Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of Kudos, the newsletter of the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies Program, which will highlight the many achievements of our students. Since the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies began accepting students in the Fall of 1999, there have been 27 graduates from the program. These alumni literally work around the globe, holding either academic or professional positions. Our current students also have made an impact at conferences held both in the U.S. and abroad, and have published in national and international publications as well. As you read through Kudos, we think that you will be as impressed, and as proud, as we are!

- Stefanie Gapinski, editor

Interesting Facts about the Program

- The original Ph.D. in Comparative Studies developed into the first interdisciplinary program to educate “public intellectuals.”
- The late Dr. Teresa Brennan, The Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Humanities, gave the Public Intellectuals (PI) Program its focus and served as its initial curriculum designer.
- The program accepted its first cohort of students in Fall 1999, and offered them a selection of 13 concentrations.
- Thirty-seven people applied that first year, with 24 accepted, and 23 registering for the Fall 1999 semester. Of those 23 students, 11 attended part-time and 12 full-time.
- In the first five years of the PI program, 11 students received their degrees.
- The first director of the PI program was Dr. Max Kirsch, who held that position until the end of the 2002-2003 academic year. He currently is a professor in the Department of Anthropology as well as the UNESCO Chair in Human and Cultural Rights.
- In July 2003, Dr. Anthony J. Tamburri, Associate Dean for Research, Graduate, and Interdisciplinary Studies for the College of Arts and Letters, became director of the program. He served in that capacity until August 2006, when he left to become Dean of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute at the City University of New York.
- The current director of the PI program is Dr. Susan Love Brown, who is an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology.
- In Spring 2003, a second tract was introduced – the Program in Literatures, Literacies and Linguistics (LLL) – and the first students were accepted in the Fall 2003 semester.
- The current director of the LLL program is Dr. Andy Furman, chair of the Department of English.
- In Fall 2005, the Program in Fine and Performing Arts (FPA) was established.
- Dr. Heather Coltman, chair of the Department of Music, serves as director of the FPA program.
- All three tracks – PI, LLL, and FPA – are part of the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies, and graduates receive a Ph.D. in Comparative Studies.
- Dr. Susan Love Brown serves as the interim director of the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies.
- As of Summer 2007, there were 27 graduates of the program.
- There currently are 112 students enrolled, either full- or part-time.
Message from the Interim Director

The Ph.D. in Comparative Studies began in the fall of 1999 with its first class of students in the Public Intellectuals Program and a handful of Arts and Letters faculty teaching specially designed doctoral courses guided by the first Ph.D. Executive Committee: Tom Atkins (Theatre), Susan Love Brown (Anthropology), Mike Budd (Communication), Jane Caputi (Women’s Studies), Bill Covino (English), Dorothy Leland (Women’s Studies), Krishna Lewis (English), Dorothy McBride (Political Science), and the late Teresa Brennan (The Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Humanities), who gave the Public Intellectuals Program its name and served as its initial curriculum designer.

The Ph.D. in Comparative Studies was directed by Max Kirsch (1999-2003), Anthony J. Tamburri (2003-2006), and yours truly in the interim (2006 to the present). Recently, Stefanie Gapinski, who has been Coordinator of Public Functions since 1998, was promoted to the position of Assistant Director.

The Public Intellectuals (PI) Program, which currently has 53 students, was designed to give a scholarly education to those who want to change the world in some specific sphere of action. Since its inception, 25 students have received their doctoral degrees, making a total of 27 doctorates for the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies as a whole when our first two graduates from the Literatures, Literacies, and Linguistics (LLL) track (directed by Andy Furman) are included. The program has continued to grow with the addition of the Fine and Performing Arts (FPA) track in 2005, directed by Heather Colman. There currently are students in the doctoral pipeline from all three tracks, and the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies now is graduating three to five students per semester. In the Spring and Summer semester of 2007 alone, the program produced 11 graduates.

The Ph.D. in Comparative Studies has grown now to include participation by many more faculty members of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters due to the cross-listing of 6000-level courses. This means that our doctoral students have more courses available and more experience with faculty members from whom they can choose their doctoral committees. This inclusiveness, along with the work of college administrators, staff, faculty, and students, has resulted in a doctoral program of which we can all be proud. We will try to keep you informed through our newsletters each semester so that you are aware of the ongoing accomplishments of our doctoral students and program faculty. See you again in the New Year!

- Susan Love Brown

Student Profile: David Bethea, FPA

Throughout my previous higher educational experiences, I have tried to incorporate the various aspects of music into my work. The Fine and Performing Arts track of the Comparative Studies Program at FAU was attractive to me because it has allowed me the opportunity to incorporate the whole spectrum of arts into my educational experience, enhancing my knowledge as well as my performance skills.

While at FAU, I have had many different and varied activities in the arts realm. Along with my core studies, I have been a featured performer with the FAU Symphony, a member of the FAU Wind Ensemble, and performed with the professional in-residence jazz band, the Jazz Rats. I also have been afforded the opportunity to teach a variety of courses including Rock and Roll in American Society, Applied Trumpet, and Music Theory.

Currently, I have begun the research for my dissertation. With my passion for jazz music and its creation in New Orleans, my interest has been drawn towards the plight of the circumstances surrounding the jazz musicians in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

Recently, I made a trip to visit the areas in New Orleans that were affected by Hurricane Katrina, and I was amazed at the devastation that still is present over two years later. I am looking forward to meeting and establishing connections with jazz musicians in New Orleans in order to do meaningful research in the coming months. I hope to complete my project and the program sometime in 2009.

- David Bethea
Since the program accepted the first cohort of students in the Fall of 1999, 27 students have graduated:

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Where are they now?

Below are some of our alumni, the dates they attended the program, the positions they currently hold, or the projects in which they currently are involved.

Ana Adriaazola-Rodriquez, PI  
Fall 2002 – Spring 2007  
Honorary Professorship, Universidad Nacional de San Agustín, Peru  
Also involved in two conservation projects: Natural National Bahuaja-Sonome Sanctuary and the preservation of Lake Titicaca, Peru.

Sam E. Baroni, PI  
Fall 2004 – Spring 2007  
Assistant Professor of Conflict Resolution and International Studies  
Nova Southeastern University, Florida

Lynne Bentley-Kemp, PI  
Fall 1999 – Spring 2003  
Dean of Instruction (also teaching photography and humanities)  
Florida Keys Community College;  
Vice President, Sculpture Key West;  
Board of Directors, Studios of Key West.  
In 2007, curated three exhibits and participated in “Women’s Work,” a juried exhibition of Keys women artists.

Maria-Odette Canivell, PI  
Fall 2000 – Summer 2004  
Assistant Professor of English and IDLS  
James Madison University, Virginia

Paul Anthony Dottin, PI  
Fall 1999 – Fall 2002  
Professor, International Culture Exchange Institute, China  
Also researching Africans and African Americans in Central China.

Silvia Giagnoni, PI  
Fall 2003 – Spring 2007  
Adjunct, film appreciation, FAU School of Communication and Multimedia Studies;  
Online instructor, mass communications, Kaplan University.  
Currently writing a book, in Italian, on Immokalee, Florida.

Tobin Hindle, PI  
Fall 2000 – Summer 2006  
Assistant Scientist, Department of Geosciences, Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, FAU  
Funded by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (part of the Earth System Science Education Alliance, which is a National Science Foundation GEO-teach project) to develop new earth system science learning modules and to teach a new, graduate level earth system science course for middle/high school educators.

Beverly Lomer, PI  
Fall 2001 – Spring 2006  
Instructor, Humanities Department, Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, FAU

Chiara Mazzucchelli, LLL  
Fall 2003 – Summer 2007  
Visiting Assistant Professor of Italian University of Central Florida

Rebecca McCarthy, PI  
Fall 2004 – Summer 2007  
Workshop on improvisational dramatism at the Oregon Rhetorical Conference, Eastern Oregon University

Caren Neile, PI  
Fall 1999 – Spring 2003  
Artist-in-Residence, FAU School of Communication and Multimedia Studies, where she directs the South Florida Storytelling Project. She recently taught in Jerusalem as a Fulbright Scholar.

Kevin Petrich, PI  
Fall 1999 – Fall 2003  
General Manager, Wavelengths, the Internet radio station of FAU’s School of Communication and Multimedia Studies.  
In addition to streaming classical music and news of college events, the station’s archive offers student- and faculty-produced spoken word content exploring important issues and ideas. Two examples are South Florida Journal, a weekly local newsmagazine, and Driving Our Lives Away: South Florida’s Transportation Dilemma, a documentary examining the increasing challenge of commuting in our region.

Emanuele Pettener, PI  
Fall 2000 – Spring 2004  
Instructor, FAU Department of Languages, Linguistics, and Comparative Literature  
His 6th article has been accepted by an international literary journal and his 7th short story (the first one in the U.S.) has been accepted by a literary magazine in Minnesota. He also is working on a study of the American writer John Fante.

Marc Rhorer, PI  
Fall 2004 – Summer 2007  
Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs  
Barry Kaye College of Business, FAU

Ilaria Serra, PI  
Fall 2000 – Spring 2004  
Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Italian Studies; Director of the Study Abroad Summer Program in Florence, Italy, Department of Languages, Linguistics and Comparative Literature, FAU  
Presented The Value of Worthless Lives, Writing Italian Immigrant Autobiography, at the John. D. Calandra Italian American Institute, NYC. A new book, The Imagined Immigrant (working title), has been accepted for publication by Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Diana Sinisterra, PI  
Fall 2000 – Spring 2007  
Research Associate, Engaging Latinos Communities in Education (ENLACE), FAU  
ENLACE Florida is a Kellogg-funded initiative managed by NCCEP to promote college readiness, access, and success for Latinos and other underrepresented students. Currently writing a book, in Spanish, on Colombian happiness.

Behind the Scenes

Administrative staff for the program include (l to r), Gabby Denier, program assistant; Stefanie Gapinski, assistant director; and Kelly Kohnken, office assistant. Gabby joined the program in January 2006 and handles the administrative details for the program. Kelly, who works part-time and is responsible for reception as well as clerical duties, came in April 2007.
The Message Board

Even though I had a very challenging and fulfilling position as Assistant Director of the Centre for Higher Education Research and Development at the University of Manitoba, after living as an expat for 25 years, I knew it was time to “come home” to my American roots. At Florida Atlantic University, I found a position that combined both my university public relations and administrative backgrounds.

On November 2, 1998, I began my new career as the Coordinator of Public Functions in the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, working with the late Dr. Teresa Brennan, The Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Humanities.

From that Fall until Fall 1999 when we accepted the first cohort of students into the newly designed Ph.D. in Comparative Studies Public Intellectuals Program, I worked feverishly to learn about FAU and its bureaucratic idiosyncrasies, how to navigate through them, and how to set up an administrative structure that would serve both the program and the students. With input from faculty and students in the program, as well as other college staff, I think that has been accomplished.

I have worked with three different but equally competent directors – Dr. Max Kirsch, Dr. Anthony J. Tamburri, and Dr. Susan Love Brown – each putting their unique mark on the program.

As the program evolves, I strive to maintain quality in all that comes from our office as well as in our service to the students and faculty in the program.

I am proud to be a part of this program – and it has been a good “home” for me for the past nine years.

It’s been an exciting time in the LLL track! Approved and implemented in the Spring of 2003 with its first students enrolled in the Fall 2003 semester, the track’s first cohort of doctoral students is just beginning to move through their comprehensive examinations and dissertations.

Andrew Halloran, our first graduate in Spring 2007, deployed his scholarly expertise in anthropology and linguistics to examine chimpanzee communication. In Summer 2007, our most recent graduate, Chiara Mazzucchelli, defended her dissertation, which explored the interconnections between Italian-American and Italian literatures.

We are particularly proud of our interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary course of study, unique to our program, which encourages students to explore topics in Literatures, Literacies, and Linguistics through the lens of a variety of college disciplines, such as Women’s Studies, Philosophy, and History. Our 41 students have embraced the challenge to interrogate traditional disciplinary boundaries, and have begun to participate vigorously in the broader scholarly dialogue, delivering conference papers and publishing articles at an impressive clip. The innovative scholarly paths of our students have greatly benefited our college faculty as well, putting many of us in productive contact with colleagues in separate, but interconnected, disciplines.

Our goal is to prepare our students to join the realm of the professorate through offering close mentorship, from their first course to their last dissertation draft. For a young program, we already have enjoyed considerable success in this regard. I know I speak for the members of the executive committee when I say how proud I am of our dedicated, hard-working students.

Andrew Furman
Ph.D. in Comparative Studies Program in Literatures, Literacies, and Linguistics

We are excited at the growth and expansion of the Fine and Performing Arts track – we now have 16 students with widely divergent interests.

Examples of student research include integrative arts education, a study of musical theatre works based on Biblical stories, and an exploration of the jazz scene in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

A diverse monthly lecture series is presented for FPA students by faculty artists as well as by guest speakers.

As new students have joined the FPA track, we have had some really exciting and interesting challenges discussing curriculum development, as well as creating opportunities for students to work together on research projects.

With students’ input, we continue to explore many ideas and believe our program quickly will become one of the most engaging and intriguing of its kind. We look forward to the many successes of our students.

Heather Coltman
Ph.D. in Comparative Studies Program in Fine and Performing Arts
The first thing that attracted me to this program was its flexibility. I knew that I wanted to engage in comparative, interdisciplinary study; I knew I wanted to be free to “trail blaze” a bit in my academic program. So I liked that the Ph.D. in Comparative Studies at FAU literally invites students to do just that. During my first three semesters as a doctoral student, I have learned a great deal about the type of student that I am and the type of academic I want to be. My professors are wonderful and genuinely concerned about my growth and I’m proud to work alongside some of the most brilliant and passionate minds in the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic field of Caribbean studies. Though many universities treat Caribbean Literature as either solely an Anglophone or solely a Francophone field, I love that the Caribbeanists here at FAU encourage students to see Caribbean Literature as a field made up of literatures, traditions and cultures in constant and necessary dialogue.

I look forward to beginning my dissertation on the representation of Haitians and Haitian history in novels from the French- and Spanish-speaking Caribbean. This research project is especially dear to me, precisely because it speaks to the precarious situation of not only Haitian literature in academia, but also to that of the thousands of Haitians who have been forced to live as second-class citizens in South Florida.

After completing the Ph.D., I look forward to a dynamic career teaching foreign languages and literatures to academically talented students at a small liberal arts college much like my undergraduate institution, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College at FAU. Although teaching is rewarding on so many levels, I ultimately want to phase into university administration and, someday, to be president of a Florida university.

When I entered college as an undergraduate my personal dream was to eventually earn a doctoral degree, but my professional career took me on a circuitous path over the years — journalism, publishing of literary books, even university teaching. I had given up hope of finding a doctoral program that would fit my interests and provide new opportunities as well.

When I first heard about the Comparative Studies Public Intellectuals Track, however, secretly I knew it was made for me. And yet, probably like a lot of people, I was filled with doubts. Can I fit it into the rest of my life? Can I handle the challenging curriculum? Will this really make a difference in my life? The answer may vary, depending upon the rigors of coursework on any given day, but at the end of every semester I marvel at the range of new information I have learned to process and apply to both historical and contemporary events.

I chose the PI track to broaden my knowledge of the social sciences, economics, and globalization processes. And the material already has proven useful in new projects that I have launched while in the program. I was able to expand my oral history work internationally during a recent month-long trip to Ghana, West Africa, where I conducted interviews on race and ethnicity for my "Race and Change" archive in Special Collections at the African American Research Library and Cultural Center.

I currently am producing, writing, and hosting a new 10-part TV series entitled "Crossing Cultures/Changing Lives," which will feature interviews as well as scholars reflecting on some of the themes touched upon in my Ph.D. coursework. The programs, funded by the Florida Department of Education, will begin airing on local and PBS stations in South Florida in March 2008, then around the state. The series also will be used in public high schools.

My dissertation will focus on the processes of oral and visual communication in the languaging of racial and ethnic change. I expect to graduate in the 2008-2009 academic year.
Message from Ph.D. Student Association

Students in all three tracks of the program are automatically members of the Comparative Studies Ph.D. Student Association (PSA). PSA exists to enrich your experience in the Ph.D. program by organizing events that support and are of interest to students and faculty.

Last Spring, we held a public screening of 2007 Public Intellectual graduate Silvia Giagnoni’s documentary Take It Back? Evangelical Christianity and Popular Music, followed by a reception. PSA also hosted a reception to honor the Spring 2007 graduates of the program and recently gathered with faculty and staff for a Fall 2007 welcoming social.

PSA looks forward to planning more events to showcase and support the important work of students and faculty in our unique and diverse program under the leadership of our incoming president, Jeffrey Kleeger. You can contact Jeffrey at jkleeger@fau.edu.

- Outgoing PSA President
  Shereen Siddiqui

Alumni Profile: Chiara Mazzucchelli

Chiara Mazzucchelli graduated from the University of Catania, Italy, with a Summa Cum Laude Laurea (M.A.) in Foreign Languages and Literatures. In 2002, she received a Fulbright Fellowship to pursue graduate studies in the US.

In Fall 2003 she entered the LLL track of the Ph.D. program. Its interdisciplinary nature allowed her to explore her interest in contemporary U.S. literary and ethnic studies. In her dissertation, Heart of my Race: Questions of Identity in Sicilian-American Writings, she examined the development of ethnic regionalism in Italian-American literature, especially in the form of a distinct Sicilian Americanness, which she found, parallels the growth in Italy of a Sicilian literary tradition. This comparative approach provided her with insights into the question of ethnic identities in US literature as well as a deeper understanding of the modern and contemporary Italian literary tradition. Her dissertation was supervised by Dr. Anthony J. Tamburri (chair), Dr. Andrew Furman, Dr. Wenyiing Xu, and Dr. Fred Gardaphé, SUNY at Stony Brook.

At FAU, she worked as a graduate teaching assistant in Italian, teaching undergraduate introductory and intermediate courses in Italian language and culture. In Summer 2007, together with Dr. Pettener, she co-directed the FAU Study Abroad Program in Florence, Italy. In addition, she taught an introductory course in Italian to FAU students and students from other American universities.

Chiara has presented papers at conferences and published articles, reviews, and translations both in English and Italian. Together with Dr. Gardaphé, she is guest editor of a special issue of the journal VIA-Voices in Italian Americana, devoted to representations of Italian Americans in non-Italian-American literature. She accepted a position at the University of Central Florida for 2007-2008.

Student Accomplishments

Our students and alumni have made an impact not only locally and nationally, but internationally as well. Space prevents us from listing all of the numerous papers, publications, and other accomplishments submitted for publication. Following is a sampling.

Ana Adriazola-Rodriquez, PI Alum
“Teaching Environmental Ethics and Sustainability: Peru.” College of Education Sciences Anniversary Program Celebration, Universidad Nacional de San Agustin de Arequipa, Peru, December 2006.

Emmanuel Alvarado, LLL

Sam E. Baroni, PI Alum

(continued overleaf)
Gabriela Ovando Barrero, PI
“Tres Mujeres que Articulan Sus Voces desde el Chaupi en el Alto Perú y Bolivia: Catalina de E rasuo (s. XVII), Adelia Zamudio (Albores del s. XX), Domitila Churgara (fines del s. XX).” Women, Gender & Discourse in Latin America Conference, Univ. of Liverpool, UK, March 2007.


Andrea Best, PI

Sav ena Budhu, LLL

Sally Brown, FPA

Maria-Odette Canivell, PI Alum

Issac Carter, PI

Val Czerny, LLL

Susan D’Alioa, PI

Matt Daniels, FPA
Winner, concerto & aria competition with FAU Symphony Orchestra on Georges Bizet’s Toreador song, “Votre Toast” from Carmen, 2006.

Jane Day, PI
“Marketing Historic Properties,” Preservation Fdn. of Palm Beach, 07.

Avia Huisman, PI

Jamie Johnson, LLL

Rebecca Karimi, PI

Jill Kriegel, LLL
“‘What’s Right with the Shire: Chesterton’s Visit to Tolkien’s World.” Mid-Atlantic Popular/ American Culture Association Conference, Philadelphia, Nov. 07.

Rebecca Kuhn, PI

Giovanna Lecaros, LLL
“‘El infarto del alma’: la fuga sicótica y el más allá de la ciudad real.” The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Graduate Student Conference, University of Miami, March 2007.

Jacqui May, PI

Rebecca McCarthy, PI Alum

Trudy Mercadal-Sabbagh, PI
“De Castro podran decir lo que quieran, pero...Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and the cross- generational discourse of Cuban immigrants in Miami.” 93rd Annual Convention, Ntl. Communication Convention, Chicago, Nov. 2007.

Ana Moretto, FPA
One of eight winners of the first concerto and aria competition, FAU Department of Music, Nov. 06.

Marc Rhorer, PI Alum

Kristen Robbins, PI Alum

Rhianna Rogers, LLL
“Comparisons of Late Roman Antiquity and New World Paganism.” Florida Conference of Historians, Orlando, March 2007.

Nancy Rubin, PI

Peggy Schaller, LLL

Alessandra Senzani, LLL

Sheeren Siddiqui, PI

Diana Sinisterra, PI alum

Mary Soliman, LLL

Nancy Stein, PI
“Diverse Local History: How Do We Record It?” Lecture Series, Delray Beach Historical Society, 2007.

Naomi Thomas, PI

Olga Vazquez, FPA

Lois Wolfe, LLL
Blue Horizon selected and presented at Waterfront Playhouse Annual Play-Reading Series, Key West, May 2007.

Cynthia Zaitz, FPA