

LA/W/S

LA/W/S WELCOMES NEW PROFESSOR

FALL/WINTER 2009-10

Written by: Ashley Michini

Here at the University, students are lucky enough to be taught by a multitude of teachers from various nations. They bring their cultures to the classroom. This year, the World Languages and Cultures department welcomed a new professor, Yamile Silva. Professor Silva, originally from Bogotá, Colombia, has studied in a wide variety of locations before finding her way here to Scranton. As an undergraduate, she studied Latin American Literature with a minor in Linguistics at La Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá. After graduation, she spent a year in Spain at La Universidad de Oviedo. She then studied in the United States, and obtained a Master's Degree from The University of Massachusetts. Her main area of study was Hispanic literature and culture with focuses on colonial literature and women writers. Professionally, Professor Silva has been teaching for quite a while, "I really love to teach," she explained. She has been a TA in Bogotá, as well as at the University of Massachusetts. She was also a professor at Colby College, a small, liberal arts institution in Maine.

Yamile Silva's other passion is research. Research first sparked her interest during her undergraduate education where she served as a research assistant. She studied a Colombian woman writer of whom little information was known. "I was passionate about reading the archives," she said. During her second year of college, she had a woman mentor, Monserrat Ordoñez, who started Women's Studies at her university and influenced her very much. "The department in which I was studying had excellent classes, but they were all about men..." She continued: "[My mentor] had

to work really hard to get her classes." In her time at U Mass, one of her professors, Nina Scott, began studying Latin American women. "Her work as well as her classes always kept me focused. [She challenged] the students to keep doing research. It's only way to keep it in the public," she stated.

Presently, Professor Silva is completing her PhD. Her dissertation analysis focuses letters from women during the colonial period in Latin America, specifically in the region of El Río de la Plata--part of present day Argentina and Uruguay. "These kinds of readings changed my life," she said. Women, in those times, were confined. They were not allowed in certain parts of the house, the public space, because of their gender. "With the letters we can understand how women determined their particular space," she noted. Most letters come from Mexico and Argentina, so in the future, Professor Silva wants "to do more research in places like Lima and Bogotá to get a thorough understanding of what was happening." She intends to compare and contrast them to see how women's roles in each country were different.

Fittingly, she is very interested in women's issues. She explained that gender roles in Latin America are more a part of the culture than we realize. "Being at the university," she elaborated, "My mind began to ask, 'How good can a society be where women have certain roles as a mother, daughter or wife?'" Professor Silva is the first woman in her family to finish university.

Professor Silva will serve both as a Women's Studies and Latin American



Studies Faculty member. She specifically chose Scranton because of the overlapping connection between Latin American Studies and Women's studies. "It was amazing for me to have the opportunity to teach what I've been studying." She continued, "It is great to study with people from other departments who share the same passion on women's issues." She is currently teaching Spanish Conversation as well as a class called "Imagine America." In this class, students examine works by explorers such as Christopher Columbus and Hernán Cortés to see how they exaggerated the New World in order to gain financial support from their home countries. Soon she will be offering a course called "Women and Nations," which will investigate books written by women in which they define how nations should be. She also hopes to have a class solely about her research to give a different perspective on the colonial era. With her expertise in Latin American culture, global women's issues and linguistics, Yamile Silva is an excellent addition to the faculty.

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES NEWS

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES INSTRUCTIONAL FILM SERIES

Written by: Timothy O'Connor

The Latin American Studies Concentration showed four films during Spring 2009 as part of its instructional film series. These films were organized in order to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the deaths of six Jesuits and their housekeepers in El Salvador in 1989, an event that helped many Americans come to grips with the reality of the bloody civil war that ravaged that country during the 1980s and 90s. All movies began at 7:30 PM and were shown in Brennan 228. The first movie, titled "Enemies of War," documented the murder of the six Jesuits and their two housekeepers, and highlighted Congressman Moakley's tremendous efforts to determine the culpability of El Salvador's military and political establishment. The second movie, "Romero," examined the life and death of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero (1917-1980). Murdered while celebrating mass,

he had originally been supported by El Salvador's accommodated classes but then became their enemy when he called for an end to the violence and poverty that gripped the nation and devastated its poorer members. The third movie, "Roses of December," focused on the murders of lay missionary Jean Donovan and three Maryknoll nuns. The movie paid particular attention to why Donovan decided to stay in El Salvador despite the violence visited upon members of other religious groups and obvious risks to her own life. The fourth and final movie, "Salvador," provided a semi-biographical account of Richard Boyle, a photojournalist who traveled to the front lines of the civil war in order to better inform the U.S. public.



LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS: SPRING 2010

PORT 210- Intensive Intermediate Portuguese, Linda Ledford-Miller
MTWR, 9:00-9:50, (CF,D) 4.5 credits
Prerequisite: PORT 110 or equivalent

HIST 126- Modern Latin American History, Lee M. Penyak
TR 10:00-11:15, (CH, D) 3 credits

HIST 215- Church and Society in Latin America, Lee M. Penyak
TR 2:30-3:45, (CH,D) 3 credits
Prerequisite: One of the following – HIST 125, HIST 126, PS 219, SPAN 314, PHIL 242

PHIL 242- Latin American Thought, Kevin M. Nordberg
MWF 2:00-2:50, (P,D) 3 Credits

PS 333- United States-Latin American Relations, Michael E. Allison
1:00-2:15, 3 credits

SPAN 314- Topics in Latin American Culture & Civilization, Yamile Silva
MW 3:00-4:15, (D, W) 3 credits
Pre-requisite: SPAN 311-312 or equivalent

SPAN 319- Business Spanish, Jaime Meilan Del Rio
MW 5:00-6:15
Prerequisites: SPAN 311-312 or equivalent

SPAN 384- Hispanic Detective Fiction, Linda Ledford-Miller
TR 10-11:15
Prerequisites: SPAN 320 or consent of the instructor

WANT MORE INFO?

Interested in obtaining a
Concentration in Latin
American Studies?

Have Questions about the
requirements?

Contact:

Dr. Lee M. Penyak,
Director of Latin American Studies
St. Thomas Hall, Rm. 252
Latamstudies@scranton.edu
Tel: 570.941.4369

Office Hours:

Wed. 2:30 - 4:30

Thurs. 1:30 - 2:30

WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

NEW COORDINATOR AT THE JANE KOPAS WOMEN'S CENTER

Written by: Ashley Michini

The start of the 2009/2010 school year brought many changes to the University; among these changes was Hope E. Smith taking the position as the new Program Coordinator at the Jane Kopas Women's Center. Hope attained a Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Women's Studies from East Stroudsburg University. She then earned a Master of Social Work (MSW) from Marywood University. Professionally, prior to her obtaining her new position here, Hope worked as a counselor at the Domestic Violence Service Center, Luzerne County, and coordinated fundraising, volunteers and blood services for the American Red Cross of Monroe County. She also has been the editor of a community newspaper for 7 years.

Hope has been highly involved in community activism for years, and continues to be. She started a Candlelight Vigil in Carbon County and a Clothesline Project in her community. Currently, she also is working with the West End Community Alliance which she describes as "community activism at its best--dealing with community issues on a macro level." She also has coached youth basketball for the last ten years! Hope feels strongly that her professional and volunteer work tend to come together to form a greater whole based on who she is as a person. "Every experience in life moves us forward to our next opportunity," she explained.

When asked how she felt about the word feminism, Hope lightheartedly responded, "I love the 'F' word." She feels her life experiences as well as the experiences of others first inspired her to get involved in Women's Studies. Hope understood early on that in her cause, not only activism but also education was needed to move forward. She elaborated, "I realized that in order to make a difference, I had to immerse myself in the history and education and not solely the emotional aspect of the movement." Hope quoted bell hooks to define feminism- "Feminism is a movement to end sexist oppression." "It's as easy as it gets," she explained. "It's easy for people to understand and it sums up the work that we do."

The woman who has influenced her most in life is her mother. Hope is one of seven children, and a first generation high school and college graduate. After her parents divorced, her mother raised them on her own. Reflecting on her mother's impact, Hope stated, "My mother really promoted education... She pushed us all to advance in life... More than anything, I admire her strength and courage to get through everything she got through."

Hope could not decide on a favorite feminist; she mentioned a few notable individuals. One was Jane Addams who is not typically identified as a feminist, but was a founder of the US Settlement House Movement. She further commented, "[Addams] was someone of privilege, but she recognized that people were being oppressed and she worked to change that." Hope also mentioned Rebecca Walker, bell hooks, Bella Abzug and Ellie Smeal, elaborating that though Smeal may not be as well known as the others, she continues to do great things within the women's movement.

There were many factors that guided Hope to the University. She was a work-study student in a women's center during her college years. Her mentor, the director of East Stroudsburg's Women's Center, initially told her about the position. Throughout the year, she plans on adding to the great programs the center has already established. "The students' passions will guide the direction of programming" Hope explained.

Very fittingly to match her upbeat, fiery personality, her favorite color is red. She is very passionate. Hope is a vivacious individual with a diverse background. She will be an excellent asset to the both Women's Center, and the University of Scranton as a whole. Feel free to stop in the Women's Center, DeNaples 205.

WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

Intersession 2010:

NURS 111 Women's Health, Farrell, web-based (D)

Spring 2010:

ENLT 225- Writing Women, S. Whittaker
MWF 10:00 (CL, D, W)

ENLT 260- Women of Color: Literature & Theory, S. Mendez
TR 4:00, (CL, D), 3 credits

ENLT 284- Femmes Fatales, Rojas
TR 1:00, 3 credits

HIST 239- History of American Women II, S. Poulson
TR 10:00, (CH, D), 3 credits

ITAL 221- E/F Italian Women's Writing, V. Picchiatti
MWF 2:00, (CL, D, W), 3 credits

SOC 220 Social Stratification, M. Rich
MW 3:00, (D, S), 3 credits

SOC 315 Feminism and Social Change, E. Randol
W 5-7:40, 3 credits

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
DR. MEAGHER, DIRECTOR,
WSTUDIES@SCRANTON.EDU**

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LA/W/S

LA/W/S is the newest academic department at the University of Scranton, The Department of Latin American Studies and Women's Studies. The new department houses the University's two largest multi-/inter-disciplinary programs, Latin American Studies and Women's Studies. Each program runs independently but with a common administrative structure. As a department, it is now possible for us to develop two new majors—one in women's studies and one in Latin American Studies. Both major proposals are undergoing the curricular review this year and should be offered in Fall 2010. Be on the look out for more exciting developments this year...

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- For more info about Professor Silva's research, contact her at silvay2@scranton.edu
- To volunteer at the Jane Kopas Women's Center stop in DeNaples 206J or contact Hope Smith at hope.smith@scranton.edu.
 - Have ideas, or are interested in submitting an article for the next newsletter?
Contact the editor, Ashley Michini, at michinia2@scranton.edu.

LA/W/S Department, St. Thomas 560, 570-941-7634, Mary Rafter, secretary

Chair: Dr. Sharon Meagher, meaghers1@scranton.edu. St. Thomas 552. 570-942-4075.
Fall office hours: T-Th 2-2:30 and 4-5 and by appointment.