

# APUNTES

DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

## NEW COLLABORATION WITH BRAZILIAN INSTITUTIONS

*By Susana Antunes and Allison Libbey*

On November 2, 2023, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, in collaboration with the College of Letters and Sciences, had the pleasure of welcoming the Vice-Rector of Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) in Brazil, Dr. Camila Ítavo, and the Director of the Innovation and Internationalization Agency (AGINOVA/UGMS), Dr. Saulo Moreira, to celebrate the memorandum of intent for interinstitutional and scientific collaboration between the two institutions.

The Vice-Rector Camila Ítavo and Director Saulo Moreira gave a very engaging presentation on Mato Grosso do Sul's history, localization, and biomes. Also, they emphasized UFMS strategic projects such as education and digital inclusion connecting with indigenous villages, culture, art and economy through ceramics and the stimulation of the Kadiweu community and culture in Mato Grosso do Sul, bioeconomy, and advances in energy transition. The UFMS science complex includes the Archeology Museum, the Science House, the Museum of Science and Technology, and the Science Park Morenão Recreational Esplanade.

This memorandum presents the following potential types of collaboration:

- Joint research activities
- Joint educational activities
- Faculty exchanges for purposes of research, lectures, or symposia
- Student exchanges for purposes of study or research

Opportunities are open to all students and faculty members. You can find out more information about UFMS here: [Institutional video - UFMS - English version](#).



Director Saul Moreira, Associate Professor Susana Antunes, Associate Director for International Partnerships and Market Development Tracy Buss, Associate Dean Jason Puskar, Dean Scott Gronert, Vice-Rector Camila Ítavo, and the Spanish and Portuguese Chair Kathleen Wheatley (from left).



Visiting CLACS. Director Saul Moreira, Associate Professor Susana Antunes, CLACS Associate Director Julie Kline, and Vice-Rector Camila Ítavo (from left).

# THE HUMANITIES AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES: COLLABORATION, OPPORTUNITIES, AND EMERGING FRONTIERS

By M. Estrella Sotomayor

A recent publication in the Modern Language Association (MLA) Newsletter underscores the importance for collaboration between the Humanities and the Natural Sciences. Interdisciplinary work, while not novel, has faced resistance in certain academic domains. However, it is perhaps the advancements in technology that prompt associations like the MLA to emphasize the significance of interdisciplinarity in the 21st Century. Undeniably, such endeavors demand creativity and additional effort from different fields to discover common ground. The space for creativity and the accompanying challenges have captivated M. Estrella Sotomayor, a Senior Faculty member in the Spanish Department, prompting her to merge her passion for language teaching with her interest in science. This journey has led her to collaborate with colleagues in Atmospheric Sciences and the School of Nursing.



During the Winterim of 2023, Sotomayor co-led a program, "Mexico - Air Pollution and Ancient Cultures," with Professor Jon Kahl. This study abroad initiative, initiated by Prof. Kahl 11 years ago, entails a two-week exploration of five regions in southern Mexico. Students not only visit archaeological sites to study the impact of acid rain on cultural heritage but also engage in museum visits and various activities at different universities. Although not a language program per se, students are immersed in the language and culture of the country. In Papantla, María, a student of Mexican descent shared with Sotomayor that exploring different parts of Mexico and learning about its rich culture and history deepened her appreciation for her own culture. María enrolled in a Spanish course during the Spring semester and plans to complete a minor before graduation.

Another noteworthy interdisciplinary collaboration is a pilot project between Sotomayor and Jessica Rotier, the Director of the School of Nursing Ziemer Clinical Simulation Center. During part of the summer, they devised a plan for students from both disciplines to address cultural aspects enhancing diversity and inclusion in the Nursing curriculum. Students in Spanish 388: Health Issues in the Hispanic World, part of the Certificate in Spanish for Health Professionals, act as "cultural consultants" to Nursing students during the semester, fostering equity and inclusion through active interaction between students from diverse disciplines. This collaboration places students at the core of the learning experience, creating active roles in their educational journey. For Nursing students, the simulation lab is where they practice life-saving skills, while Spanish certificate students share cultural knowledge gained in their Spanish courses. Sponsored by the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, this project exemplifies the potential of interdisciplinary collaboration.



The possibilities of interdisciplinary work between languages and other fields are boundless. Such collaboration not only broadens the research interests of educators but also provides students with opportunities to develop skills that will open doors in their future careers.

# PORTUGUESE PROGRAM NEWS

By Susana Antunes and Allison Libbey

## Interaction with students from UFMS (Brazil) and UW-Milwaukee

During the fall semester, Port 203 and 310 students had the opportunity to interact with students from the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (Brazil) from October 10th to November 7th, for a total of 6 hours through ZOOM videoconferences. During the sessions, students practiced Portuguese in a real context and collaborated in the English learning process with their Brazilian partners. This interaction had 2 different perspectives: Port 203 students interacted according to the topics learned in class and Port 310 students had the opportunity to listen each session to a short presentation (10-15 minutes) from a Professor from a Brazilian university about the following topics:

- Human rights and Environmental questions
- Human rights and Racial questions
- Domestic violence
- Digital influencers and consumer law
- Trans language

The total number of participants involved in this interaction was 60 people (students and professors). All the students who participated in the project received a certificate from the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. This interaction was the first step to move forward in the direction to the memorandum between UFMS and UW-Milwaukee.

## Clube Lusófono Fall 2023

We held five different sessions of Clube Lusófono this semester, which were attended by PORT 360 students as well as other members of the UWM and Milwaukee communities. Here are some students' reactions to what they learned in several of the sessions.



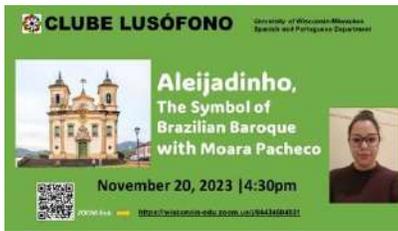
The presentation of Goa was my favorite, presented by one of my favorite professors that I had the privilege to actually have as a professor for one of my Spanish classes. Portugal is usually shadowed by Spain in terms of exploration, but it was nice to get insight about how the Portuguese also had their hand in the innovations of naval exploration and technology. For example, Alfonso de Albuquerque who took over Goa in 1510, who was particularly intelligent in these kinds of navigations. We also see a lot of influence from Indian culture years shortly preceding 1492.

Gema Makeizie Garcia-Paez, Port 360

I thought it was really interesting having a guest presenter, Simone Ferro, discuss Bumba Meu Boi with our class. We looked at many different performing groups with different standards. There were differences noted in who was eligible to participate, how much practice would go into it, and how serious the event was. No matter the differences, the performers were always very committed and excited to express themselves and their culture through that form of art.

Jessica Rieder, Port 360





Moara Pacheco was incredibly knowledgeable about Aleijadinho. Her presentation "Aleijadinho, The Symbol of Brazilian Baroque" was incredibly captivating to the audience, and she answered our questions with ease. Her cultural and professional knowledge about the topic was apparent. It was a very in-depth, and well-rounded presentation overall.

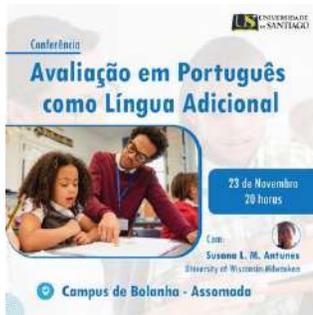
Sophia Kvalheim, Port 360

### Bate-Papo Fall 2023

Bate-Papo returned this semester! We had 3 exciting sessions (September, October, and November) with Portuguese students, Brazilian students at UW-Milwaukee, and community members. Also, we had music with Dare Bisquerra and the delicious Brazilian pão de queijo made by Sara Villanova. Terrific! Thank you so much to Alberto Maldonado, the Director of the Roberto Hernandez Center (RHC) for offering that space for us to meet.



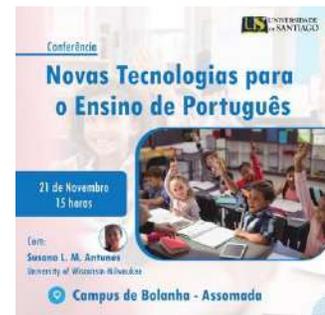
## FACULTY AND STAFF



**Susana L. M. Antunes** gave an online talk for Master students at the University of Santiago, Cape Verde on the creative writing in Portuguese classes focusing on *O Canto do Mar* in May. In June she co-organized with Professor Ida Alves (Federal University Fluminense, Brazil) the volume 28 of *Gragatoá on Literature, nature, and ethical commitment: Ecocritical views*.

<https://periodicos.uff.br/gragoata/issue/view/2813> and also presented at The Lusophone World and its Diasporas International Conference, York University, Toronto, Canada, on "A arte da palavra em movimento na poesia de Olga Cabral." She attended a

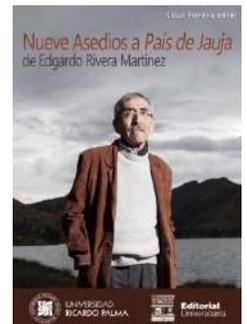
3-week workshop in July on the teaching of Portuguese as L2, provided by the International Society of Portuguese as a Second Language, Brazil. During the fall semester, she presented at the II Atlantic Conference History, Culture and Heritage: Body, Technology and Time on "A trilogia corpo-sonho-tempo em *Oníricas*, de Ana Marques Gastão"; at the 38<sup>th</sup> Lusophony Colloquium, Azores, on "Um punhado de areia nas mãos, de Maria João Ruivo"; at SAMLA conference on "A língua, essa coisa esguia...": a reconstrução da memória linguística em Odete Costa Semedo"; at the IV Jornada Saramago Vive: A arte de romper o véu, on "Poesia e humanidade: interlocuções entre Jorge de Sena e José Saramago"; at the VI International



Macaronesia Poetry Meeting (Cape Verde University, Praia) on “Poesia e música: compromisso social”; and at the International Seminary FAUBAI on “UFMS e UW-MILWAUKEE: Interação linguístico-cultural inclusiva”. Additionally, she gave 2 conferences at the University of Santiago (Assomada, Cape Verde) on “Novas Tecnologias para o Ensino de Português” and “Avaliação em português como língua adicional”. She also gave the closing conference speech at the IV International Conference on African, Ibero-American and Caribbean Literatures and Cultures on “Pedro da Silveira e Corsino Fortes: o mundo unido por ilhas”.

Prof. **Nancy Bird-Soto** published the article: "Un nuevo pacto: 'Soñarán en el jardín' de Gabriela Damián Miravete" (*Polifonía* XIII, Issue I, Fall 2023; pp.110-124) <[https://www.apsu.edu/polifonia/volume\\_13/2023-7-BIRD-SOTO.pdf](https://www.apsu.edu/polifonia/volume_13/2023-7-BIRD-SOTO.pdf)>. Her reflective essay "Alquimia liminal" is featured in the Fall 2023 issue of *LACIS Review* ([lacisreview.org](http://lacisreview.org)). She presented the paper "Emilia Casanova: Transnational Cuban Feminist" at the Calibanías & Caribeñidades Conference at Marquette University on October 6, 2023. Currently, Prof. Bird-Soto is a 2023-2024 CLACS fellow.

Dr. **César Ferreira** was invited to speak at the “Biblioteca Almudena Grandes” in Mejorada del Campo (Madrid) on “Manuel Scorza: vida y obra” in October 2023. He published the edited volume *Nueve asedios a País de Jauja de Edgardo Rivera Martínez*, Lima: Universidad Ricardo Palma, 2023; the article “Perfil y palabra de Manuel Scorza,” *Quipu Virtual-Boletín de Cultura Peruana-Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Perú*, No. 187, 1o. de diciembre de 2023: 1-3, and two book reviews: Gustavo Rodríguez, “Cien cuyes.” *World Literature. Today* Vol 97. No 6 (November-December 2023): 77; and José María Arguedas, “Los ríos profundos-Edición Conmemorativa”, *Latin American Literature Today* Vol. 1 No. 27 (September 2023).



Prof **John McCaw** presented his paper "Dishing out Culture: Staging Food and Farce in Early Modern Spanish Theater" at the Mediterranean Studies Association Conference in Brno, Czech Republic.

Professor **Gabriel Rei-Doval** was invited by Florida International University to deliver “[Galician Studies in the US with a Cuban influence](#)” within the Colloquium *From Havana to New York: the Footprints of Galicianness* (Miami, June 8 2023). He also presented in the 4<sup>th</sup> North American Symposium of Galician Studies the paper “[Viaxes sen Lee, unha síntese ciberliteraria galego-americana](#)” (Texas Tech University, Lubbock, October 20, 2023). Similarly, he was invited to present “[A avaliación do contacto lingüístico galego-castelán de arriba-abaxo e de abaixo-arriba: un contraste necesario](#)” at the [ILG Symposium 2023. Language Contact: Linguistic Identities and Ideologies](#) (Santiago de Compostela, November 28, 2023). In the field of creative writing, his book *Cartas de Marco Polo e outros relatos* (Ferrol: Embora Edicións, 2024) is now under contract. In this same field, he has recently published the following articles: [California en carne viva](#) (April 30, 2023), [O acordar de Eureka](#) (May 13, 2023), [Mind Surfing](#) (July 31, 2023), [Mercaderes e traficantes](#) (September 2, 2023), and [Isis dos ollos grandes](#) (October 20, 2023); Galicia Confidencial has also acknowledged his contribution to Galician travel writing literature on [Cartas de Marco Polo e Viaxes sen Lee, un xeito de reinventar a literatura de viaxes en galego](#). The travel writing volume [Vivir para viaxar](#) (June 2023), edited by the Guitiriz High School has included an interview with Professor Rei-Doval, as well as his article [O camiño da liberdade](#) on pages 182-90, and different book clubs in Galicia have been following and discussing his [Viaxes sen Lee](#).

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

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From Kathy Wheatley  
Chair, Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
December, 2023

Dear friends and colleagues,

This semester we welcomed five new graduate student teaching assistants (TAs) to our Spanish MA and MALLT programs from four continents. Cemy Bae Lee from Chile, Endika Merketegi Iztueta from el País Vasco in Spain, Abdud-Nasir Habib from Ghana, Sara Milia, a Shorewood high school Spanish teacher who decided to return to graduate studies, and Ryan Ammerman, who graduated from UWM with a major in Spanish and a minor in Portuguese. Daisey Velázquez, a full-time MPS teacher, is also working towards her Spanish MA degree. All the TAs are teaching Spanish except for Ryan, who will once again teach Portuguese 202 (Portuguese for Spanish speakers) online in the spring semester. If you are interested in taking this class, please let me know and I will share more information with you.

I would like to congratulate Allison Libbey, who has been selected into the inaugural cohort for the 2024 UWM Educators Institute, and Michele Haeberlin, who received this year's Graduate Teaching Assistant Award. ¡Enhorabuena!

As in previous newsletters, I would like to send out a request to alumni to send me your post-graduation activities so that I can share this information in future editions of *Apuntes*. However, this semester I have to share some very sad news about one of our alumni, Sara Bachleitner, who passed away on July 28th. Sara graduated from UWM with a BA in Spanish in 2006 and later returned to complete a Master of Arts in Spanish in 2012. While completing her MA degree, she worked as a TA in Spanish and continued teaching in our program after she graduated. She was passionate about the Spanish language and its culture and loved to teach. She lived in Spain for six years while working as an English teacher and translator, and returned to Milwaukee, where her family lives. Sara had a vibrant and sparkling personality, and we will remember her joy and laughter with sadness in our hearts. If you knew Sara and would like to make a donation in her memory, her family recommended <http://namisoutheastwi.org/get-involved/donate/>.

Wishing you a happy new year, feliz año nuevo, feliz ano novo,  
Kathleen Wheatley  
Chair, Department of Spanish and Portuguese  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee