A word from our graduates

Dr. Iliana Rosales-Figueroa, Visiting Assistant Professor at Denison University (Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures, UC)

“My experience as a graduate student at UC prepared me greatly to excel as a professor. The academic work, amazing mentors, and training I received as a teaching and research assistant all helped me develop into the person I am now and to build critical thinking skills in every aspect of my position. It helped me prepare for the rigors of being a language professor and to be able to adapt what I learned to assist my students in the classroom.”

Dr. Matthew Fehskens, Assistant Professor of Spanish at East Tennessee State University (Ph. D. in Romance Languages and Literatures, UC)

“The Department of Romance Languages and Literatures provided me with a collegial environment and graduate student society that developed my language skills and criticism outside the classroom. There was such a diverse community of students from Europe, Africa, Latin America and the United States, and I often found some of my best ideas were developed in the hours after a class when I would dig into my questions with my classmates. The friendships that later blossomed into professional connections were a natural consequence of this sociable atmosphere and mutual curiosity for each other’s cultures, languages and projects. The yearly conference was also a special occasion in that from the first year, I was placed in an environment that encouraged an academia-wide scope of criticism, and nurtured the community of scholars. I met future colleagues, authors I would end up reading, and
heard exciting new research every year I was at UC. Being a grad student in on the organization of this conference from day one, I acquired an invaluable education on research, collegiality, and the academic career.”

**Isabel Gómez-Sobrino (M.A. in Spanish, Ph. D. candidate in Romance Languages and Literature, UC)**

“I arrived at the University of Cincinnati in 2007 in order to start my Masters in Spanish literature. From the beginning, the professors at UC always offered their help with papers and the expectations of a Masters student. Being part of the Department of Romance Languages has been one of the most enriching experiences of my life since I have been able to encounter people from Latin America, France, Portugal and the United States who, considering the different cultural background, had something that always kept us tied together: the love for language, culture and literature.”

**Manuel Iris (Ph. D. candidate in Romance Languages and Literature, UC)**

My time as a Graduate Student at UC has been one of the most important experiences of my life. I have found, in my colleagues as well as in my professors, all the support, friendship, and intellectual motivation I have needed to grow as a professional and as a creative writer. I have greatly enjoyed the way my professors are willing to help outside the classroom, giving each student close, personal attention.
Leah Hunt (M.A. in French, UC)

“My MA degree in French from UC, RLL has offered some of the most memorable experiences of my life- as an educational and professional development experience, I would say that nothing rivals it. Having been granted the opportunity to co-Chair our immensely successful 32nd Cincinnati Conference on Romance Languages where I also presented my research in Caribbean literature; to coordinate a superb novel reading for a prominent Haitian-Canadian author; and to enjoy intellectually stimulating courses by outstanding faculty members has already opened so many doors for me, and I only just graduated in June! Though perhaps the greatest gift my MA in French literature has afforded me, is the knowledge of what it means to be human. I wouldn’t trade this degree in for anything in the world.”

Paola Cadena (M.A. Spanish and first-year Ph. D. student in Romance Languages and Literatures, UC)

“My time as a graduate student of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures has been a great growing experience in many aspects of my professional life. In one hand, it offered me the opportunity of having an academic education in Latin American and Spanish literature with well-qualified teachers from different countries enriched significantly my knowledge in all the topics of my main academic interests. And, on the second hand, the creative writing abilities of my teachers and classmates, along with the workshops in that field I had the opportunity to take, were also an important benefit to my professional development as a writer.”
Jonathan Hilton (Spanish Major, UC)

“For me, the best part of being a student of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures has been interacting with my professors. The instructors are all friendly, and if you put in some effort, many will take the time to get to know you outside of the classroom—including going with you to dinner, helping you improve your fluency during office hours, or even inviting you to Christmas parties. Of course, the international travel is great, too. I’ve been able to study abroad in Nicaragua, Chile, Spain, France, and Belgium thanks to Romance Language and Charles Phelps Taft Center funding. This has allowed me to learn two romance languages, Spanish and French, during my time at RLL.”

Sara Hutchinson (B.A. in Spanish, UC)

“One of the most enriching parts of studying a Spanish major at UC was the diversity and enthusiasm of the professors. Even at the basic level, I was exposed to the accents of Spanish, Latin American, and non-native speaking instructors, allowing me to grow to understand Spanish-speakers from all over the world. This instruction, coupled with a tremendous study abroad experience, had me fluent and culturally aware at the date of my graduation.”