

From the Editor

WITH the support of a grant from the Department of Education, the Office of Foreign Language Programs of the Modern Language Association is presently conducting its twenty-first survey of enrollments in foreign language courses in colleges and universities in the United States. Registrars from over 2,900 institutions have been contacted, and results will be published in fall 2007. To allow for comparative analyses, this 2006 survey will continue to list global figures for individual languages with specific data for undergraduate and graduate enrollments. In addition, the survey will introduce a new subcategory differentiating enrollments in first- and second-year language courses from enrollments in upper-level language classes. These added data will give a more finely grained picture of the field, by making visible the numbers of students pursuing higher language competency and by examining yields between introductory and advanced undergraduate levels. This information should prove useful to chairs in anticipating demand for advanced courses. Recent world events, the continued development of global trade and economic partnerships, and changing educational trends have intensified the need for monitoring the study of foreign languages and cultures in United States institutions of higher education. The MLA remains the primary source for data on the study of languages other than English in American colleges and universities, and its survey of foreign language enrollments receives intense media coverage and numerous requests for information. The 2006 survey will show whether recent trends in enrollments are continuing or have shifted. Information from the survey will assist the teaching profession and all concerned agencies, both public and private, in assessing growth patterns in the field and in planning for the future. Businesses, professional groups, not-for-profit organizations, as well as government agencies concerned with international issues, commerce, and cultural exchanges, will all benefit from the MLA's findings.

The MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion, chaired by past MLA president Domna Stanton, has released its findings and recommendations. The report is available online at www.mla.org/tenure_promotion. While the

report should be of interest to all faculty members, chairs who are looking to hire new faculty members or expecting internal promotions need to be particularly cognizant of its findings and recommendations. The report calls for a written understanding of the expectations for promotion at the time of hire, transparency throughout the tenure process, criteria in accordance with the values and educational mission of the institution, and a more capacious understanding of research, from its application in teaching to its dissemination in a multiplicity of media and forms. Chairs faced with institutional demands that may disadvantage their faculty members can and should use the report to claim or reclaim the authority of the field in matters of tenure and promotion.

The report of the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, chaired by past MLA president Mary Louise Pratt, was released in May. At the 2005 MLA convention in Washington, members of the committee participated in a session entitled "Language Policy and the Politics of Language." Their presentations are published here under the caption of Forum, an occasional format that allows publication of short interventions on ongoing debates and issues of general interest. Since this issue of the *ADFL Bulletin* is published in the same period as the release of the committee's recommendations, the many probing questions and discerning opinions you will read here will have the unusual attribute of being at once anticipatory of and posterior to the actual report. The report, entitled "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," is available online at www.mla.org/flreport.

Also released this spring was the report of the National Research Council of the National Academies on the Title VI programs of the Higher Education Act and the educational component of the Fulbright-Hayes Act. The report was undertaken at the request of the United States Congress to evaluate Department of Education programs designed

to serve the nation's needs in international studies and foreign language education. The report found that Title VI and Fullbright-Hayes programs have built a foundation for United States foreign language needs and international expertise, primarily in less commonly taught languages, but called for increased funding, program evaluation, and oversight. The full report will be available on the publications Web site of the National Academies. Elizabeth B. Welles, former director of ADFL and MLA foreign language programs, was a member of the twenty-person committee that reviewed Title VI and Fullbright-Hayes programs, and she provides in this issue of the *Bulletin* an ADFL Update about the report.

Searching for the right instrument to satisfy administrative requirements for accountability can be frustrating. In the K–12 system, assessments have created a wide spectrum of results from havoc to elaborate and constructive collaborative efforts. Now the call for assessments has reached higher education. There are, of course, a myriad of ways to satisfy the need for accountability, from evaluating the student to judging the teacher to appraising the program. Tests, exams, grades, interviews, portfolios, and class observations are among the most established evaluating tools. Today's calls for assessment have two major goals: to measure the attained competency of students' learning and to make comparative analyses possible among institutions. While the concept of accountability finds few enemies among academics used to grading their students and evaluating their peers, the issues raised in the humanities by the demand for quantifiable evaluation for comparative purposes could have a major impact on programs and the profession. It is therefore important for chairs to become knowledgeable about the issues and for departments to be familiar with the assessment tools available and, whenever relevant, their short- and long-term effects on course content and programs. Sessions and workshops at the ADFL seminar in Hawai'i were devoted to these questions, and we will feature articles on assessments and outcomes in forthcoming issues of the *ADFL Bulletin*.

The articles in this issue address the status of the humanities in a changing world. In the section entitled "New Directions" are papers from the 2006 meeting of ADFL Seminar East that took place at

Hunter College in New York City. After twenty-six years of chairing the college's Department of Classical and Oriental Studies, Tamara Green, who introduced the plenary session, reminds us, with superb touches of humor, that change is a constant and revolving phenomenon. Even when in larval stage, the potentiality of change often sets off momentous academic debates between those, on the one side, who consider the proposed change as constituting the wave of the future and those, on the other, who see it as ushering in the end of civilization. For Russell A. Berman, the conviction of many academics that the status of the humanities has been unchallenged in the past, that its perspectives and values have remained unchanged since medieval times, emerges as one of the greatest obstacles to understanding the necessity for change. The forces at play within academe under the pressures of the economic realities of a multicultural global world need not lead to despair but, in Berman's view, could be the catalyst for an imaginative restructuring of the humanities. Ten years after the launch of the languages-across-the-curriculum (LAC) project of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Thomas M. Adams revisits some of the campuses that implemented and maintained LAC programs. In presenting a wide selection of imaginative uses for LAC in a variety of programs, courses, and institutional settings, Adams offers one response to Berman's suggestion to think strategically of change as adaptation to evolving contexts. Urbain Ben DeWinter brings important data to our attention: most students in study-abroad programs are not language majors, and many students in such programs or in internships abroad who do not have prior knowledge of the language take foreign language classes on returning to campus. Monolingual students in a multilingual context soon understand the significance and advantages of knowing a language other than English.

Language learning is a cumulative process that requires time, hence the need for programs that start in early education, continue throughout the K–12 system, and persist in college. David Steiner reviews the history, implementations, and challenges faced by elementary and secondary programs in the delivery of foreign language education. For Steiner, the picture is grim, and foreign language programs in the K–12 system are in peril because of a convergence of factors: the No Child Left Behind initiative left learning foreign languages in the margins, leadership at the state or district level

is lacking, and there are pronounced dissensions among teachers about when and how languages should be taught and what the focus of language study should be. And if the absence of foreign language learning as a requirement for graduation from high school or for entrance into college was not troubling enough, the training of future teachers of language for whom there is no specific course of study and low competency expectations jeopardizes future generations. Thus, in Steiner's view, the status of foreign language learning in the K–12 system is not simply a present-day problem handicapping those already in school but the evidence of a crisis with new dimensions yet to come.

Opening the section "Teaching Foreign Languages," Jennifer Leeman revisits the history of Spanish in United States education with regard to changing sociopolitical contexts and changing educational perspectives. Ruth H. Sanders demonstrates that learning a foreign language fosters significant cognitive abilities in students and leads to increased facility in native-language writing. Daniel R. Morris proposes the Southern Oregon

Foreign Language Articulation project (an initiative seeded by the MLA) as an example of an organized effort that links programs through high school, community college, and university in a coherent learning pattern. Finally, Joseph Mai recounts his difficult job search and then his success at obtaining a teaching position as a bittersweet experience where, as in Flaubert's famous novel of disillusionment, a romanticized vision meets an unexpected reality.

Finally, our study on chairs' compensation is continuing with the publication of part 2, which focuses on gender differences. The results are not unexpected. They show discrepancies in stipends between men and women chairs whether at the rank of associate professor or full professor. In the light of these findings, my previous contention that the articles in this issue of the *ADFL Bulletin* speak to a changing world should perhaps be replaced by the famous phrase, *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

Nelly Furman