



# The Word on Language



**BGSU**

Language Learning Center  
Newsletter

Vol. 2 May 2004

Digital Language Learning **for** the next generation...

## Romance Languages to Begin Online Proficiency Testing

Beginning in the summer of 2004, the Romance Languages Department will begin online proficiency testing in the Language Learning Center. Initially, the department will be running the process on a trial basis, limiting their target audience to those students who will be taking Spanish classes in the Fall 2004 semester. The BGSU students will be using Brigham Young University's WebCAPE system. The "CAPE" stands for Computer-Adaptive Placement Exams. The students will log onto the system in either the CMC or LC sections of the Language Center, and complete the test. The BYU computer will then return an "ability estimate" to the department. The students will

then be informed of the results by their advisor, and which level of language classes—from 101 through 202, or 300-level classes—that the student should be enrolled in during the Fall 2004 Semester. The testing will be integrated into the new student orientation and/or open registration cycles. If the system passes its initial year of evaluation, Romance Languages will consider using the system for all of the languages that it instructs. German, Russian, East-Asian Languages will likely follow suit as the BYU system can evaluate all of the languages taught by the departments, as well as English as a Second Language. ♦

### FEATURES

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### LLC Improvements

- ♦ In order to improve the appearance of the LLC, and aid in the sound attenuation between the LC and CMC, the LLC has borrowed the sets of flags from both the German, Russian, East-Asian, and the Romance Languages Departments. The flags will only come down twice a year for special campus guest/visitor events.
  - ♦ The main Video Viewing Area now has DVD capability. By switching out the VCR deck from the VVA with the DVD/VCR deck in the Computerized Multimedia Classroom, both areas now have
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**LLC Spring Hours are: 8:30 – 5:30 Monday – Thursday  
8:30 – 3:00 Friday**

## ***Spanish to Implement Additional Contact Hour***

Beginning in the Fall 2004 Semester, BGSU students enrolled in Spanish 101-202 classes, will be given an additional “contact hour” per week. This change was initiated by Romance Language Department’s Spanish Section Committee, and was approved at the college dean and provost levels. The reasoning behind the increase was



**Flag display over the CMC.**

to underscore the amount of actual contact hours that the students receive in conversation, listening, and interaction exercises with Spanish-speaking faculty and Teaching Assistants. “It has been proven that an increase in the level of person-to-person contact

as part of a second-language-acquisition program, achieves significant, measurable improvements in the abilities, and scores of the students,” according to Chalupa. “Our goal is to elevate the standards, expectations, and competency levels of all of our 101-202 students across the board.” In lieu of having the Teaching Assistants, or faculty add this hour to their instructing load, the department decided to hire adjunct faculty to work only in the Language Learning Center. Currently 26 sections of Spanish 101-202 are planned for the Fall Semester. The adjunct faculty will be instructed on the CMC’s hardware and software by the LLC’s Coordinator, Dr. Ron Skulas, and will work in cooperation with the classroom instructors and their lesson plans. Discussion is currently underway as to whether the CMC hours will be spent as an extension of the classroom work, or will be used as a platform for cultural enrichment using Spanish-language-based instruction. Discussions are also taking place within the department’s Spanish section on  
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## **LLC Improvements**

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the capabilities to show DVDs, VCR tapes, and streaming video from WBGU’s SuperNet/Set top box connections, including German, Chinese, Japanese, and French television programs. Instructors may also bring their laptops into either of these areas, and connect them to the LCD projectors for special presentations.

◆The Listening Center will add another function to its many roles. Beginning in the Fall 2004 Semester, language students will be able to work on e-Portfolios in the LC. The e-Portfolio initiative of the Provost’s Office, gave rise to this change. Department Chairs from both the Romance Languages and German, Russian, & East-Asian Languages Departments supported this effort as a means for improving the professional resonance of the students’ work while at BGSU. This will necessitate opening the LLC’s server audio files to the Internet, via Blackboard.com course shells. Students will then be able to listen to the audio tracks on computers anywhere on campus. ◆

***Did you know that at one time there was only a single Foreign Language Department at BGSU?***



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**The addition of new technology allows instructors to convert records and tapes to CDs/DVDs.**

## LLC Website Undergoes Improvements

The Language Learning center has implemented several significant improvements since our last newsletter:

1. You can now access the LLC website using the URL [www.bgsu.edu/llc](http://www.bgsu.edu/llc). This is a much more efficient and speedier URL than the old [www.bgsu.edu/departments/greal/llc](http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/greal/llc). This "mask" was implemented by ITS at the LLC's request.



Students use the Macs in the LLC.

2. The website now sports a new button for "Admin Info." The page, complete with "quick links," details the hours, policies and procedures, and workshops available for the language faculty and students. The workshops are also available online of QuickTime Movies of the Keynote presentations given by the LLC, Dr. Skulas.

3. Another new button on the navigation bar is for "Resource Links." Dr. Skulas, and page master Sam Parks, combined to create a rather thorough listing of web resources for use by foreign language and ESL faculty and students. By virtue of the complex and fluid nature of the Internet, new links, or links not previously listed will constantly be found. A button on the page allows the finder of the new link to e-mail the LLC with a request for inclusion on the site. There is also a plan for a monthly review of the links listed to ensure that they are still "live" or if they have had "redirect" pages added.
4. Overview descriptions of the three LLC areas, the CMC, VVA, and LC, have been consolidated into a single button, with corresponding photo gallery links for each area.
5. A new color scheme has also been implemented for not only the site, but also the LLC's Newsletter, "The Word on Language," whose second edition is before you now. A "Google" Search Engine form has also been added, indexing both the BGSU site, and the

Internet as a whole.

6. The renovation photos have come off the front page and now have their own link on the navigation bar.
7. The LLC website is easier to find on the BGSU website. The site is now linked to the "Academics Special Programs" page, both GREAL and ROML Department sites, and the "Administrative/Support Offices and Sites."



Please visit [www.bgsu.edu/llc](http://www.bgsu.edu/llc) !!!

8. Finally, a special rotating photo album has been added to the LLC site pages congratulating the BGSU Falcons Football team for their 11-3 record, MAC West Division Championship, 23<sup>rd</sup> ranking in the nation, and 2003 Motor City Bowl Championship. ♦



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**The LLC has been visited by groups from Japan, Ukrania, Russia, Germany, and Austria.**

## ***LLCC Attends Foreign Language Technology Workshops***

The Language Center's Coordinator, Dr. Ron Skulas (BGSU '95), accepted an invitation to attend a Foreign Languages: Teaching with Technology Workshop, from 27-28 February, at Ohio University. The workshop was sponsored by Houghton Mifflin Company's foreign language instruction division. The weekend was held in partnership with ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of foreign Languages) and IALLT (International Association for Language Learning Technology). Dr. Skulas was the only non-foreign language faculty member in attendance, but his work with Bowling Green State University's language learning faculties, and his experience with design and operation of language training/instruction facilities made him an unplanned-for asset to the instructors—especially those unfamiliar with the Macintosh computers. "All of the instructor students had some really great ideas, but didn't really know how to implement them technology-wise. The workshop instructors, who were all foreign language instructors themselves, were great in how they opened doors for the faculty students," said Skulas. One of the best parts was the high amount of practical application and hands-on work that the instructor students were involved in during the workshops. (The workshops were designed and completed within the framework of the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning.) The assignment in particular was the creation of "TrackStar" websites.

*You can view the TrackStar asset sites that Dr. Skulas created during the workshops, and shortly thereafter, by going to: <http://Trackstar.hprtec.org/> and searching under the author's name "Skulas." A list of the three sites that Dr. Skulas created during and after the workshops include #196804, **Foreign Language: Teaching with Technology**, #195448, **German Media Resources**, and #196859, **Language-Specific Sites for Educators**. ♦*

## ***Spanish Program Adds Hour***

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the breadth and scope of what is to be taught, and how the technology of the CMC can best be used to support those efforts. At the end of the Fall Semester, the students, CMC instructors, and classroom faculty will be surveyed for input on the system. Corrections and adaptations, if required, will be implemented in the Spring 2005 Semester. A



second survey will be given at the end of the semester, and a grand review of the system will take place over the summer. If the system is deemed to be viable, the other Romance Languages will follow suit over the coming years. ♦