

Montclair State University
Department of Classics and General Humanities

Annual Report for AY 2006-2007 – Highlights of the Year's Activities.

B. Tenure, Promotion, Leadership.

- Senta German was awarded tenure.
- Senta German was promoted to Associate Professor.
- Mary C. English began a two-year quarter-time appointment in the Department of Theater and Dance
- Sulochana Asirvatham was granted sabbatical for Fall and Spring 2008-9.
- Mary C. English was granted a sabbatical for Spring 2009.
- Aditya Adarkar continued as coordinator of the Asian Studies Program
- In addition, Dr. Adarkar was put in charge of the General Education program.

A1. New Courses (3)

(1) GNHU 209: Greek and Roman Religion. This course was developed by Jean Alvares in conjunction with faculty in Classics and General Humanities as well as in Philosophy and Religion. Greek and Roman culture is foundational for later Western (and thus global) culture (including religion), and an understanding of Greco-Roman religion is thus absolutely vital. This course will not only provide a valuable offering for students in Classics and General Humanities, but will be valuable for students of the Humanities and Fine Arts. It will be offered in Spring 2009.

(2) GNHU 288 Mythic Traditions. As part of our Department's intention to deepen our offerings in mythology, the Department's mythology working group developed this course. It will be offered in Spring 2009. This course will begin from a study of some prominent Greco-Roman myth and study how that myth is transformed from the past to the present, engaging many historical, cultural and theoretical issues along the way.

(3) GNHU 313: Aegean Art and Archaeology (to be crosslisted as ARHS 313). Dr. Senta German, whose scholarship has focused on the Aegean Bronze Age, has taught this course a number of times under a special topics rubric, and has now turned it into a regular offering which deals with some sophistication with the art, archaeology, history and culture of the Aegean Bronze Age, principally that of the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations from 1900-1100 BCE.

A2 New/Special Offerings

Continuing our Department's project to enrich our offerings in Mythology, our newly hired member, Dr. Glen Gill, offered two new courses as special topics courses, and planned one more for the Fall 2008.

GNHU 470-03 (Fall 2007) Seminar in Classical Humanities – The Mythological Structure of Western Culture. This fairly advanced special topics course looked at some primary myths found

in the corpus of Greco-Roman myth and the Old Testament, as well as some more modern instances, considering them in a comparative manner so that the students could see the underlying archetypal structures of these myths.

GNHU 320-02 (Spring 2008) Selected Topics in Interdisciplinary Humanities: Myth and Popular Culture. Building on the experience of the previous semester, in this course Dr. Gill looked at some prominent ‘modern’ myth, such as the *Star Wars* saga, the *Matrix* trilogy, *E.T.* and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, with a special focus on movies. Here again students not only observe the underlying (and ancient) structures of these myths, but also see how their structures interact with modern cultural (including ideological and commercial) realities.

GNHU 320-02 (Planned for Fall 2008) Selected Topics in Interdisciplinary Humanities: Celtic Mythology. Students taking mythology have also expressed an interest in taking courses in other major myth systems. To meet this need (and to explore the potential for such courses) Dr. Gill developed for Fall 2008 Celtic Myth, which will examine many of their main mythic cycles of Celtic myth (such as the Tuatha Dé Danann, the Ulster Cycle and the stories of the hero Cuchulainn) as well as more modern adaptations, as seen, for example in Yeats and the “Celtic Twilight” and modern singers such as Enya.

GNHU 470-02 (Fall 2007) Seminar in Classical Humanities – Comedy and its Legacy. Dr. Mary English, who for 2007-2010 is holding a quarter time appointment in the Theater Department, brought to this course her special knowledge of Greco-Roman comedy in general and the Greek Old Comic writer Aristophanes in particular. In addition to these plays of the Classical period, Dr. English also considers the transmission and reception of the Greco-Roman comic tradition up to our era .

Our Department also continued to offer more courses in ancient history, intending to develop a rotation of courses, offering at least one each semester, courses which are cross listed with the History Department. We fully intend these special topics courses to be converted in time to regular courses.

GNHU/HIST 332-01 (Fall 2007) Selected Topics in Ancient History: Augustan Rome was taught by Prudence Jones. This course covered not only the history of the Roman Empire in the Age of Augustus, but also its major writers (e.g. Vergil and Horace), architecture, art, and various cultural matters (e.g. religion).

GNHU/HIST 332-01 (Spring 2008) Selected Topics in Ancient History: The Age of Athens was taught by Dr. Sulochana Asirvatham. This course covered the history of Athens during its major period of power and prosperity, but also its major writers (e.g. Sophocles, Thucydides), architecture, art, and various cultural matters (e.g. religion, philosophy) as well as later views of that “Golden Age of Athens”.

GNHU/HIST 332-02 (Spring 2008) Selected Topics in Ancient History: Roman Cities and Urban Life. was conducted by Dr. Deborah Chatr Arymontri. This course, which combined both history and archaeology, while primarily focusing on the material culture and life of the urban population of the major cities of the Roman empire, also possessed a considerable historical

component, for, although only a minority of the population actually lived in cities, the great cities remained the central components of the Roman web of power.

As regards upper division Latin courses, course was revived which had not been taught in decades: LATN-361 Caesar: End of the Republic was taught by Jean Alvares. In this course Dr. Alvares covered important passages from the Caesar's *Gallic Wars* and *Civil Wars*. While this course focused on increasing the student's ability to read Caesar's Latin, students were also familiarized with the basic history of the events concerned and the problems with Julius Caesar as a historical source .

B. Undergraduate curriculum revision/improvement

There were advances on various fronts. Our working groups in Language (led by Sulochana Asirvatham) and Mythology (led by Victoria Larson) continued to meet and work on curriculum matters.

The Mythology working group was particularly productive, not only crafting the course mentioned above, but also planning out future courses which will be developed in the near future, such as a World Myth course.

The Language working group this year tackled our major 'one room schoolhouse' problem, that is, the tendency for students, after they have completed 3rd semester Latin (LATN 121), to go directly into a regular reading course. Unfortunately, this means that students of a wide variety of abilities are placed in the same advanced course, where some student really struggle – as do their teachers. We decided to revive Intermediate II (LATIN 132) for Fall 2008 and next year to write up a new, 200 level 'bridge' course, LATN 200 .

We have increasingly seen how the internet and learning management systems can provide new resources for learning as well as for student advising and program management. Thus Blackboard 'shell' courses were created (which continue semester to semester) to assist us in promoting programs and advising students. Accordingly, Jean Alvares, Chair and Acting Coordinator of General Humanities I and II, created these five Blackboard courses.

(1) CALA: Classics and Latin Advising. All majors and minors in Classics and Latin are enrolled into this BB site, where students can find various advising documents (including advertisements for upcoming courses) as well as a discussion board. We hope to add surveys soon.

(2) GHAA: General Humanities Advising. All majors in General Humanities are enrolled into this BB site, where students can find various advising documents (including advertisements for upcoming courses) as well as a discussion board. Here too we hope to add surveys soon.

(3) AMAP: ARCHAEOLOGY MINOR ADVISING PAGE. All Archaeology minors are enrolled into this BB site, where students can find various advising documents.

(4) LECC: LATIN EXERCISES AND DRILLS. For the past two years, Jean Alvares and Prudence Jones have been creating Latin Drills for Blackboard. This year, Jean Alvares created

this BB page into which all students can be enrolled and where there are now a considerable number of drills – and more to come.

(5) CGHXC: Classics and General Humanities Extra Credit. Jean Alvares has also created this BB site which students can join to view and do exercises on various units covering art and archaeology from the Neolithic to the latter half of the Roman Empire. Several full and part-time instructors have given students extra credit for completing these exercises.

C. New Program Implementation and Other Developments

LATIN MAT Following extensive discussions between MSU's arts and sciences teacher education programs and CEHS, resulting in a plan for a new MAT curriculum of 36 semester hours, the classical languages working group of the department agreed to pursue this coming fall the possibility of creating an MAT track in Latin. Unlike most other certifiable subject areas, Latin, which needs many new teachers each year in New Jersey, has never been included in MSU's MAT.

Archaeology Minor. From last year's initial meetings of the interdepartmental working Group (Anthropology, Classics and General Humanities, Art & Design, Earth and Environmental Studies) Archaeology curriculum working group, chaired by Timothy Renner, two new course proposals have resulted: GNHU/ARHS 313 Aegean Art & Archaeology, developed by Senta German, and a 300-400 level course in Geoarchaeology that is nearly at the final stage of development by Greg Pope of EES. Both courses have strong interdisciplinary qualities (it is hoped that Geoarchaeology can be listed under Anthropology as well) and will be good additions to the Archaeology Minor as well as to three or more major programs.

Our Department, working with Rita Jacobs, Bryan Murdock and Beverly Ververs, has intensified our efforts to encourage our majors to enroll in the Professional Semester. After a series of meetings, a new letter was written and sent out to our majors and materials on the Professional Semester were added to our advising pages

Finally, this year our Department completed and provided our assessment rubrics for our Majors in Classics, General Humanities and Latin to Dr. William Rosa.

III Programs, Projects and Special Events, Outreach.

On October 25 was held Classics Day, sponsored by the Institute for Humanities and the Department of Classics and General Humanities. This program gathered together nearly 500 New Jersey secondary school students with their teachers from all over the state, one of the biggest turnouts ever. Each student and teacher listened to two of the four presentations - -all which were very well received. All speakers were from our Department: (1) "The Authority of the Archetype. The Universal Significance of Myth" by Glen Gill (2) "What do you do with Dad when he's mad (or Mom when she's just plain Mean)?," by Susan Hussein; (3) "Roman Inscriptions and Roman Social History," by Tim Renner (4) "The Ancient World on the Big Screen. Hits and Misses," by Sulochana Asirvatham. These presentations were followed by the

usual written competitions in Roman History, Latin Language, and Mythology, which in turn were followed by an awards ceremony and a professional lunch for teachers.

In January 2006 our Department, in cooperation with the Institute for the Humanities, successfully put on a program “Troy and the Trojan War: Incorporating the Classics into the Middle School Curriculum.” This year we had two follow ups to that successful program.

First, was “Troy, Aeneas and Odysseus Revisited. Classics in the Middle School Curriculum. A workshop for Middle School Teachers, “ held on Friday, December 14. The presenters included from our Department Jay Braverman, Carol Kotch (also a teacher of Middle School at Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy), Patricia Salzman and Prudence Jones, plus Angelina Carione (Teacher of Reading and Writing at Cleary Middle School). Lectures covered the mythology of the Trojan war and its aftermath, the nature of the hero, some recent movies which covered these myths and ways these ancient and modern materials can be used in the middle-school classroom, how Greek and Roman myths can be used in courses designed to enhance critical thinking and language skills. There was also a segment of the workshop where teachers considered some practical ways of using these materials.

On April 18, 2008 Dr. Jean Alvares, Dr. Prudence Jones and Dr. Tim Renner (with considerable help from the IT department, especially Mr. Greene) conducted a ninety-minute video conference with middle school students at the Ranney school, Tinton Falls, New Jersey. The teachers there had been so impressed by the Troy and the Trojan war program of the previous year that they wished a version of that program be presented to their students at Ranney. Dr. Jones talked about the “The Hero and Epic” while Jean Alvares covered the rediscovery of Troy, the archaeology of Troy, and Troy’s relationship to the Hittites. While there were some technical difficulties make the program less than perfect success, the students at Ranney got a lot out of it. This experiment certainly showed the potential for new kinds of outreach programs which we might offer.

While the Institute for the Humanities is technically not part our Department, Dr. Tim Renner, Dr. Victoria Larson and Dr. Aditya Adarkar play a significant role in its various outstanding programs, all of which apply to the field of the Humanities. If you go to <http://chss2.montclair.edu/instituteforthehumanities>, you can obtain a fuller view of the excellent programs in the Humanities which many members of our faculty (both full and part time) have created and managed this past year and in the year prior to that.

Our Department also hosted a number of lectures and other programs.

(1) Andrew Szegedy-Maszak (Wesleyan University) “Nineteenth Century Travelers and Photographers and their visions of antiquity”. October 15.

(2) John Quinn (Hope College) “Juan Latino, From Slavery to Master of Arts,” February 13th.

(3) Laura Samporano, (Temple University), “Cicero’s Verrines. A New Man in Old Clothes.” April 8.

(4) Lecture and Presentation by Dr. Corey Brennan (Rutgers University) "The Peoples and Cultures of Italy Before Rome." Co-sponsored by the Coccia Institute and the Departments of Classics and General Humanities. Tuesday, April 29.

(5) The Department of Classics and General Humanities helped sponsor "An Evening of New Jersey Historical Archaeology. Tuesday, April 22, 6-8 PM. Lectures on the Joseph Bonaparte estate in New Jersey (Dr. Richard Veit) and on the archaeological background to the epoch of the "Gangs of New York" (Dr. Rebecca Yamin).

(6) The Department conducted a viewing of *Pan's Labyrinth* on Thursday, April 3rd, University Hall 1070, at 4 PM. A short discussion of the film and its mythology was also given by Dr. Patricia Salzman.

(7) The Classics Club and the Department of Classics sponsored a field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art Friday, April 4. This was lead by Dr. Prudence Jones, with help from Dr. Jean Alvares and Dr. Timothy Renner. It should be noted how this field trip was part of Dr. Jones's work to help revive the Classics honor society, Eta Sigma Phi, for whom she is advisor.

In 2007-2008 we continued our series of Archaeological Institute of America (Northern New Jersey Society) Lectures

- October 11th, Salima Ikram (American University in Cairo) "Ancient Egyptian Mummies."
- November 6th, Kathleen Lynch (University of Cincinnati) "Sex Sells but Who's Buying? Erotic Imagery on Attic Vases."
- December 5th, Christopher Matthews (Hofstra University) "The Archaeology of Slavery and Freedom in Early New York."
- February 21st, Alan Shapiro (Dept. of Classics, Johns Hopkins University) "The Athenian Akropolis: A Vase-Painter's Perspective"
- March 25th, Ellen Belcher (Dept. of Art & Archaeology, Columbia University), "Death and Life in Anatolia: The Prehistoric Settlement of Domuztepe."
- April 14th, Paula Kay Lazrus (Dept. of History, St. John's University), "Power and Land-use in a South Calabrian Municipality during the Napoleonic Era."

Dr. Aditya Adarkar, with David Benfield of Philosophy/Religion, put on a seminar "The Risks and Rewards of the Socratic Method," for the Provost's Series on University Teaching and Learning, Research Academy for University Learning, December 2007.

Dr. Aditya Adarkar, with David Kaiser, spoke on "Global Civics and Compassionate Stewardship" as part of "Intimate Practices: Civic Engagement and the Public Purposes of

Education in a Democracy." at a panel of the American Educational Research Association Conference, New York, March 2008.

B. Off-Campus Outreach

On March 15th Montclair State University hosted the Spring meeting of the New Jersey Classical Association. Jean Alvares gave a lecture entitled "Catullus 65; Initiation and Apocalypse."

On November 2, 2007 Prudence Jones gave a lecture in Austin, Texas for the Texas Classical Association on "Dido and Cleopatra: Invention and Reception."

IV. Other Items of Interest.

At the January 2008 Meeting of the American Philological Association, Dr. Mary English received the 2007 Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Classics. See <http://www.apaclassics.org/education/awards/etca2007.html>

Dr. Aditya Adarkar completed his term as MSU's Faculty representative to the board of trustees.