

MA IN LIBERAL STUDIES *News*

SUNY College at Old Westbury, Fall 2019

PUERTO RICAN LITERATURE IN TRANSITION



Professor Ruben Gonzalez
Chair, Modern Languages Department

Professor Rubén González, chair of Modern Languages, loves Old Westbury. "It is large enough to offer a broad variety of choices and opportunities. Yet, it is small enough that students don't get lost in the multitude. Here, we care about our students one at a time."

González served 18 years in Old Westbury's administration, as an Associate VP in the College's Academic Affairs division and as

Dean of Education, but remains at heart a literary scholar. His first book *Crónica de tres décadas/ Chronicle of Three Decades* (Río Piedras, EDUPR, 1989) analyzed Puerto Rican poetry from the sixties to the eighties. Poetry from this period marked what he calls "a new epoch of literary production in the country, [one that] constitutes a break with the metaphysical and abstract poetry immediately preceding it known as 'poesía transcendentalista' (Transcendentalist poetry)." The new Puerto Rican poetry challenged earlier classics, and "sought to redefine the role of poetry in Puerto Rican literature and culture."

A staunch supporter of Old Westbury's inter-disciplinary programs, including the MA in Liberal Studies degree, González says,

One of the reasons I feel comfortable in this college is because of its interdisciplinary approach to education: research and teaching that integrate the theories, insights, and methods of established and emergent fields of knowledge and artistic practice. That's what we do. Actually, when the College opened in the late sixties, the entire curriculum was interdisciplinary. There was collaboration among all disciplines. Disciplines in this college dialogue; we talk to each other. In a way, that was our initial mission: we embraced interdisciplinary activities because through collaboration we reflected our values; we looked at society not just as it was, but as it should be, which is to say that we were committed to setting a good example. That element of the mission has not changed.

(Puerto Rican Literature, continued on page 4)

Newsworthy

NEW Graduate Program - Advanced Certificate In Video For Professional Development

The State University of New York, and the State Education Department, have just approved Old Westbury's *newest* graduate program, an **Advanced Certificate in Video for Professional Development**. Students possessing undergraduate degrees from a variety of disciplines can enter this program to develop valuable skills in digital video production. And MALS students can choose the 4-course sequence for their official Area of Study. The new program begins in September 2020. For more information, contact Prof. Frisken by email (friskena@oldwestbury.edu).

NEW Combined BA/MALS degree for American Studies Majors

American Studies majors can now begin graduate course work before they complete the undergraduate degree. Old Westbury's new **Combined BA/MALS** degree offers AS majors an accelerated path to a master's degree, while saving students a little money on tuition. For application requirements, information about the program, and courses, contact Prof. Frisken at 516.876.4853, during office hours (NAB3013), or by email at friskena@oldwestbury.edu.

A Professor's Life at SUNY Old Westbury

"My life's journey has been fairly wrapped up in the legacy of Old Westbury," says **Professor Thomas DelGiudice** (Politics, Economics, and Law), "and I would say that has been a very good thing." For DelGiudice, Old Westbury created opportunities for learning and activism, which led him to his current position as tenured professor. As he describes his years as an undergraduate in the late 1970s,

I was surrounded by excellent progressive faculty who saw something in a working-class student and encouraged him to develop his interests and to attend graduate school in economics. During my senior year with the cooperation of my professors I was able to do an independent study and travel to India to live and work in villages in the very poor state of Bihar. That was a transformative experience and motivated me to further my studies regarding the economic pressures facing the populations of the peripheral areas of the world economy.

DelGiudice went on to pursue graduate studies, completing his PhD at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. "I was very fortunate to be surrounded by heterodox and progressive economists (a great rarity in the profession) and students from all over the world who came to study with them." He worked with faculty who were "reconceptualizing Marx's class analytic" alongside others "who were advising the new Sandinista government of Nicaragua." The possibilities for Nicaraguans after years of struggle seemed limitless, he says, until the U.S. government "began attacking the revolution creating all sorts of distortions." These developments shaped DelGiudice's research choices for his dissertation, and committed him to "the development of a class theory of trade and to apply it to those nations on the peripheral of the global economy." He wanted to understand why, "despite the economic success in following the precepts of mainstream economics, ...so many of these nations [end] up in revolutionary conflicts."

Public Lecture on Photographer Dorothea Lange

On **Thursday, November 14, at 5:30 pm**, Professor **Carol Quirke**, (American Studies), will present "The Politics of Care: Dorothea



Prof. Carol Quirke,
American Studies

Lange's New Deal Photography" in the New Academic Building reception room, NAB1100. Quirke will talk about her research findings on Dorothea Lange, the internationally-acclaimed photographer. Her book, *Dorothea Lange, Documentary Photography, and Twentieth Century America: Reinventing Self and Nation*, was published in Spring 2019 by Routledge Press.

Light refreshments will be served. For more information about this event, email Professor Amanda Frisken at friskena@oldwestbury.edu.

Finding mainstream economic analysis unable to answer that question, DelGiudice developed his own way to analyze the problem — "a formal class analytic for how to think about international trade and then applied it to Central America in particular Nicaragua's export sector."

At Old Westbury, DelGiudice committed himself to supporting students in their own intellectual journeys. He has produced teach-ins and workshops over decades, focusing on topical events and historical injustices, "creating an active environment of student involvement questioning the policies of our nation. With colleagues and on his own he has produced events exploring "US involvement in foreign wars in Central America and the Middle East, US Nuclear Defense Policy, Environmental and Labor issues as well as Building a Safe Campus Community, [and] more recently...the policies of the Trump administration and last year the historical context of the recent refugee crisis at our southern border."

DelGiudice also became increasingly committed to reversing what he calls the "technology deficit" at Old Westbury. Through public and private sector grants, and eventually as Director of Capital Planning responsible for technological innovation and construction of the New Academic Building (NAB), DelGiudice has sought to help the campus make the best decisions in its long-term facilities planning.

Each fall, DelGiudice teaches *HI6530 Economics: Theories, Tools, and Debates* for the MAT program. Like all his economics courses, his experience informs his approach to teaching. "While teaching mainstream economic models and techniques," he says, "the emphasis is on what explanatory power do they bring to the social challenges we are facing today—whether its inequality, environmental, conditions of work or the transformation of our market economy into a rentier economy....This brings me back to my original work to insert class into the analysis of our social challenges."

DelGiudice describes himself as "incredibly grateful" for his career at Old Westbury, and "to teach and be taught by our students, to collaborate with my colleagues and to have had a chance to make a difference for the College."



Professor Tom DelGiudice,
Politics, Economics, and Law

Native American Boarding School Students “Write Back”

Student newspapers produced by Native American school children were “complex sites of negotiation,” **Professor Jacqueline Emery** (English) explained at her September talk for the MA in Liberal Studies *Public Lecture Series*. Emery’s lecture, “Newspaper Making Isn’t Play: Native American Boarding School Students Write Back,” shed new light on how young women and men at Native American boarding schools used their publications to question discrimination and colonialism.

Her talk title—“Newspaper making isn’t play”—is a quote from an editorial written for *The Hallaquah* in February 1888, by Ida Johnson, Lula Walker, and Arizona Jackson, three young students at the Seneca Indian School in Oklahoma. As Emery explained,

these girls took their printing of, and editorial work with, the *Hallaquah* seriously, and sought to transform the boarding school press by lending their voices and critical perspectives to it. That the young women assumed roles as printers and editors of their school newspaper, at a time when such roles were limited for women and Native Americans – and especially limited for Native American girls – is worthy of attention.

Unlike the teachers who saw school newspapers as a way to assimilate Native American children into American culture, the girls used the *Hallaquah* to “[serve] their community and [preserve] aspects of Native American culture.” Their writings in the *Hallaquah* subtly challenged assimilation.

Writers and illustrators for *Talks and Thoughts* (a boarding school newspaper in Virginia) also used their press to

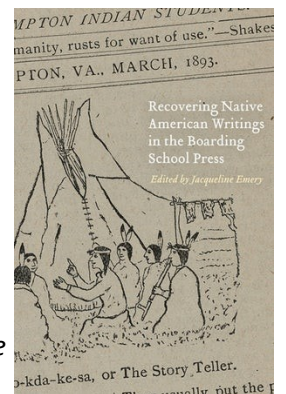


Professor Jacqueline Emery, English Department

preserve Native practices. According to Emery, by creating “identities for themselves as printers, editors, and writers...they became vital participants in intertribal print networks.” Author Elizabeth Bender engaged in “writing back to non-native readers,” rejecting assumptions about the “vanishing Indian.” Artist Harry Hand produced numerous illustrations that preserved Native practices.

For a long time, scholars discounted these newspapers, assuming that their producers had been coopted, or brainwashed, by the schools that housed them. Emery sees the papers in a more positive light, as a “lost trove” of literary output from communities in transition.

To make them more visible, Emery published letters, essays, editorials, and short fiction from such publications, in a prize-winning collection entitled *Recovering Native American Writings in the Boarding School Press* (University of Nebraska Press, 2017). As Emery concluded, “This understudied periodical archive is an untapped resource for scholars.” The very act of publishing these works helps readers reconsider and “challenge the assimilationist/resistance binary that has dominated narratives of the boarding school experience.”



Professor Patricia Harris,
Visual Arts

Coming in Spring 2020 - “The Semiotics of Type”

On **Wednesday, February 19, 2020**, at 5:30 pm in NAB1100, Prof. **Patricia Harris** (Visual Arts) will present “The Semiotics of Type.” This talk focuses on graphic design with an emphasis on typography as an important element in visual communication.

Professor Harris is an artist and

designer, who works across a variety of media including sculpture, drawing, photography, animation, and graphic design.

For more information, email Professor Amanda Frisken, MALS Graduate Director, at friskena@oldwestbury.edu.

Featured Courses for Spring 2020

AS6330 Visualizing America.

This course examines the visual production of U.S. artists and photographers, ranging from the majesty of Hudson River school canvases, to Andy Warhol's glib, late twentieth-century soup cans. The course identifies and traces central "American" themes. Neither a survey of American art, nor a history survey, the course locates U.S. artists and their work within: U.S. society, politics, economics and culture; ideologies; modes of production and circulation; artistic milieus; and transnational interactions. Themes may include: the individual versus the collective; a unitary versus pluralistic national identity; invented pasts versus modernizing aspirations; and urban versus agrarian or frontier focus.



VA6320 African Visual Traditions in the Americas.

African Visual Traditions in the Americas is a course designed to explore different visual traditions in the Americas and the Caribbean that have roots in traditional African arts, cultures and religions, and that acknowledge and reclaim African cultural and visual languages. Through readings of critical texts, cultural theory and visual analysis, the course will examine ideas such as: Diasporic identity, Transatlantic historical and cultural relations, theories of Pan-Africanism and Négritude, and the development of transnational cultural paradigms.

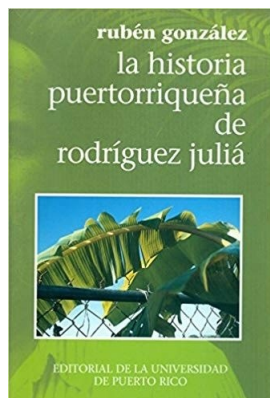


Puerto Rican Literature (continued from page 1)

MALS students with Spanish language skills can take two courses that Prof. González offers for the Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program for Spanish teachers. *ML6520 Masterpieces in Hispanic Literature*, offered each fall, explores topics such as Modernism and Modernity in the literary expression of Spain and Latin America. In *ML6540 Points of Contact: United States and Latin America*, offered in spring, students gain historical perspective of colonialism and immigration affecting both the US and Latin America through the reading and analysis of historical and literary texts.

González describes his second book, *La historia puertorriqueña de Rodríguez Juliá/The Puerto Rican History of Rodríguez Juliá* (Río Piedras: EDUPR, 1997) as analyzing "novels which pretend to be actual chronicles of the eighteenth century that involve the intersection of many historical crossroads." The book "details encounters and crossings, merging and clashes of the white elitist government with the enslaved population and the forging of an African-based, maroon culture." He is currently at work on a third book, which will also focus on the literary output of Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá.

Having taught at SUNY Old Westbury since 1979, González retains his commitment to promoting "an environment in which our students feel academically challenged." His contributions to scholarship on Puerto Rican literatures, his stewardship of the Modern Languages department, and his teaching in the graduate MAT (and MALS) programs, further this educational and scholarly goal.



To learn more about Old Westbury's MA in Liberal Studies degree, contact the Graduate Director, Professor Amanda Frisken, by phone at 516.876.4853, or by email at friskena@oldwestbury.edu.

Schedule of Spring 2020 MALS Courses and Electives

AS6330 VISUALIZING AMERICA (CRN: 14900), R* 4:45-7:00 PM, QUIRKE

EL6530 TOPICS IN MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE (CRN: 14822), T 4:45-7:00 PM, TBA

EL6540, TOPICS IN WORLD LITERATURE (CRN: 14823), M 4:45 PM-7:00 PM, JANI

HI6510, TOPICS IN US HISTORY: STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE (CRN: 15111), W 4:45-7:00 PM, FRISKEN

HI6520, U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL & POLITICAL HISTORY (CRN: 14824), W 4:45-7:00 PM, COCCA

HI6540, TOPICS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY (CRN: 14825), M 4:45-7:00 PM, SHIELDS-MAS

LI6300, INTERNSHIP / FIELD PLACEMENT (BY ARRANGEMENT IN ADVANCE WITH GRADUATE DIRECTOR)

LI7990, INDEPENDENT STUDY (BY ARRANGEMENT WITH GRADUATE DIRECTOR AND FACULTY MENTOR)

ML6530, CERVANTES AND THE GOLDEN AGE (CRN: 14819), M 4:45-7:00 PM, GUERRERO (TAUGHT IN SPANISH)

ML6540, POINTS OF CONTACT: U.S. & LATIN AMERICA, NET COURSE (CRN: 14820) (ONLINE), GONZALEZ (TAUGHT IN SPANISH)

VA6320 AFRICAN VISUAL TRADITIONS IN THE AMERICAS (CRN: 15003), T 4:45-7:00 PM, BERNARD

Note: COURSES IN BOLD, above, were specifically developed for students in the MALS program.

The remaining courses are open to MALS students on a space-available basis. Some require pre-requisites and/or instructor permission.

*R designates Thursday classes