

## Spring 2025 Newsletter



Dear Alumni and Friends,



I hope this newsletter finds you well and you are staying warm in this cold winter weather!

Now that the spring semester has begun, our Department would like to share some updates since it's been quite some time since our last

newsletter was issued. Being said, we are eagerly looking forward to the spring semester with optimism and excitement to continue to foster and cultivate enhanced linguistics-focused learning, knowledge, and research efforts. From our graduate student-led colloquiums featuring esteemed linguist scholars from across the country, to our annual Department Commencement ceremony in May (and all the many events in-between), we are hopeful the spring semester will provide many opportunities for continued collaboration, growth, revitalization, and achievement.

Although this newsletter only captures a few noteworthy happenings and accomplishments that have taken place within the last calendar year, we strongly encourage you to visit our [website](#) for a comprehensive listing of all news and announcements and stay tuned for future updates.

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the several faculty and staff members who have retired within this past year. This list includes **Dorit Kaufman**, professor and **Bob Hoberman**, professor (now a toll professor), and **Sandra Brennan**, assistant to the chair. Furthermore, **Mark Aronoff**, distinguished and Toll professor, and **Kevin Hughes**, visiting assistant professor, will conclude their term appointment at the end of this semester. We are immensely thankful to these individuals for their indelible contributions to our department.

Thank you for your interest in our area and best wishes for a successful spring!

Best,

Francisco Ordóñez  
Professor and Chair, Department of Linguistics

P.S. Thanks to our Assistant to the Chair, **Brian Frank**, for his assistance and effort in compiling and editing this newsletter.



# Department News and Happenings

## Linguistics Studies Continue to Expand Globally

Professor **John Frederick Bailyn** was awarded a two-year follow-up grant (2024-2026) by the U.S. Embassy Moscow Public Affairs Section in support of the long-standing summer school he co-directed in St. Petersburg, Russia from 2003-2019. More so, since 2020, it has held nine sessions as a live worldwide virtual Institute V-NYI (The Global NYI Institute of Cultural, Cognitive, and Linguistic Studies).

This grant will continue to support SBU faculty and allow graduate students to participate in NYI as instructors and TAs, as well as supporting Linguistics students from across the globe in participating in NYI's multi-faceted seminars.

V-NYI #10 will take place this summer from July 10-25, 2025, and will mark the 10th live virtual global NYI Institute and the 27th overall event. Many Department faculty members and students have benefitted from the dynamic programs it offers.

[Read More](#)



## Tactile Spectrograms Exhibits on Display in Main Office (S201)

Beginning this semester, our Department is proud to showcase a new exhibit of Tactile Spectrograms in our main office area. This display is designed to enrich the teaching of the acoustic properties of speech and make learning of this topic more accessible to those with visual disabilities.

The displays involve crafted spectrograms with different textures for different kinds of speech sounds (audio explanations are available). Those who are super ambitious can try to decode a mystery spectrogram to be entered in the running for a tactile spectrogram of their own!

The new exhibit, Tactile Spectrograms 2, was developed by undergraduate major **Tanisha Khan**, in collaboration with Professor **Marie Huffman**. We hope you will come visit the exhibit if you are in the SBS building – SBS S 201!



Marie Huffman



Tanisha Khan



## Undergraduate Student Spotlight

At last spring's Linguistics Commencement Ceremony, several undergraduate students received excellence awards for their outstanding academic achievement and Department service.

The following undergraduate students were recognized and named recipients of the Certificate of Excellence for Recognition of Outstanding Scholarship and Service:

- **Victoria Inks**  
BA Linguistics/Teacher Preparation in TESOL
- **Ian Kenworthy**  
BA Linguistics
- **Sophia Mastrangelo**  
BA Linguistics/Teacher Preparation in TESOL;  
Spanish Language & Literature
- **Nikhil Vohra**  
BS Physics/BA Linguistics

Congratulations on receiving these awards!



## Graduate Student Spotlight

### Congratulations to our recent graduate student awardees:

**Felix Fonseca-Quesada** (advisor: Lori Repetti) had his article *Substitution Patterns of the English Voiced Interdental Fricative by L1 Costa Rican Spanish Speakers* ranked as the top One Isogloss article for 2024. Isogloss is one of the premier journals in the field of Romance linguistics. Felix was also named a 2024 recipient of the Graduate School's President's Award for Excellence in Teaching by a Graduate Student.

[Read more](#)

**Michelle Mayro** (advisor: Jiwon Yun) was named a 2024 recipient of the Graduate School's Stony Brook Foundation Board of Trustees Dissertation Completion Endowed Fellowship.



## Faculty Spotlight

Congratulations to our faculty members on the following accomplishments:

Professor **Joy Janzen**, a senior lecturer in the Department, was recently named Professor of the Month by the SBU Graduate Arts & Sciences Magazine.

[Read more](#)

Distinguished Professor **Richard Larson** was elected as a 2023 Fellow of the American Association of the Advancement of Sciences (AAAS).

[Read more](#)



Jeffrey Heinz

**Jeffrey Heinz** received funding from the NSF beginning September 2024 for a project titled "Collaborative Research: Subregular Inference of Morpho-phonology." This project is a collaboration with professors Jane Chandlee (Haverford College) and Adam Jardine (Rutgers University).

[Read the abstract](#)

## Staff Spotlight

Congratulations to **Michelle Carbone**, graduate program coordinator, who was the recipient of a College of Arts and Sciences Staff Excellence Award in 2024! Michelle also received the 2023-24 SUNY Chancellor's Awards in Classified Service.



## Alumni Spotlight

We're proud of our SBU alumni who continue to put forth their contributions and efforts long after they graduated:

**Ji Yea Kim '22**, PhD, **Veronica Miatto '23**, PhD, **Andrija Petrovic '23**, PhD, in collaboration with Professor **Lori Repetti**, have edited and formatted a new book titled *Epenthesis and Beyond: Recent Approaches to Insertion in Phonology and its Interfaces*, which has been published through Language Science Press, an open access scholarly publisher.

[Read more](#)

**Poppy Slocum '16**, PhD, served as our alumni speaker at the 2024 Department of Linguistics Commencement Ceremony held on Friday, May 17, 2024 in the SB Union Ballroom. Poppy is currently an associate professor of communication studies at LaGuardia Community College.



Poppy Slocum

# Introducing New Faculty Members

## Ana Manas Lopez



**Ana Manas Lopez**, lecturer in the TESOL program, joined us in August 2024 as a full-time faculty member. She is a double alumna of SBU, having received a BA in linguistics (2015) and an MA in TESOL (2018). During her time as an SBU student, Ana became fascinated by the field of language acquisition, especially second language acquisition and bilingualism.

After graduating with her TESOL degree, Ana became an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher and worked directly with students of various levels within high-need school districts. For the last six years, Ana has worked with both newcomers and Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE), in a bilingual classroom setting, and special education ENL students in a self-contained classroom. She has also taught adult ENL to students at an alternative high school. Through her own experience as an ENL student and time in the classroom, Ana has grown extremely passionate about this field.

Ana spent the last three years teaching as a part-time instructor in the SBU TESOL program. Currently, she teaches two pedagogy courses in the program (Methods 1 and Methods 2) and other courses required for the program such as Bilingualism, TESOL and Technology, and a course on Assessments in TESOL. Her specific interests are focused on second language acquisition and literacy development, specializing on students with limited or no formal education.

Ana has implemented many firsthand strategies to help students build literacy all while continuing to monitor their growth and efficacy. Ana has additional experience in examining a variety of curricula focused on assessing, monitoring and teaching in the classroom; has developed and created her own unit plans, lesson plans and assessments to target all proficiencies and ability levels; and served as a textbook reviewer. Furthermore, she has facilitated and conducted multiple development workshops on these topics, attended numerous professional conferences, and has been trained by some of the most influential educators in the United States.

Ana is thrilled to be a part of our Department in a full-time role and looks forward to collaborating with her colleagues, peers, and students.

We would also like to extend a warm welcome to the following new part-time lecturers joining us this spring semester.

## Brynjar Leifsson, Part-Time Lecturer (SLN)

**Brynjar Leifsson** is delighted to join our Department as an adjunct professor of American Sign Languages (ASL). He attended Rochester Institute of Technology, National Institute for the Deaf and graduated with a BS in Applied Arts & Sciences, Multidisciplinary Studies and a MS in Secondary Education of Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. He currently is an ASL teacher at Smithtown High School. Brynjar has taught and instructed ASL in the Baldwin Union Free School District, Eastport-South Manor Central School District, St. Joseph's School for the Deaf, Austine School for the Deaf, and ASL Discoveries. He looks forward to becoming a part of the campus community.



## April Virga, Part-Time Lecturer (SLN)

**April Virga** is a new adjunct professor with Stony Brook this semester. She graduated with her master's in Teaching ASL at Northern Colorado University, where she was able to research language and resource disparities between hearing and Deaf, students and educators. April's past working experiences include ASL interpreting within educational, freelance and video relay services. She has a vast working history in educational fields with students ages 3-21, and recently started working in a Long Island public school teaching middle school ASL. April is most looking forward to opportunities to connect with students and staff and learn more about campus culture. As a language buff, she understands the importance of community and culture and is excited to convey this within her curriculum. April also looks forward to working with ASL students and seeing their language skills grow.



Both Brynjar and April will be instructing ASL courses this semester under the guidance of Professor **Jenny Singleton**, director of sign language studies (SLN).



Jenny Singleton

Every semester, our SLN courses generate much demand, interest, and popularity among students. In addition to an established group of part-time ASL instructors who work as educators and interpreters in the local area, we are very fortunate to have Professor **Rafie Legene** as a full-time lecturer for these courses. Rafie began his role as full-time lecturer in Fall



Rafie Legene

2023 and teaches sections of SLN 111, SLN 112, SLN 211, and SLN 212 at different intervals throughout the academic year.

We are happy to have you all on board!

## Support

Resources for faculty and students support and strengthen the educational experience. The Department of Linguistics depends on our alumni and friends to expand field opportunities for our students and provide seed money for senior honors theses and summer research experiences.

Your generosity, whether it's the renewal of your support or the decision to give for the first time, allows us to do what we do best – innovative, creative research and teaching that's the hallmark of a great public research university. I hope you'll consider investing in our faculty and students by making a gift today or speaking with **Brianna Goodfellow**, director of development, at [brianna.goodfellow@stonybrook.edu](mailto:brianna.goodfellow@stonybrook.edu) or (631) 632-4012.

