

M.ED. IN LANGUAGES

*2020-2021 Newsletter
Inaugural Issue*



Inside the Issue

COVID RESPONSE

Hear from one of our current students who is teaching in the classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Learn how one of our alumni is using what she learned in the M.Ed. in Languages program each day as an adjunct instructor at the College of Charleston.

TIPS FOR TEACHING

Read about programs and platforms that help to facilitate language learning via Zoom and online.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Professor Arlene Ventimiglia

Meet Professor Ventimiglia, who taught EDFS 680 during Fall 2020, and one of our amazing faculty members in the program. She and her family live in Yokosuka, Japan where her husband is stationed as a Naval officer serving on the USS Ronald Reagan. In addition to teaching, she spends her time volunteering with military families on base and, during the COVID pandemic, she, like many of us, is also providing support for her children in online schooling. She has a hands-on philosophy to teaching and specifically enjoys the opportunity to work with teachers and help them find new ways to connect with their students. EDFS 680 is a course that emphasizes the importance of interconnectedness among all subjects to develop English proficiency across the disciplines. In Spring 2021, Professor Ventimiglia is teaching EDFS 678. We are so lucky to have Professor Ventimiglia as a part of our program!





STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Beth Cummings

Meet Beth Cummings! She is an ESOL teacher who entered the M.Ed. in Languages program in Summer 2020. She chose to join our program because she wanted to be able to further her own education, enjoy more opportunities in the field of education, and to have more strategies and understanding about the students she teaches. Beth's favorite part about teaching is seeing her students happy; she loves watching them master the concepts to pass the math test or overcome their shyness to be able to make a new friend.

This year has definitely presented teachers with unprecedented challenges. The most difficult aspect for Beth has been the lack of in-person engagement with all of her students: "I miss hearing their stories and seeing their smiles. Just reflecting on the lost time with them makes me emotional."

Beth says that she feels passionate about being an advocate for her students. This year, her goal is to establish connections with them that will allow her to understand their needs and advocate more effectively on their behalf. She wishes good luck to all her fellow teachers. Her one piece of advice is to show the students that you care: "When they know you care, they will learn what you teach."



TEACHING DURING A PANDEMIC

Shannon Withers is one of our students in the M.Ed. in Languages program and a middle school Spanish teacher. During the pandemic, she has faced abrupt changes with regard to her face-to-face and virtual classes. It has been difficult having her students transition between the modes, teaching them to properly self distance, and engaging them in the target language while wearing masks. The preparation required has been time intensive: she's shifted all her activities online and replaced face-to-face activities with new platforms to allow students opportunities to continue building language proficiency. Even her notebooks are now digital!

Each day, she sprays down every desk between classes and sanitizes the stress balls that she has available in her class. Shannon uses the face-to-face interactions to focus on her students' feelings and emotions, which has helped them recognize their emotions after being socially distanced for so long. She uses mindfulness cards to warm up for the class. She has materials available to help her students have opportunities to move and wiggle since they cannot physically get up and move around the room to do group work.

Shannon feels it's important for students to know that their teacher is advocating for them and cares about them. The pandemic has made those personal connections especially difficult; one strategy that's been working for her is using Flipgrid for videos, talking, and interaction based on prompts, in both English and Spanish. Her tips for fellow teachers are to get enough sleep, eat as healthy as you can, and to accept that not everything is going to go as planned. This is hard for students and teachers. Have grace, be flexible, and do the best you can. She has found it especially helpful to reach out to other teachers to see what they are doing to adapt to these circumstances. Everyone is struggling to stay afloat, so it's important to support one another!



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Professor Marisol Castro-Calzada

Marisol began her career as a K-12 teacher, but she always wanted to further her education. The M.Ed. in Languages allowed her to be hired as an adjunct Spanish instructor for the College of Charleston where she has been a member of the Hispanic Studies Department for the last eleven years. Marisol teaches Spanish 101-202 level courses, both face-to-face and online modes. She became a mentor for the Mentoring Matters program and a member of the Distance Education and Basic Language committees, helping shape the curriculum and departmental standards for the introductory language sequence.

During her time as a student with the M.Ed. in Languages program, Marisol worked closely with other teachers and collaborated in the development of pedagogical strategies that she continues to use. In her own words: "The M.Ed in Languages gave me a more flexible schedule, better preparation to teach a wider variety of students and the tools to become a more effective educator. It allowed me to better convey my expertise to students and has helped me to develop valuable relationships with colleagues who have become important resources for my continued growth and development."

KNOW SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE M.ED. OR ESOL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS?

Scan this QR Code to get more information regarding our program! Prospective students can also reach out to the program director, Dr. Emily S. Beck at becke@cofc.edu.



M.Ed. in Languages



ESOL Certificate

DONATE TO THE PROGRAM

Help us continue to provide high quality education to the next generation of teachers and language advocates. Please consider donating - even small donations help!

[Click here to donate or scan the QR code below!](#)



WHERE ARE OUR ALUMNI NOW?

Hugh Pressley (M.Ed. 2017)

English teacher at West Florence High School and an online instructor of first-year writing at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, and a PhD student in the program in English: Technical Communication and Rhetoric at Texas Tech University.

Glorimar Blanco (M.Ed. 2010)

Assistant Professor of Spanish at Charleston Southern University. She is also an Adjunct Professor of Spanish at the Citadel where she is the Assistant Director of Hispanic Internships. She is pursuing a PhD in Spanish and Linguistic Anthropology at the University of South Carolina.

Raven Thomas Smith (M.Ed. 2017)

After graduating, she taught English as a Foreign Language at Kaihua Senior High School in Kaihua, China and is currently teaching English to Speakers of other Languages at St. Andrews Middle School in Columbia, South Carolina.

Are you an alum of the M.Ed. in Languages program? We'd love to hear how you're doing! If you're currently teaching, please share strategies and tips that you've implemented during the pandemic and let us know how it's going. If your career path has taken a new direction, we'd love to hear from you too!

Please contact Program Director Dr. Emily S. Beck: becke@cofc.edu.

Keep up to date with information and announcements by following along on social media!

 @cofc_gradlanguages

 @medlangcofc

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CHANGES TO THE PROGRAM

Starting in Fall 2020, the M.Ed. in Languages reduced the required number of credit hours from 37 to 31. The committee felt that, especially now, teachers needed more access and fewer barriers to high quality preparation. Many current students were able to take advantage of this change and we look forward to serving future generations of passionate language teachers and advocates.

TIPS FOR TEACHING

Dr. Shawn Morrison

Follow along with Dr. Shawn Morrison on Twitter as she shares resources for teaching both online and in person! Make sure you follow the twitter account and interact with resources that you find helpful, such as:

- Jamboard lessons and ideas
- Strategies for working with students with disabilities
- Online class resources to keep students engaged
- Teaching about different holidays in the classroom
- And so much more!

Follow along: Foreign Language Education College of Charleston (@edflcofc)!



[CLICK HERE FOR THE M.ED IN LANGUAGES WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION!](#)