a new name and a new look, the Husky Alumni Network now features permanent email capability and on-line career networking for both alumni and students.

\* *\_Permanent email.\_* Alumni, graduate students and UConn seniors can sign up for a permanent UConn alumni email address that is easily redirected to any personal or professional email account. The format will be "username@alumni.uconn.edu".

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\* *\_Career Network.\_* \*Alumni can volunteer to share their expertise and experience directly with students and other alumni informally through email, or by choosing to develop a mentoring relationship. All UConn students will have access to the Career Network.

Alumni, graduate students and UConn seniors have access to the entire Husky Alumni Network. This includes the new Permanent Email and Career Network features, as well as the online directory, calendar of alumni events, class notes, and career services.

These new services address strategic priorities and the expressed needs of UConn alumni. Specifically, 93% of UConn alumni say it is important that the Alumni Association provide student mentoring and help with career choices. In the coming weeks, the Alumni Association communications team will begin rolling out messages to UConn alumni encouraging them to sign-up and participate in the Husky Alumni Network. In particular, we are encouraging alums to take advantage of the UConn alumni permanent email service as well as volunteer to share their expertise in the Career Network by completing their Career Network profile. We will begin promoting the Career Network to students in the fall in partnership with Student Affairs and Career Services.

Help us connect alumni and support our students! As you interact and communicate with alumni and students, I invite share this information and the benefits. As participation in the Husky Alumni Network grows, we will have a stronger Husky family. We are happy to provide you with marketing materials to include in your publications and electronic communications.

Please visit the following link <<http://www.uconnalumni.com/images/stories/pdf/huskyalumninetwork.pdf>> for more information, or visit UConnAlumni.com <<http://www.uconnalumni.com/>>. Please contact Marie Leblanc, manager of electronic communications, in the UConn Alumni Association at 486-0571 or [marie.leblanc@uconn.edu](mailto:marie.leblanc@uconn.edu) <<mailto:marie.leblanc@uconn.edu>> with any additional questions.



*William: our head dude*

**"The possibility for our alumni to get permanent e-mail accounts through UConn"**



*Work harder guys! There is a deadline to catch!*

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Departmental Orientation, Aug 22, 2008

## Summer Miscellanea

By whoever submitted their summer activities

**Cynthia:** I taught LING 2010Q, took the core course (GRAD 5915) for the Certificate in College Instruction. I also taught at UCAELI and worked with Jonathan on an article that is under review for publication and available on LingBuzz.



Party at William's place

**Natasha:**

publications:

(in press) Fitzgibbons, Natalia V. Freestanding N-words in Russian: a Syntactic Account. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics*.

(in review) Fitzgibbons, Natalia V. N-words in the Syntax of Russian and Spanish. *Proceedings of FASL 17*

(accepted) Fitzgibbons, Natalia V. N-Words and Negative Heads in Russian. *Proceedings of FDSL-7 presentations*:

"Negative Concord Items (N-Words) in the Syntax of Russian and Spanish", *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 17*, Yale

**Nina:** I presented a poster 'Echo questions in Russian' at Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics (FASL), Yale U, New Haven, May 2008. I presented a paper 'The Geometry of Local Case Affixes' at the Pionier Workshop on Locative Cases, Radboud University, Nijmegen, August 2008. I also took a cake decorating class (level 1). June 2008



Wow! Diane: twenty years of service!

**Oksana:** I had fun working in three kindergartens in Kostroma, Russia collecting data on the acquisition of agreement within NP in Russian from more than fifty children. Forty of them provided me with complete sets of data which I am going to analyze in the nearest future.

**Pei-Jung:** I did a poster presentation of my acquisition work at IASCL in Edinburgh, UK this summer. I taught a 2010Q (the old 110Q) summer session with five students. I also took one session of horse riding lessons at UConn. The lesson is at the Beginner level for Western style. I had a very impressive experience and lost some weight. Because of the later, I highly recommended it!