

SJSU ERFA Newsletter
Summer 2021 Volume 34 Number 4
A Newsletter of the SJSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association

President's Message - Spring brings important milestones

By Tim Hegstrom

Last week five of us from the ERFA Board donned our regalia and masks to support the photo-op graduation exercise designed by the SJSU graduation committee. I think we wanted to show a little “love in the time of” COVID-19. We went to the 7th Street pedestrian mall, checked-in on the steps of the Music Building, and took up our station in a covered booth next to the old faculty offices building opposite Clark. The students were socially-distanced from one another, but most were accompanied by a couple of family members. After check-in they proceeded to a tent at the northern end of the mall where they were handed a diploma and had pictures taken with either the President or Provost. As they came out of the tent, one or more of us greeted them with applause and cheers of congratulations.

During slower moments, the graduates would stop to talk to us about their studies and their plans. Several mentioned their favorite professors. One mathematics major told me she was headed off to NYU for graduate study. A philosophy student, who had also been admitted to a PhD program, stopped for a minute to discuss Wittgenstein and Dewey. A couple of students had pre-school age children accompanying them who were also dressed in a cap and gown. That was cute, but it also involved some important imprinting. Students whose parents did not attend college often wore a sash with their robes declaring “first generation.” One of these had decorated her mortarboard with these words, “La primera pero no la última! She was my favorite, but a close second was a marketing student whose mortarboard said, “YOUR AD HERE!” I told that one not to forget his alma mater when he became rich. What did these students have in common? They all realized that they had reached an important milestone, and they all expressed gratitude for the university, their teachers, and those who had come to celebrate with them on this important day.

I have here a similar, if less important, function. This is a personal milestone because it is the last newsletter column I will write as ERFA President, and it is also the right occasion for me to express gratitude. In my year as ERFA President I have never conducted an in-person meeting of the ERFA Board. Our discussions have always been ZOOMed, and my colleagues have kindly adapted to this change. They have consistently focused on the things we can do to maintain connections now, and the things we need to do to keep our

options open for future events that will not be so constrained by public health imperatives. Our electronic newsletter and our website maintained by Carol Christensen and Bethany Shifflett have been essential to this process. Our number of short biographies of retired faculty on Scholarworks continued to increase throughout the year as ERFA members found time to work on them while following the stay-at-home mandate. As an association, we funded two excellent faculty research projects. We even managed to get through our annual business meeting with only a few hiccups.

The Program Committee (Carmen Sigler, Barbara Conry, Bill McCraw, Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno, and Lonna Smith) has been particularly effective in planning ZOOM programs that were well attended by ERFA members, and we look forward to a fall schedule of engaging activities. On August 18, we are offering a webinar about the CalPERS Long Term Care Insurance program. A day-trip tour of the San Jose History Park is scheduled for October 7. It will be in-person, but largely outdoors, and we will eat lunch together. We are also planning for the annual holiday party in December to be held in-person and in the usual fashion. A Zoom meeting will be held in November because we have learned that some colleagues who have moved away from the Bay Area are happy enough to attend ERFA events when they can do so by Zoom. So, we are scheduling a mix of electronic and face-to-face activities.

Like our wonderful SJSU graduates, our association also has a bright future. Recent suggestions made by many of you will be featured prominently on our agenda for this next year. We will find additional ways the association might make your relationship with SJSU even more meaningful. We want to address the questions you have raised about basic issues like parking on campus and library subscriptions, but we will also find ways to highlight the work being done by emeritus and retired faculty. So, thanks for making it a good year despite the difficult times.

A Digital Humanities Center Comes to SJSU

From the SJSU Library News

At the end of a challenging 2020, one uplifting piece of news appeared: San José State University's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library and the College of Humanities and Arts received a \$375,000 Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to establish a Digital Humanities Center (DHC) in the library. Over the next five years, SJSU King Library and H&A will work together to raise the matching \$375,000 as required by the NEH Challenge Grant.

The DHC will provide SJSU students, faculty, staff, and the community a dedicated space to support learning, teaching, and research in digital humanities. For many students, this

will be an introduction to digital humanities, a burgeoning field of study that brings the humanities and technology together. “As a university campus in the center of the Silicon Valley, SJSU will be able to better serve our students by allowing them to engage [with] technology through their exploration of the humanities,” said Shannon Miller, Dean of the College of Humanities and Arts.

For faculty, it will be an opportunity to share their work and expand upon it. A range of faculty research projects in digital humanities are highlighted on the DHC’s website, showing the vast interdisciplinary work already taking place across campus. They include projects that look at the intersection between philosophy and technology, incorporate virtual reality (VR) in storytelling, and explore artificial intelligence (AI) tutors for remote learning. Both current and retired faculty are encouraged to submit their projects to the [DHC’s website](#).

SJSU will be one of three universities in the California State University system to have a digital humanities center, and the only one to also serve the community through SJSU King Library’s partnership with the City of San José. Adds University Library Interim Dean Ann Agee, “The new DHC will open possibilities for collaboration between the university and the community. The recent SpartanQuest project, which maps areas of cultural and historical significance on campus and the neighborhood nearby, demonstrates the potential of this type of collaboration.”

The planned DHC will offer tools and resources that include open-source software, cloud storage, computing equipment, and the expertise of librarians who will help guide users. The space itself will feature three distinct areas that allow for consultation, collaboration, and presentation. Visible throughout the DHC will be the floor-to-ceiling video screens that will showcase the diverse digital humanities work occurring on campus, from courses to lectures to guest series. Proposed plans for the center are on the DHC’s website.

To bring the DHC to the university, SJSU King Library and H&A have started to raise the first year’s matching goal of \$75,000. With a generous gift of \$50,000 from Diane Brandenburg, a dear friend of the library and former board member of the Library Leadership Council, this year’s matching campaign is off to a great start. A crowdfunding campaign “Our Dream Digital Humanities Center” will launch on June 7th to raise the remaining \$25,000. We hope to secure the first year’s goal by the end of the summer to begin working on the second year’s goal of \$100,000. “Five years is a long-term commitment to sustain a campaign, but the opportunity to bring the DHC to SJSU with NEH support doesn’t come often,” says Anh Ly, Development Director for SJSU King Library.

The DHC will add to the growing technology- supported learning spaces in SJSU King Library and will have a significant impact on the university's courses, scholarship, and research, as well as the public's engagement with digital humanities in the years to come. Learn more about digital humanities and the NEH matching campaign on the DHC's website.

Faculty Trustee Addresses Annual Meeting

by Jackie Snell

The guest speaker at our spring Zoom meeting was the faculty representative to the CSU Board of Trustees, SJSU professor Romey Sabalius. Discussing the future of the CSU, Romey acknowledged the magnitude of changes in the past year, including a change of Chancellors, and especially the impact of the pandemic on faculty and students. But the budget news is good. There was a costly loss of international students and campuses spent about half of their reserves, but through Federal stimulus packages and State legislators reversing a planned budget cut, this year's budget is probably one of the best we've had.

Other highlights: Enrollments have been dropping nationwide even before the pandemic. CSU worked with high schools to have more students completing the A-G requirements thus being more college ready. There will be an effort to reach out to non-traditional learners such as professionals (who want to up-skill or re-skill), those with some-college-but-no-degree, students with families, students in remote areas, students with disabilities.

In order to reach out to these new students the CSU needs to become more flexible in bureaucratic matters like admissions and advising, and by offering alternative teaching times such as asynchronous online courses. We also need to consider more short-term options like certificates, credentials, badges, modules, and stackable degrees.

You can find a YouTube video of the meeting at https://youtu.be/70EgZ9k_nsc. Prof. Sabalius's talk begins 20 minutes after the start of the video.

Nursing Program Zoom Announcement

by Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno

On Thursday, June 3rd ERFA sponsored a fun Zoom meeting with eight retired Nursing attendees. We had such a good time talking about family, books, travel and what's happening in the nursing program that we plan to Zoom again on Thursday, September 9th at 2pm. If you would like to be added to the announcement list, please send an email to mjgmoreno@sbcglobal.net.

Language Matters

By Rosemary Henze

I have been working as a volunteer contact tracer for Santa Clara County since December 2020. I experienced the terrible surge in Covid cases of the winter months, when it was common to have upwards of 1500 new positive cases per day in the county. Thankfully, the rate of infection has greatly slowed since March, but we are not "out of the woods" yet. Almost every workday, I encounter a pandemic story that deepens my appreciation for the intricacy of connections and resources that help people to cope with the pandemic. And hearing one's native language is undeniably one of the cornerstones of these connections.

One day in April, I received a case that another staff member had been trying to reach for the past two days, logging six unanswered calls. When there is no preferred language indicated in the person's record, we use English as the "default." I left a voice message, thinking if this person didn't respond after six calls, why would she respond after seven? But her name caught my attention, reminding me of friends from a particular country. I looked up the middle name and found that it is a common name in that country, so I thought perhaps she was a speaker of the official language of that country. I deliberated, knowing that names do not accurately predict the person's preferred language, but I decided for the 8th and last attempt I should try calling through a translator. With the tap of a button in the software program we use for contact tracing, I connected with a translator who helped me leave a message.

To my surprise, five minutes later the person called me back, speaking fluent English! Though she must have understood all those messages in English, it was the one in the native language that finally moved her to call back. I was happy to learn that she only had mild symptoms and was already feeling better. She was doing everything needed to protect others and required no additional resources. Then I asked her how she thought she might have been exposed to Covid.

At that point, she told me she had been on a plane coming from her ancestral country the past Sunday. She thought she might have been exposed during the long flight. She had tested negative before the flight, as required by the airlines. However, the day after her arrival in San José, she began having symptoms and tested positive a couple of days later. Given the tight time frame, it's hard to know whether she was exposed on the plane, or if she herself was already infectious but asymptomatic. Either way, our protocol requires us to fill out an air travel exposure form so that a team of investigators can look into it and inform others who might have been exposed that they need to quarantine. Given the tight

quarters on a plane, many more people could become infected and continue to spread the virus to others on arrival. Hopefully, any resulting spread would now be checked. It made me reflect on the power of the native language and the connections it builds. We just don't know which call attempt might finally motivate someone to call back, but in this case, the quick response suggests it was the native language that made a difference -- even for this fully proficient bilingual.

Academic Senate and University News

By Susan McClory (ERFA Representative)

The Academic Senate bid farewell to Kenneth Peter who is retiring and entering the FERP program. Dr. Peter has been a mainstay in the Academic Senate, serving since 1992 with only a two-year break in his service. He was the first person to serve two terms as Chair of the Academic Senate.

His many accomplishments include serving on the Senate Special Committee on the Joint Library Project that resulted in guidance for the creation of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. He also served on the Special Drafting Committee, which crafted “Out of Crisis-Reforming Governance of the California State University”; he co-chaired the AIM Task Force, which generated “Alleviating Faculty Workload at SJSU”; and authored “Requesting Changes in the Systemwide Proposed Intellectual Property Policy.”

As one of his last contributions to the Academic Senate, Dr. Peter ushered major policies through the Professional Standards Committee concerning the RTP process for Tenure/ Tenure Track faculty to include a provision for the Scholarship of Engagement and a policy outlining the procedures for appointment, reappointment, and evaluation of Lecturer Faculty including the criteria for range elevation.

Dr. Peter’s presence on the Academic Senate will be sorely missed.

On May 10, a new set of Officers and Senators began their terms on the Academic Senate. The officers for the 2021-2022 academic year will be as follows.

Chair: Alison McKee

Vice Chair: Karthika Sasikumar

A Local Travel Focus

Associate Vice Chair: Kimb Massey

Chair of Curriculum and Research: Brandon White

Chair of Instruction and Student Affairs: Laura Sullivan-Green

Chair of Organization and Government: Tabitha Hart
Chair of Professional Standards: Shelley Cargill
CSU Statewide Senator representative to the Executive Committee: Julia Curry

Membership Benefits Survey Results

by Bethany Shifflett

Thanks very much to all of you who filled out our survey about the benefits that come with your emeritus status or ERFA membership. Not only did we gain valuable insights, but through your responses to open-ended items we found that many were unaware of some of the available benefits. As a result, the ERFA Board has asked Tim Hegstrom to chair a group to raise awareness and also to advocate for some of the suggestions you made. Here is a summary of the data:

Emeritus benefits members most frequently use: SJSU Email (83%). Zoom (83%), MySJSU (73%), MLK Services (73%), Free SJSU Parking (66%). For the benefits members indicated not using, in many cases the follow up written comments noted it was because they did not know about them. We will attempt to rectify this in the ERFA newsletter and future emails to ERFA members.

ERFA activities and resources members have used: Newsletter (88%). Directory (71%), December Holiday Party (50%), Fall Luncheon (50%), Spring Luncheon (45%), Field Trips (41%), Special Interest Groups (25%). Again, written comments noted that for activities like the luncheons, many folks who indicated they did not participate explained it was only because of the COVID constraints and they look forward to getting back together in person.

To close, with Emeritus status you continue to have access to many SJSU resources associated with your SJSUOne account. One example is being able to get a VTA pass (all buses and light rail lines) for just \$25 a semester. Information here: <https://www.sjsu.edu/as/departments/transportation-solutions/smartpass-overview/employees.php>.

Additionally, there is a wide range of discounts for you to take advantage of. Check here for details: <https://www.sjsu.edu/up/mybenefits/employee-discounts.php>. We will continue to highlight specific benefits and resources in future issues.

Annual Business Meeting

By Jackie Snell

At the spring business meeting, members voted unanimously for the Board-recommended slate of Officers: Vice President (President in 2022-23), Mary Jo Gorney-Moreno; Secretary, Celia Bakke; Treasurer, Bill Campsey; Member-at-Large, Lucy McProud; and Academic Senate Representative, Susan McClory. Vice President Jackie Snell will take over as President.

Several changes to the ERFA Bylaws and Constitution were also approved unanimously. These had to do with making the document consistent with things we are already doing, such as meeting virtually. You can find more details about these changes in the June 7 Minutes: Newsletters/Minutes | Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association | San Jose State University.

In addition, President Tim Hegstrom took the occasion to acknowledge the years of service of individuals who have left the Board this year: Steve Branz, Carol Christensen, Jill Cody, Dolores Escobar Hamilton, and Marion Yoder. He then read a resolution in honor of Abdel El-Shaieb who served as Treasurer for more than a decade and as a Board member for many more years.

Report on CSU-ERFSA Meeting

By Nancie Fimbel

The CSU ERFSA board met on Zoom on April 20, 2021. The CSU's new Chancellor, Joseph Castro, addressed the group, promising to assist us in getting contact information from the campuses about new retirees. As usual, the committees reported on their activities since the previous meeting and their reports for the spring ERFSA newsletter are now available at <https://csuerfsa.org>.

The two primary concerns at this time are the question of the viability of the CalPERS Longterm Care Program and the continuing, though slowed, decrease in ERFSA membership.

Romey Saballius, faculty rep to the CSU Board of Trustees (and SJSU professor), provided an update on the Ethnic Studies requirement and other issues. The next meeting, also scheduled for Zoom, will be held in October.

Emeritus Parking Permits

As an SJSU emeritus faculty member you are entitled to a parking permit that allows you to park free on campus. A couple of years ago, parking services made these and more stickers or placards, you just need to have your license plate number properly registered.

These Emeritus Courtesy permits, as they are officially called, are issued for one year and expire at the end of each June.

The good news is: whether you are applying for the first time or requesting a renewal, you can now do it all online. Send an email to parking@sjsu.edu. Include your name, your Tower Card number (which indicates your status as Emeritus), and the license plate number of the vehicle or vehicles you are registering. (You may register up to four vehicles, but only one may be parked on campus at a time.)

That's all there is to it. But remember— permits expire at the end of each June. And above all, make sure the license plate numbers are accurate.

Calendar

Zoom Webinar about CalPERS Long Term Care Insurance Program Wednesday, August 18th at 11:00 am (Pacific Time) Featuring Dr. Dave Wagner, Chair of CSU ERFSA's Healthcare Benefits Committee and a CalPERS representative with expertise on the subject Invitation with Zoom link and registration information will be sent in Mid- July

Visit to San Jose History Park; Thursday, October 7th 10:00 am to 12:30pm
An opportunity to explore the park, visit the Chinese American Museum, the One-Room School House and the Markham House, and enjoy a picnic lunch in the company of former colleagues. Announcement with registration information to be sent in September

Fall General Meeting Friday, November 5th
A Virtual Meeting; Time and Speaker: TBD

Holiday Celebration,
Friday, December 3, at 11:30 am. Venue: TBD

Chat Room

As a reminder, this is a section with news about travels and activities volunteered by the membership. Please send updates on your activities for the Chat Room to Nancie Fimbel at fimbeln@gmail.com or by snail mail at

239 Cypress Point Drive
Mountain View, CA 94043

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**In Memoriam**

Richard Keady, Religious Studies  
Robert Wilson, Sociology  
Marvin M. Shrewsbury, Biology  
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SJSU ERFA Executive Board

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Campsey
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Activities-- Lonna Smith, Elba Maldonado-Colon, Lucy McProud
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McProud, Carmen Sigler
Web Administrators - Carol Christiansen, Bethany Shifflett

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