

UFLA

The Utah Foreign Language Association Newsletter

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Jeff Packer
UFLA President

It is an honor to be able to serve this year as the President of the UFLA. I would like to introduce myself to those who do not know me and explain why got into teaching. I am currently an Associate Professor of German at Utah Valley University, where I have been working since 2007. I began my languages career when I was 14 and signed up for Jeff Corry's German class at Cedar City High School. That began a love of languages and language learning that has continued ever since. By that time, I had already decided I wanted to be a teacher, and Herr Corry's influence was a major influence to me in keeping on that track. His class was quirky and interesting but challenging. But what really hooked me was that I could immediately see the success I had in the class. It gave me a confidence that as a nerdy, awkward freshman with thick glasses I didn't find on the ballfield.

It is perhaps a cliché that success breeds success, but I believe that a focus on the successes of students is one of the things every great teacher shares. In our beginning language courses we have a unique opportunity to help our students experience real success. Not since the first grade have most students started a topic from the very beginning the way

they do in a language class. I have always enjoyed watching the progress and the excitement that occurs when they discover that they can communicate in a new language. If you watch them when they do listening activities, you will see that the students laugh out loud when they understand something—not because it is funny, but I believe out of the pure joy that comes from the comprehension.

As I write this I am finishing up final grading for the semester and the school year. It is very easy to focus on mistakes as note for what seems the millionth time a bad conjugation or a misplaced verb, and to get discouraged at both my teaching skills and some students lack of effort. But I also think it is rewarding to take a minute with the students and remind them of their wide eyes on the first day of class as I point out to them how far they have come in so short a time. I find this to be a far better motivator for improvement than yet another red mark on their essays.

Since high school I have kept an eye out for the really good teachers. I had many over the next 15+ years of formal education, and I have had the honor to observe many more as a faculty mentor and especially as a coordinator of many excellent concurrent enrollment teachers. I watch these great teachers and ask them about their teaching philosophy. I steal their ideas and I learn from their examples. Each of them share a dedication to the success of their students.

I hope that as President of the UFLA I will be able to assist each of you in your efforts to help students succeed in your classrooms. It is my sincere desire to leave our profession many years from now better and stronger than when I started. I look forward to getting to know as many of you as possible and to hearing of your successes and of the success of your students.

Alles Gute,

Jeff Packer

Associate Professor of German
Utah Valley University
UFLA President

UFLA Announcements

Mark your calendars!

Entries for the **2018 Poster Contest** are due on December 1st, 2017. The theme is “Bridges.” Check the UFLA website for guidelines.

New! “Seal of Biliteracy” Contest open to High School students: Design a seal to be used on Utah’s Seal of Biliteracy diplomas and related documentation. We will start accepting entries at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year. More information coming soon!

2017 Teacher of the Year / Guest Teacher of the Year Awards

Dear Colleagues – It is again time to consider nominations for our Teacher of the Year and Guest Teacher of the Year Awards for 2017. UFLA recognizes one exceptional world language teacher from each of the following areas: Elementary, Secondary, and Higher Education.

We also recognize one visiting guest teacher. Nominations for this year’s awards are due by **October 15, 2017**. Please take the time to nominate those deserving and talented teachers who we would love to recognize.

Please view UFLA’s website under the “Grants and Awards” link. We also refer you the link below for additional information and the requirements for nomination.

All nominations with accompanying portfolios should be submitted to:

Jared Nebeker – President Elect, UFLA at janebeker@dsdmail.net.

<http://organizations.weber.edu/ufla/GrantsAwards/Awards-TOY.htm>

UFLA Vitality Awards

Ruth Mudrow and John Trimble et al. were recognized by the UFLA Board with the Teacher Vitality Award (Ruth) and the Pat Buckner Collaboration Award (John and his research group). Ruth will receive \$500 to create a STEM Project. She will use the project during the Weber Summer German Camp and with her GAPP students in Wolfsburg. John will receive \$1000 to help fund a collaborative research project comparing the oral proficiency of Weber State’s 1020 students with students from three other Utah universities.

Each Year the UFLA Board grants up to three Vitality Awards and one Collaborative Award. Making a proposal for one of these awards is a fantastic way for UFLA members to get money for innovative projects. Please consider submitting a proposal for the 2018 awards.

Intermountain AP Summer Institute

The Intermountain AP Summer Institute is July 11-14, 2017 at Davis High School. Information for the Institute is now available at: <http://dsd-pd.org/all-conferences/ap-summer-institute/>.

The World Language offerings are expanding because of the explosion in AP offerings due to immersion. This year we will have a French session, a Chinese session, and two Spanish sessions—one for new AP teachers and one for experienced AP teachers. It’s important that all AP teachers participate in these institutes on a regular basis, and this local option is the cheapest (and best)! Schools receive money for each AP test their students pass, so there is typically a school fund to pay for registration.

Here is the lineup:

French – Francine Shirvani

Chinese – Xiaolin Chang

Spanish (New) – Louis Baskinger

Spanish (Experienced) – Maria Vasquez

Language News

Recruiting French Teachers for the Summer 2018 French Teachers Institute

Plan now for the next BYU French Teachers Institute (June 25 through about August 10, 2018). The program includes three weeks on BYU campus and approximately four weeks in France.

This is a great gateway to the BYU Second Language Teaching MA. The main purpose of the institute is to help French Teachers in the public schools improve and renew qualifications in French culture, teaching, and language.

During the in-France portion we will live in Paris and spend five days visiting other French cities. The program is especially suited for French teachers who will begin teaching the DLI Bridge course in Fall 2018. All participants will take two graduate courses: Teaching and Learning about Culture and Teaching Speaking and Listening.

The cost is extremely reasonable (estimated under \$4,000) and includes BYU LDS tuition, lodging and travel in France, a food allowance, and books. Start saving now!

For more information, contact Dr. Robert Erickson, the Institute Director, at rob_erickson@byu.edu or 801-422-5193. Space is limited, so let Dr. Erickson know now if you're interested.

2017 BYU SUMMER WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS OF SPANISH



Designed for Spanish teachers in K-12 schools who want to focus on the teaching Spanish from a proficiency perspective and learn more on how to apply current trends in language teaching to their classes.

June 21 – 22, 2017
BYU Campus in Provo
Topic: Interculturality and Proficiency

Tuition, lunches and materials will be provided. USOE credit upon successful completion.
Cost: \$20 (non-refundable)

For registration and info, please check our website
<http://spanport.byu.edu/blog/program/byu-summer-workshop-for-spanish-teachers/>

If you have questions, please contact: Dr. Nieves Pérez Knapp at (801) 422-3196 - Email: knapp@byu.edu

Next year's UFLA Conference will be at
Weber State University on Thursday, February 15, 2017
Plan now so you can attend.

BYU German Language Fair 2017

Spring has come again, and with it, the BYU German Fair. Thirty-two schools participated this year, coming from all over Utah and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. 2017 has brought some new changes to the Fair, all of which have been for the better! One of the changes is the location. This year, on April 20th, the Fair was held at the Conference Center at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. The Conference Center allowed the Fair to have Kleindeutschland outside in the fresh air. Although the air was a little nippy when the Fair's registration started at 8:00 AM, beautiful and colorful tulips lined the midway and the air warmed throughout the morning of the Fair.

Nearly 700 students from these schools participated in various events and competitions, including poetry memorization and delivery, conversations, interviews, writing their own speeches, various musical performance opportunities, video creation, visual arts for the theme "Typisch Deutsch," and a culture bowl trivia competition. The various events were judged by volunteers from the university, including distinguished professors from BYU's Department of German and Russian in the College of Humanities. It was an amazing venue to provide students with exposure to both students and professors taking and teaching German at the university level.

One very popular event was the baking competition, where students were able to research and try out baking German recipes. Judges enjoyed a wide variety of authentically baked desserts, including: Schwarzwälderkerstorte, Erdbeertorte, Lebkuchen, Kokosmakronen, and Mandelbrot. The winning dessert was an Apfelkuchen that tasted like it came right from a bakery in Germany! The room where the baked goods were housed and judged smelled heavenly!

There was also considerable excitement this year for the soccer tournament, which was also held outside on the fresh green just past Kleindeutschland. With the new location, the games were much more visible and accessible and there was a considerable following of students cheering their schoolmates on. Fußball is an integral part of modern German culture, so the event was a great way for students to improve their skills and come up with creative German team names, like "Die Merkel-Rauten" and "Kinderspiel."

The main cultural experience for the students

is Kleindeutschland, which featured booths where students could purchase various German goodies, play games, learn facts about German culture, and have fun – all in German! Students were given passports for their journey through Kleindeutschland, which were stamped as they completed different activities and visited booths. Students were able to take pictures in the Fotokabine with important German and Austrian figures as well as a giant "Bär"-liner bear! In addition to pictures, students could go to the Zoo at a booth sponsored by one of the attending schools, snack on large pretzels at the Bäckerei, and learn some of the most beloved German short poetry. If a student was caught speaking any language other than German – off to Gefängnis (jail) with them where they had to perform German tongue twisters or sing in German before they were released to go back to the Fair.

The 2017 BYU German Fair was a

great success, and it can only get better! When people come together because of a love of German and a desire to improve and be involved, only good things can happen. The Fair is such an opportunity: bringing together volunteers, faculty, students, and teachers from all around an entire region and be unified with a love for a language and a culture. It takes some work, but providing an experience like the Fair is immensely rewarding and is wonderful in promoting the continuation of German language-learning.

The 2018 BYU German Fair will be held on Thursday, April 19th, and we could not be more excited. For more information on the purpose, events, and details of the Fair, visit: <http://germanFair.byu.edu>





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Advertising Information

The UFLA Newsletter is published three times each year in September, January and May. All issues are distributed via e-mail to UFLA members as well as posted on the UFLA website.

Advertising rates are available at: <http://organizations.weber.edu/ufla/News/AdvertisingRates.html>

Contact Mike Wood at mwood@alpinedistrict.org with any questions or to place an ad.

UFLA Mission

The UFLA exists to stimulate the interest of all people everywhere in the learning and preserving of skills in foreign languages, and all languages other than English and to foster discussion and interchange of ideas relative to the duties, responsibilities, and problems of teachers and students engaged in the study of foreign languages in order to aid and promote the advancement and mutual understanding of teachers and students.