UMBC

TESOL PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Director's Note

We have continued to be challenged during the fall semester by COVID-19 and sociopolitical struggles. They have touched our TESOL community in multiple ways, personally and professionally. Susan Hade's article in this issue offers a powerful glimpse of the effects on P-12 teachers and schools. Each of our TESOL students, faculty, and alumni could tell similarly poignant stories of their tribulations. Yet alongside the turmoil we are all facing, there is also a strong current of perseverance. We see it in teachers like Susan who are pushing through the difficulties to serve the needs of English learners. We see it in our TESOL faculty members like Kara Silanskis, who writes about her use of new teaching technologies, and in our TESOL students like Eric Chen and Kenya Avalos, who write about navigating master's studies during the pandemic. We see it in the way our TESOL club has continued to maintain a sense of togetherness remotely.

Over the years, I have come to recognize that perseverance is among the most important qualities of a teacher. Even under the best of circumstances, ours is a profession in which we experience challenges daily and throughout our careers. Perhaps serendipitously, my first published poem, titled Perseverance, although written much earlier, appeared this year. Here are a few lines that for me resonate with 2020:

On my good days, I teach
On my bad days, I teach

When my students are inspired, I teach
When my students are tired, I teach

Francis M. Hult, PhD
Professor and Program Director
December 2020

In This Issue

With this issue, we bring you news from the Fall 2020 semester. Learn about faculty initiatives around educational technology locally and internationally. Hear from current students and an alumna about their experiences with teaching and learning during the pandemic. Read an overview of events and activities hosted virtually during the fall by the TESOL program and its student club. Find out about recent faculty and alumni accomplishments. Enjoy!

Upcoming Events

Understanding and Using K-12 English Language Proficiency Assessments to Promote Beneficial Outcomes for English Learners
Professional Development Webinar
Dr. Ahyoung Alicia Kim, WIDA, University of Wisconsin-Madison
February 25, 2021   Time: 4:30 - 5:30 pm

Virtual Yoga and Massage
Social Event
UMBC TESOL club
Sara Clement, UMBC
March 10, 2021   Time: 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Email TESOL@umbc.edu for the link

An Insider's Guide on Preparing a Competitive Public School Job Application
Professional Development Webinar
Charlene Durant and Nylca Vandillen, AACPS
March 30, 2021   Time: 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Email TESOL@umbc.edu for the link

An Intimate Conversation with Public School ESOL Teachers in Different Stages of their Careers
Professional Development Webinar
Joanne Amaro, Old Mill High School
Tema Encarnacion, Annapolis High School
Megan Scharmann, Long Reach High School
April 13, 2021   Time: 7:00-8:00 pm
Email TESOL@umbc.edu for the link

Tips on Taking the ESOL Praxis Exam
Professional Development Webinar
April 27, 2021   Time: 7:00-8:00 pm
Sarah Gawens, UMBC
BB Kim, UMBC
Email TESOL@umbc.edu for the link

End-of-the-Term Hangout
Social Event
UMBC TESOL club
Date and Time: TBD
Email TESOL@umbc.edu for the link

Application Deadlines

Summer Session
May 1 for domestic applicants only

Fall Semester
April 1 for international applicants
August 1 for domestic applicants

Spring Semester
November 1 for international applicants
January 1 for domestic applicants

We offer rolling admissions.
Applications are reviewed when they are complete.

TESOL club virtual meetup

Program Faculty and Staff

Francis M. Hult
Program Director

BB Kim
Newsletter Editor and Program Graduate Assistant

Sara Clement
Program Research Assistant

Lakisha Skinner
General Assistant

Summer and Fall 2020 TESOL Faculty
Cara Aaron; Jill Basye-Featherston, Christopher Browder; Renée Burgos, Colleen Grisham, Laura Hook, Jiyoon Lee, Sherry Lyons, Marybelle Marrero-Colón; Kati Milter, Shannon Sauro, Yuliya Schmaltz; Kara Silanskis, Brian Souders, Mary Tabaa, Ray Terhorst

Communicate, Collaborate, Connect

Kara Silanskis

Kara Silanskis

In November, UMBC took part in celebrating National Distance Learning Week (NDLW) by offering daily interactive webinars for our campus community. While this recognition of and appreciation for distance learning takes place every year, it seems especially pertinent this year. And for us in the education field, it's nearly all we can think about! That's why I jumped at the opportunity to be a guest presenter when asked by Peter Ariev of the Department of Information Technology.

I took part in the session "The 3 C's of Online Learning: Communicate, Collaborate, Connect," where I shared how I used VoiceThread to host a debate in EDUC 601 this semester. The idea for the debate was already in place by fellow instructor Cara Aaron. Knowing that everyone would have their fill of online classes this semester, I wanted to find a way to connect a bit more personally. Although I had never used VoiceThread as an instructor before, I thought it would be a good fit for a debate.

I paired up students and provided them with reading materials ahead of time. When the debate opened, each set of partners followed a timeline to take turns posting their side of the debate argument. While VoiceThread allows postings via text, voice, or video, I disabled the text option, as my goal was to encourage a more collaborative discussion between partners.

The results of the debate were pretty impressive! Students were able to communicate directly with each other, reference what their partner had said, and use research to make their own arguments. VoiceThread proved to be a great platform for this week-long asynchronous debate, as participants could return to their partner's arguments and relisten as they built their rebuttals. From my perspective, the interaction between the students increased, as hearing someone's voice brings a more personal touch than does reading words on a screen.

During my segment of the NDLW presentation, I shared my process, the successes, and challenges with other faculty members from across disciplines at UMBC. It was also a learning opportunity for me; thanks to fellow guest presenter, Carol Bogash of the Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Leadership Program, you can expect to see Jamboards in my EDUC 625 course next semester!

Bio
Kara Silanskis has been an adjunct faculty member with UMBC's TESOL program since 2016. Previously, she taught ESOL to children in Baltimore City Public Schools and to adults at surrounding community colleges. She is a graduate of the M.A. TESOL program and also holds a bachelor's degree in Modern Languages & Linguistics from UMBC. She enjoys hiking in Patapsco Valley State Park with her family and dog.
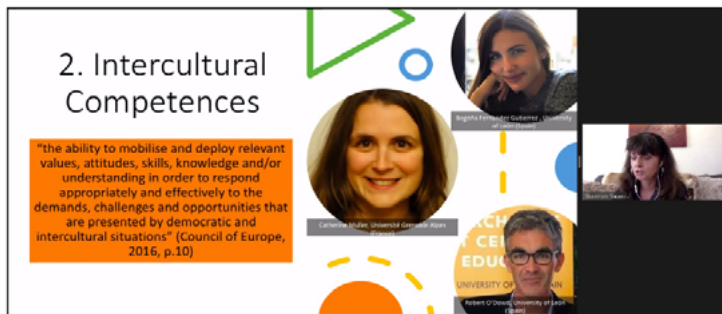
Student Learning Outcomes from the EVOLVE Project

BB Kim

The logo from this year's L2DL.

In October, TESOL faculty member Dr. Shannon Sauro gave a keynote talk at this year's L2DL (Second Language and Digital Literacy) Symposium, hosted by the Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language and Literacy (CERCLL) at the University of Arizona. Dr. Sauro's talk explored the results of the EVOLVE project, a multi-country grant funded by the Erasmus+ programme, which set out to investigate the impact of virtual exchange on higher education.

Virtual exchange, a well-established pedagogical approach that brings together classes (often from different countries) to engage in online communication and collaboration as part of their courses, has a long history in language education and has been increasingly embraced as a tool for supporting internationalization and global citizenship across all subject areas. In the TESOL program, Dr. Sauro has integrated virtual exchange into EDUC 670 (Theories of Language Learning in the ESOL Classroom), which brings together UMBC students with fellow English teacher education candidates at partner universities in other countries: for fall 2020, the partner classes are in Spain and Sweden, and in spring 2021 the partner classes will be in Israel and Sweden. In these virtual exchanges, students from three partner universities are organized into smaller transnational teams, 5-6 students from each university, to share perspectives on issues in teaching and to collaboration on the development of teaching materials that can be used in their various contexts.
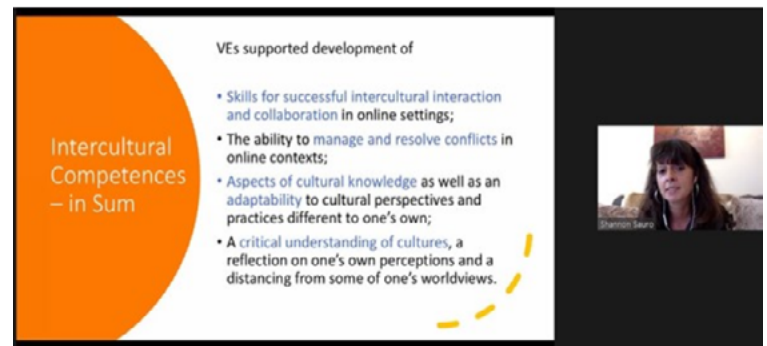
Dr. Sauro as keynote speaker at this year's L2DL

Dr. Sauro introduces student learning outcomes for intercultural competences investigated by the EVOLVE project.

The EVOLVE project results presented by Dr. Sauro looked at student learning as a result of virtual exchange in the following four areas: intercultural competence, critical digital literacy, language competence, and disciplinary skills. Findings were drawn from approximately 250 university students from 33 countries, who participated in 16 virtual exchange partnership between September 2019 and April 2020. Included in these partnerships were UMBC students enrolled in EDUC 670 last year.

The recording of Dr. Sauro's talk can be viewed on YouTube and the EVOLVE report will be available on the EVOLVE website from December 2020.

Perspective from a New Student

Interview by BB Kim with Eric Chen

Eric Chen

Despite the pandemic, Eric Chen started his first semester in the TESOL program this fall. We reached out to learn more about his experience.
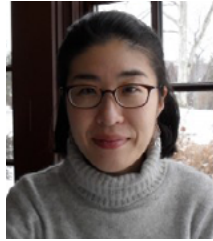
How was your semester? The courses at UMBC are interesting, taught at a lively pace, and the faculty are quite engaging, so I'm doing fairly well academically. It is nice not having to commute to campus and worry about parking permits this year.

What did you enjoy about the classes? What was challenging? I really enjoyed getting to know the phenomenal UMBC TESOL faculty who have done a fantastic job pivoting to an entirely online presence and many of the topics being addressed in coursework. I can definitely see why UMBC TESOL's program is so highly regarded! Starting from the mountain of helpful emails Dr. Hult sends daily and the very helpful TESOL faculty like Dr. Lee and Mary Tabaa, who answer questions when I'm not even one of their students!

Additionally, it can be surprising when random personal experiences become relevant in one's learning. In distant memory, (late 90's) I ran a (short-lived) TESOL website that became popular with an Israeli high school for a couple years. Like most teenagers, I didn't know what I was doing but I learned what mistakes not to make! When a faculty member asked what could be done to improve our virtual class, I went overboard and had emailed three pages worth of suggestions. Feeling sheepish, I checked in with the course instructor to apologize, only to discover he actually implemented all of my suggestions and wants me to look at his next semester's online course! That was electrifying. Thanks, Ray! There are many challenges, which everyone can relate to. Personally, I have four family members at critical risk, living independently, which requires a lot of juggling daily. Scholastically, well, I'm used to living with occasional low-tech fixes so being entirely tech dependent is still a curveball for me. A memorable challenge I had recently was trying to do tech support in Spanish of a Zoom problem while racing to Rockville.

What do you hope to get out of the program? I've always had a passion for equity and teaching and have professionally taught young children for a number of years. I believe that ESOL represents the new frontier for inclusion and equitable access for many reasons (including personal experience). My career has been progressing towards education management, which isn't something I actively value as the overwhelming focus of that field is liability/risk management and high stakes testing (as a vehicle for funding opportunities/measuring educational 'success') rather than equitable access or otherwise fixing deep rooted problems in US society. I hope to emerge from the program with a viable path to improve my teaching career without going to 'the dark side', that is, not sacrificing the classroom aspect of teaching.

You were active in the TESOL club. Tell us about your experience. The TESOL club virtual-meets are fun and informative about the TESOL program experiences and fostering a sense of community. I've also learned quite a few valuable tips and tricks from our resident gurus BB, Christina, Rida and Sarah. Of course, it's harder to connect with classmates virtually, but I've had some pleasant surprises. Like being able to connect with classmates around the world! I've always thought, that it would be very easy to connect with young digital natives as they have tech savvy skills and relatively few family/personal commitments, but I find that even they tend to communicate sporadically and informally as they grapple with defining their private/ professional boundaries amidst this unprecedented blurring. (Hang in there, you all are doing great!) It is older classmates who have rich life experiences, few tech skills, many family/personal commitments and very little time to themselves that are most appreciative of comradery, respectful of others' time, most supportive and express willingness to help. To them (and everyone else), I say give me a call, I'm always happy to hear from you. But please, no calls about how to fix Zoom in Spanish, while I'm driving.

TESOL Faculty Publications

Dr. Francis Hult

Dr. Jiyoon Lee

Dr. Shannon Sauro

Butler, Y.G., **Lee, J.**, & Peng, X. (2020). Failed policy attempts for measuring English speaking abilities in college entrance exams: Cases from China, Japan, and South Korea. *English Today.* doi:10.1017/S0266078420000346

Hult, F.M. (2020). Perseverance. *English in Education,* 54(4), 320. https://doi.org/10.1080/0425 0494.2019.1689790

Källkvist, M., & **Hult, F.M.** (2020). Multilingualism as problem or resource? Negotiating space for languages other than Swedish and English in university language planning. In M. Kuteeva, K. Kaufhold, & N. Hynninen (Eds.), *Language perceptions and practices in multilingual universities* (pp. 57-84). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi. org/10.1007/978-3-030-38755-6_3

Lee, J. (2020). Investigation of external and internal quality assurance strategies in online language teacher education. In H.S. Kang, D.S. Shin, & T. Cimasko (Eds.). *Online education for teachers of English as a global language.* Routledge.

Lee, J. (2020). You had better turn off the fan: Communicative competence in action. In L. J. Pentón Herrera & E. T.Trinh (Eds.), *Critical storytelling: Multilingual immigrants in the United States* (pp. 51-56). Sense Publishers.

Lee, J., & Butler, Y.G. (2020). Where are language learners? Reconceptualizing language assessment literacy, *TESOL Quarterly*,54(4). 1098-1111. https:// doi.org/10.1002/tesq.576

O'Dowd, R., **Sauro, S.**, & Spector-Cohen, E. (2020). The role of pedagogical mentoring in virtual exchange, *TESOL Quarterly,* 54(1), 146-172. doi:10.1002/tesq.543

Ou, W.A., Gu, M.M., & **Hult, F.M.** (2020). Translanguaging for intercultural communication in international higher education: Transcending English as a lingua franca. *International Journal of Multilingualism.* https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718. 2020.1856113

Sauro, S. (2020). Fan fiction and informal language learning. In M. Dressler & R.W. Sadler (Eds.), *The handbook of informal language learning* (pp. 139-151). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Sauro, S., Buendgens-Kosten, J., & Cornillie, F. (2020). Storytelling for the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals, 53*, 329–337. doi.10.1111/flan.12467

Sauro, S., & Thorne, S. L. (2020). Pedagogically mediating engagement in the wild: Trajectories of fandom-based curricular innovation. In V. Werner & F. Tegge (Eds.), *Pop Culture in Language Education* (pp. 228-239). Routledge.

Shelton, N., & **Lee, J.** (2020). Inviting multilingual children to use their languages as resources. In R. Meyer & K. Whitmore (Eds.), *Reclaiming literacies as meaning-making: manifestations of values, identities, relationships, and knowledge* (pp. 212-222). Routledge.

Tales from the Field

Phase I Internship Experience

Kenya Avalos

Doing Phase I of my internship during a pandemic has not been something I was prepared for. I remembered thinking of my internship and imagining meeting my students face to face in the classroom and worrying about how I would dress to look professional. When I found out my internship would happen online, I was fearful. It was something that no one had experienced before, and I was afraid that I was not going to be able to connect with the students through a computer screen. I feared that I was not going to be able to do the same things that I would normally do in a face to face situation.

I have to say that the experience has been one of a kind. The fears of not being able to connect with my students have slowly disappeared as I hear their shy voices call my name behind the blinking bubble on the screen. I have loved to be able to get a glimpse of their smiling faces when they finally decide to open their cameras. Those interactions are the ones that have made this experience so much sweeter. The dress code has stayed the same with the only difference that I can wear slippers and comfy socks while teaching.

One of the challenges of this online learning experience has been having to be on the computer for long periods of time. On the other hand, the benefits have been much greater. I have noticed that virtual learning has brought teachers together. I

Kenya Avalos

have had the opportunity to attend planning sessions between teachers who teach the same course in different schools, and I have noticed that this makes the teaching material much more vibrant and unique. Teachers have also created spaces online where they can share how they are feeling and brainstorm ways to help their students. I have seen students take ownership of their learning and look for help from the school staff.

I was lucky to be paired with the most amazing mentor teacher in Howard County, but I have heard my classmates say the same thing about their mentor teachers, so I assume all of them are wonderful. From my mentor, I have learned that teaching is not only a profession but a way of life. She has shown me what love and compassion are and I feel extremely lucky to be learning from someone like her. With this being said, I encourage those of you who will be starting your Phase I internship in the fall to not be afraid but instead to enjoy the beautiful ride of virtual teaching. I am sure that each one of you will find that one thing that makes your day bright and that you will be paired with a mentor who will give you the tools you need to continue growing into the role of an ESOL teacher. I will leave you with this quote by the Spanish poet Salvador Dali: "A true artist is not one who is inspired but one who inspires others."

Narrative of Online Teaching

Susan Hade, M.A. TESOL '18

Susan Hade

My name is Susan Hade, and I teach at Patterson High School in Baltimore City. On March 12, 2020, we thought that school may close soon, and we were in a panic to prepare for that emergency. I was nearing the end of teaching Macbeth using a graphic novel by Gareth Hines. The students were organizing their notes to prepare to write end-of-quarter essays. There was a PD day for teachers on the 13th so we all thought we might be shut down soon. I spent the day ensuring that my students could access Google classroom on their phones. I have always been a proponent of using technology as much a s possible, even though the ESOL department at Patterson with over 450 students has fewer than 60 laptops

at our disposal. As an English teacher before earning my M.A. TESOL (2018) I thought it worth the effort to teach computer skills, typing, and how to navigate Microsoft Class Notebook (2015) and since 2018, Google Classroom. My students were familiar with the computer-based version of GC but had not used it on their phones. In the spring, that is all we had in terms of technology. Very few students had computers at home, few had internet service.

We limped through the end of Quarter 3 and once the students realized that their grade would be calculated based on the first three quarters, they stopped engaging in online learning in quarter 4. The uncertainty of what was happening with the pandemic was weighing heavily on everyone. Many students who had part-time jobs in restaurants, lost them. Sickness and death seemed to be around every corner. We had spent almost three quarters of the school year together and having a sudden shutdown felt awful. I missed my students, and they were anxious to return to school.

I scrambled to learn how to teach virtually. I used Screencastify to record instructions for navigating Google Classroom and my lessons for students to access anytime. I set up WhatsApp groups for each class to send out encouragements and announcements. My fellow teachers and I were sharing what we learned with each other, flood-

ing inboxes with new ideas and tools, but with no time to try them out and master them: Jamboard, Clever, Google Sites, Lingt, Flipgrid, Inkscape, Sketch. io, Canva, Edpuzzle, Vocabulary.com, Nearpod, Padlet, Peardeck, Whiteboard, Storyboardthat, Read&Write TextHelp, and more. City Schools ITD rolled out many how-to videos for basic education platforms and features of Google Classroom. At the end of the school year, City Schools staff led professional development in virtual learning best practices including a focus on Social and Emotional Learning. By the third week of June I was exhausted mentally from the stress of trying to find ways to teach students who struggled to learn and exhausted emotionally from realizing that many were so discouraged they had given up and were waiting for school to reopen in September.

School year 2020-2021 began with eight days of an information tidal wave of professional development sessions divided between school-based and district-personnel led. I felt energized to start the year with more new tools and clearer ideas of how move forward but overwhelmed with the number of choices and lack of time to learn all their features. I have 83 students in three sections of ESOL English II (10th grade). Each class period is 65 minutes long with school-mandated elements: Welcome Ritual, Content Demonstration, Brain Break, Clarify and Practice, Optimistic Closing. In the spring shutdown,

I knew my students' personalities and academic characteristics, but now my students and I were strangers. Only a handful attended the first week; five did a Flipgrid introduction of themselves. Each week in September more and more students attended Zoom class, but navigating within Google Classroom was very challenging. Students are willing to write a response in the Zoom chat, but not unmute, and after teaching the lesson and "discussing" it in chat, very few move to the Google doc or other independent aspect of the lesson to complete it.

I have narrowed down the number of platforms that I use on a regular basis. Google classroom holds resources like recordings of Zoom classes, the text we are reading for the quarter, assignments, instruction videos, and each day's agenda. I assign practice on Typing.com each week, and I purchased a subscription to Vocabulary.com for daily practice on lists I create based on the readings for class and overall WIDA score to read and discuss the same article at their reading level. All ESOL and English teachers have been asked to assign one lesson per week from this program. My students are not very tech-savvy. They are comfortable with their phones, but the complexity of the online learning tools requires a computer. Computer and internet access may be more common in higher socio-economic populations.

Narrative of online teaching continued

City Schools has provided a laptop to any student who needs one. Unfortunately, there is not internet access in many neighborhoods, so hotspots in limited quantities have been distributed. I spend part of most class sessions asking a student to share their screen to help them use basic computer features or navigate a learning program. Lessons in Achieve3000 are designed to be completed independently but require my coaching and instruction in using the helpful features like sentence frames, text support tools (dictionary, translation, highlighting), and note-taking text boxes. We are working through the forth lesson and students are now starting to get it.

Most days, I wonder how long school can continue this way. Teaching is a personal profession, and the personal interaction is missing for the most part. The bright spots, few though they are, of hearing students' voices when they share their screen and I help them understand, or WhatsApp exchanges of computer screen pictures and texts keep me motivated and connected. In class we are reading *The Second Coming* by Yeats in preparation for reading excerpts of *Things Fall Apart* by Achebe. My students and I are discussing and writing about what we center our lives around as we think about the lines from the poem: "Turning and turning in the widening gyre/The falcon cannot hear the falconer;/Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold" (1-3). Students center their lives on future goals and doing the work of learning, even in the virtual world; school is their rock and island of stability and connection.

Welcoming New TESOL Staff

Lakisha "KiKi" Skinner
General Assistant

I am a Maryland resident who graduated from Towson University with a degree in English Writing. My hopes were to become an English professor, but instead my career journey went in another direction but still came back to the halls of academe, giving proof that the best plans are those unplanned. I have been a private secretary for Dr. Richard E. Layton, a songwriter for an alternative rock band and other music artists, and the writer and editor of Backstreet Boys' Howie D's support group newsletter. Aside from working as the general assistant for the TESOL program, I enjoy writing about music on my blog, Klef Notes, and tutoring students in English, writing, and sociology as a CRLA-certified tutor at Harford Community College. One of my favorite quotes is from Oscar Wilde, which reads: "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

Sara Clement
Research Assistant

I started my teaching career as an elementary music teacher and went on to teach English as a foreign language in Rome for several years. After a brief hiatus from teaching, I decided to attend the TESOL master's degree program at UMBC in hopes of relocating abroad with my family and eventually pursuing a Ph.D.

"Working as a research assistant has allowed me to explore the ins and outs of the research process, and uncover an affinity for research I never knew I had."

Virtual Professional Development Webinars

BB Kim

During the fall, the UMBC TESOL program hosted four virtual professional development webinars open to students, alumni, and the TESOL community. Here is an overview of the four fall events.

Restorative Practices for English Learners At-risk in the Time of COVID-19

Madelaine Pella Schwartz

As part of the TESOL Speaker Series, Madelaine Pella Schwartz, an ESOL teacher with more than 35 years of teaching experience internationally and locally, led an informative webinar focused on five tools for keeping online teaching simple, meaningful, and engaging during the pandemic. As a current Baltimore City Public School ESOL teacher, she shared specific tools she used in her classroom to connect with her students in the virtual learning environment. She emphasized the importance of checking in with ourselves and making self-care a

priority, as we cannot we be fully present for our students if we are struggling.

Pedagogical Translanguaging from Theoretical and Applied Perspectives

Dr. Jasone Cenoz

During International Education Week, Dr. Jasone Cenoz of University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU (Spain) and President of the Education Science Committee of the Spanish Research Council, presented on the concepts of pedagogical translanguaging by looking at its theoretical foundations and its application to the classroom. Dr. Cenoz's talk drew more than 100 attendees worldwide. The last 20 minutes of the session was reserved for a Q&A where attendees were able to ask questions directly to Dr. Cenoz. An overwhelming number of public school ESOL teachers wanted to learn more about how they could incorporate translanguaging into their classrooms.

An Insider's Guide to Fulbright and the English Language Fellow Programs

To continue with the celebration of International Education Week, students interested in teaching and working abroad were invited to learn more about the Fulbright and English Language Fellow (ELF) programs. The session was moderated by TESOL faculty member Dr. Brian Souders, who is also UMBC's Fulbright and ELF advisor. Of note, thanks to Dr. Souders, UMBC has been named a Fulbright top producing institution in the nation. To speak on behalf of the Fulbright program, Leah Ginty, an M.A. TESOL and 2019-2020 Fulbright alumna, shared her experience working as an English teaching assistant in Benin. Matthew Gleason, also an M.A. TESOL alumnus, joined us from Taiwan, where he works as a TEFL advisor for Fulbright Taiwan, to discuss his journey in the ELF program. For his ELF placement, he worked in the Philippines from 2018-2020. Both Leah and Matthew

discussed challenges they faced while serving in the program and imparted tips on creating a competitive application.

A UMBC TESOL Alumnus's Journey to Becoming a Professor

Dr. George Bunch

Students and alumni aspiring to get their doctorates had a special opportunity to have an intimate conversation with Dr. George Bunch. Dr. Bunch is a UMBC TESOL alumnus who continued his education at Stanford University. He is currently a Professor of Education at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The session was moderated by Sara Clement, a current student and research assistant in the TESOL program, who plans on getting her Ph.D. after graduating from UMBC. Dr. Bunch shared his academic journey in detail and gave useful tips for students planning to continue with their education.
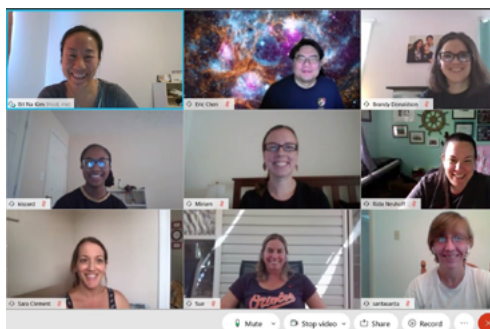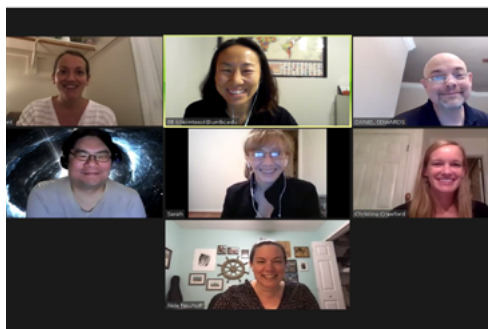
TESOL Club Happenings

In the beginning of the term, the TESOL club organized a social event, *Virtual Coffee Meet and Greet*, to get to know each other better and to address any questions new students had about the program.

Midway through the semester, the TESOL club organized another virtual event for students to check in and share how they were doing in their classes.
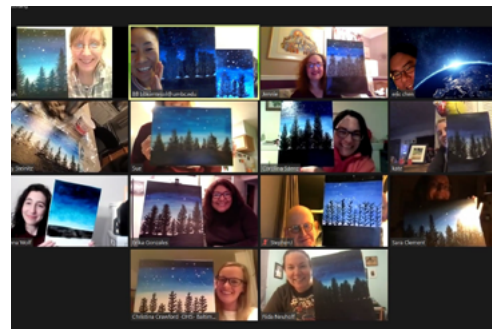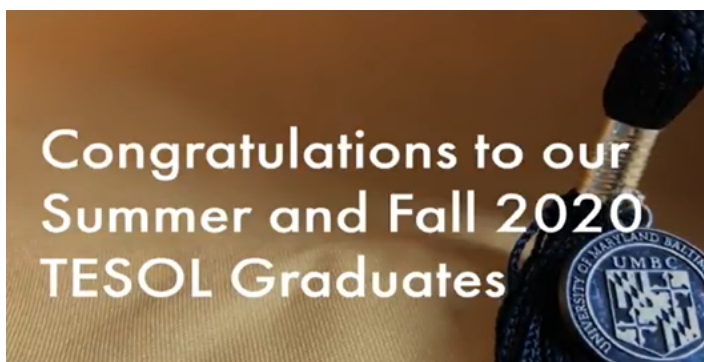

During the winter break, the TESOL club came up with the brillant idea to host their first ever virtual paint night. A special thanks to Sarah Gawens, one of the TESOL club officers, for leading the paint night session.

Congratulations, Fall '20 Graduates

We would like to congratulate our Fall '20 graduates and certificate awardees.

Best of luck in the future!

Master of Arts in TESOL
Yaya Sékou Sala Ballo
Karyn Brown
Jimmy Castro
Jiuk Choi
William Grome
Tamara Hawkins
Gabriela Joseph
Caprice Kennedy
Jin Lee
Joseph Mayhew
Matthew Prudhomme
Erika Sun
Michelle Xu

Postbaccalaureate Certificate in ESOL
Beth Bengermino
Sue Hale
Stephen Jones
Keisha Pendleton

Alumni Notes

Yaya Sékou Sala Ballo, MA '20, is planning to return to his native country, Mali, and become an assistant professor.

Shuhua Bloom, PBC '09, is a project director at Tasly Pharmaceuticals, Inc. in Rockville, MD. In 2012, she obtained a master's degree in public policy.

Karyn Brown, MA '20, works as a full-time writing tutor at Montgomery College, Rockville Campus, in the Writing, Reading, and Language Center.

Robert D. Douglass, MA '15, is virtually teaching with his wife at a non-profit education center, Joseph's Academy, in Myanmar.

Roberta H. Douglass, MA '94, is a virtual volunteer English instructor at a non-profit education center, Joseph's Academy, in Myanmar.

Sarah Harlen, MA '08, is an ESOL teacher and ESOL department chair at Riverdale Elementary School in Prince George's County Public Schools.

Angelica S. Keyser, MA '20, works as an ESOL teacher in Frederick County Public Schools.

Heera Lee, MA '12, is studying as a Ph.D student in Human-Centered Computing (HCC) in the Information Systems Department at UMBC. She is investigating public speaking anxiety and foreign language anxiety among English language learners by using their pyhsiological arousal and behavioral cues with the aim of supporting English instructors to provide personalized emotional and instructional scaffolding for each student.

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MA - Master of Arts in TESOL

PBC - Postbaccalaureate Certificate in ESOL