

## Mentorship Project is in its 2nd Semester

ELC instructor Alissa Cohen wanted to help her students integrate into the larger MSU community in sustained and meaningful ways. In addition to training them in English academic language, she wanted to help them to build skills, experiences, and connections that will serve them throughout their academic careers at MSU. So in the Fall of 2013, she started the English Language Center Mentorship Project. The project matches provisionally-admitted MSU students in their last semester of intensive English classes at the ELC with two mentors each - one domestic MSU student as well as one former ELC student who is now a successful full-time academic student at MSU.

Together, these two mentors guide and advise their ELC "mentee" as they complete a series of tasks designed to help the ELC student connect with the greater university and benefit from the experience and insight of student mentors who have been in their situation. In one task, for example, mentors are asked to invite their ELC students to attend an extra-curricular club activity or event with them and later to help the ELC students to explore campus clubs and organizations that fit their own interests. In another task, mentors share their favorite MSU campus resources with their mentees. In yet another, ELC students interview their mentors about such topics as choosing majors, academic workload, and rules and expectations in academic classes. They then observe a class with each of their mentors.

Ms. Cohen met with the mentors regularly to discuss their progress with the mentorship tasks. They talked about their own challenges adjusting to university life and to brainstorm ideas for helping their "mentees" to navigate these same difficulties. What emerged from some of these meetings was that both domestic and international students had struggled with many of the same difficulties their first year at MSU: making friends,



ELC Student Hao Wan (left) with her Domestic Mentor, Marie Gebbie (middle), and International Mentor, Shasha Liu (right)

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finding help at such a huge university, choosing and changing their majors, learning how to use the academic resources available to them (most notably their professors' office hours), and getting involved outside of academics. Some of the domestic students even cited instances of culture shock adjusting to life in a midwestern college town. Throughout the program, mentors expressed a genuine interest in helping their mentees and gave insightful and positive comments about how much they themselves were learning and growing as a result of the project.

Chunlei Zhao, International Student Mentor comments, "For me, this is a unique experience. It gives me the opportunity to help people who are in the same situation as I was, and I am glad to provide all of my knowledge to make their life easier." Chang Yu, ELC Student adds, "I got lots of useful information and university resources from our mentorship. We also shared interesting things and met with each other at our free time. This mentorship let me make my first foreigner friends in MSU."

Carson Tabiolo, Domestic Student Mentor, says, "Since the end of the program, I talk with my mentorship cohort every once in a while; I'd say once a month or so. We also love going out to eat together. While eating we catch up on life, and discuss other current events. Having them in my life still gives me so much perspective and enriches my college experience even further."

# The ELC GLOBE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY College of Arts & Letters English Language Center

## The ELC History Lecture Course Celebrates an Anniversary

By Leah Addis

Spring 2014 marks the 10th semester of the ESL 093 Content Lecture course. What started as an experiment has become an important part of the ELC's curriculum, preparing students for their academic futures at MSU and elsewhere.

When we first began developing the course, we were looking for something different to offer our students. We realized that while most of our ELC classes are small and communicative (great for language acquisition) when students leave us, they experience a range of classroom styles, including large lectures. We felt it was important that our students also have experience with the lecture format where the contact with the professor is much more limited and the expectations are much different.



093 Students listen to a lecture in Olds Hall

Materials were developed in-house, and the pilot ran in Spring 2010. It was well-received from the beginning and has continued to be successful. All 093 students attend lecture on Mondays and Thursdays. Leah Addis and Elizabeth Webster share the lecturer position, trading off year-by-year. Depending on the semester, between 45 and 250 students fill the lecture hall. Students take notes on the lecture and use iclickers to answer questions. The lecturer can see from the responses the level of understanding or the range of opinions in the room. This makes lecture an interactive experience for everyone. On Tuesdays and Fridays, students meet in

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## Arabic-English Language & Culture Exchange

By Laura Ballard

This spring semester, the ELC has again partnered with MSU's Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) to provide fun and interactive language and culture exchange opportunities for both international and domestic students. In February, the ELC and CeLTA launched the Arabic-English Language and Culture Exchange, a group where Arabic-speaking English language learners and English-speaking Arabic language learners come together to share their cultures and practice their second languages. At each of the meetings, thirty students gathered to meet one another, mingle, play language games, and find a conversation partner. Activities included language games from vocabulary races to identifying animal sounds. They also learned about cultural activities like traditional dances and marriage traditions. As this language exchange and the Portuguese-English language exchange (which started in Fall of 2013) have been so successful, the ELC and CeLTA are working to create similar groups for Korean, Japanese, and Chinese in the Fall 2014 semester.



Students play a game using their Arabic listening skills





*ELC Instructor Elizabeth Webster gives a lecture in Wells Hall*

recitation where there are typically about 15 students per section. The recitation instructor collects homework, answers questions, leads review activities, facilitates class discussions, and administers quizzes and tests over the material presented in lecture. The lecturer and recitation instructors meet regularly to go over course materials, plan upcoming lessons, and stay in touch about student performance.

The overall theme of the course is “U.S. History and Society.” We chose this theme for a number of reasons: 1) Most undergraduates are required to take a history course, even if history is not their major or one of their interests! This fact often surprises students. 2) Students should be able to learn something USING their English. Therefore, we picked a topic that they wouldn’t already know a lot about in their native languages. 3) The history topics we include help international students understand current American culture, society, and news.

Each semester, we cover a range of social, cultural, and economic topics. In both fall and spring semesters, we begin with the American Revolution, basic U.S. civics, and our founding documents (especially the Bill of Rights). In the fall, we teach additional units on the Progressive Era (urbanization, immigration, and women’s rights at the turn of the 20th century), the Roaring Twenties, and the Great Depression. In spring, our units include Post-WWII America (consumerism & the Baby Boom), the Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movement. No matter the topic, we always find that something in the news connects directly to the history we are studying.

*So what academic benefits have we seen for our students in this course?*

O93 Content requires a lot of personal responsibility. Students must be more independent and more organized than in their smaller ESL courses because their face time with each instructor is more limited.

This class also provides extensive practice in note-taking, a skill that must be developed over time. Students are in lecture for an hour twice a week. Structured note guides are provided online ahead of time. Students print and review them before class, predict what they might hear, look up new vocabulary, etc. Then during lecture, they fill in the notes. If students are not able to catch everything during lecture, they have many opportunities to find the information they missed. PowerPoints are posted online each lecture. Students can also ask questions during recitation the following day.

There is a lot of vocabulary to learn in O93 Content. Some words are specific to the history topics being studied (e.g., veto, legislation, segregation, McCarthyism). There is also a lot of academic vocabulary which students will encounter in a wider variety of contexts (e.g., approve, consume, enforcement, authorize). We also focus on using prefixes and suffixes to guess at the meanings of new words (demo-, anti-, -ism, etc.). Students will need a range of vocabulary acquisition skills when they enter their academic courses. This course gives them a taste of the kind of vocabulary they will encounter and gives them strategies on how to learn them.

Over the years, student reaction to the course has generally been quite positive. Those who do the work consistently and conscientiously report huge gains in their note-taking ability, vocabulary range, and confidence to succeed at MSU. However, we do get some pushback each semester. The class is not one that students can slide through with minimal effort. Those who try to “game” the course by skipping lecture, copying notes from friends, begging hints about exams from classmates, etc., often perform very poorly. For this reason, the teaching faculty works very hard at the beginning of each semester to help students understand the purpose and benefits of this course. Those who buy into our plan see great results in their English and academic learning!

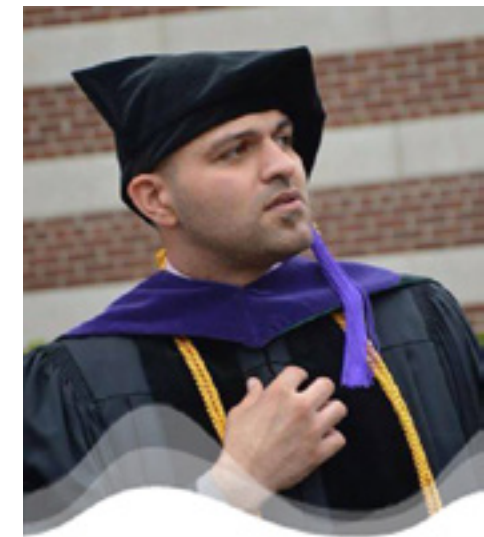
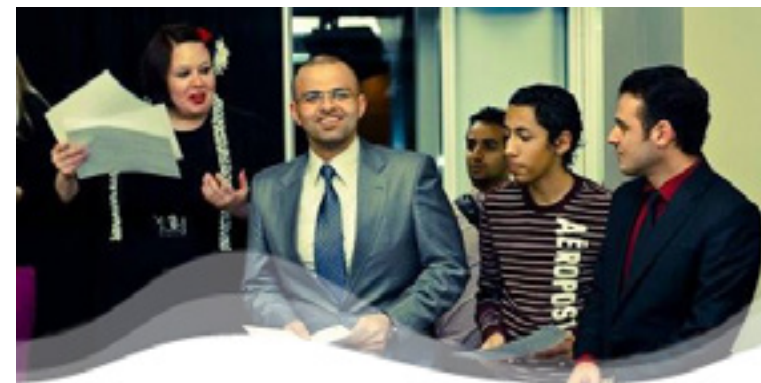
## ELC Alumni Recounts Experience Studying in MSU

*By Marwan Al-Khalidy*

My journey with Michigan State University started in the beginning of January 2011, when I got a scholarship to study Law from the Iraqi Government. For me it was a dream to go overseas as a graduate student. The United States was the peak of that dream. When people talk about studying abroad, no doubt that there is no country in the world promotes the academic approaches as the USA. I had never been out of my country, and I wondered how my life was going to be in the United States. As a foreigner who doesn’t speak English very well, I had to take English language lessons in the English Language Center at MSU. The first person I met at MSU was the secretary of the English Language Center who left a great first impression of the people I am going to deal with. I spent almost a year studying English language in that solid program, then a year and a half in the College of Law. The well prepared and organized instructors and professors enriched my language, knowledge, and experience.

The three semesters in the English Language Center was not just learning English; it was preparation for the academic study life and to adapt to the American environment. In the ELC, we were not only studying English; rather it went beyond that. We were learning the American culture, how to deal and treat people in the community, and how to be a successful student in your specific major. Furthermore, meeting people from many different backgrounds from around the world teaches you that diversity is great. The variety of student’s cultures, behaviors, customs, and attitudes was a great opportunity to change some stereotypes.

There were some hard situations I faced when I was in MSU, and I would not have been able to go through them without supportive people I met there. For instance, I remember the first lesson I had in law school; it was in a specific area of intellectual property law, which I barely knew about. I was shocked in the en-



tire 50 minutes of the class. I told myself, “You cannot make it Marwan! You better find a solution, such as you better drop this class.” I made an appointment with the professor, went to his room and was shocked again. I was shocked about how great and nice he was to me. He spent the same amount of time in the classroom trying to clarify the subject and make it easier. At that moment I knew that I am here not only to get a certificate or to get good grades, I am also here to gain knowledge, learn professors’ techniques and methods of teaching.

When I went back to Iraq, I aimed to transfer those good approaches and methods I had encountered in the United States. At the beginning I found a job as a part time law lecturer in the Business and Management Department in Ishik University in the Kurdistan Region in Northern Iraq. When I was teaching, I used all those methods I had experienced in Michigan State University College of Law. I remembered those professors who had taught me, their attitudes and techniques with the students, their teaching methods, even the techniques of the exam questions. I really owe those professors every moment they spent teaching in love and honesty. As a result, I was honored to receive great feedback from my business students.

I also received an offer from the English Center in the same university to teach English. It was such a great opportunity for me to keep using my English language and at the same time help students improve their English language skills. Right now I am teaching Listening and Speaking, and it I find it really enjoyable to teach. Listening and Speaking was one of my favorite subjects at the English Language Center in MSU, and I still have the notes and the handouts from those classes.

Teaching English is a joy for me, and it is absolutely true that if you love your job, you will be successful and creative at it. Finally, there are no words to express my thanks and gratitude to all the people who I have met in the U.S. who helped me achieve my goals.



## MSU Graduate Students Learn the Inner Workings of an International Student Forum

TESOL Master of Arts students from MSU attended and assisted with the all day Graduate Student Forum event at the 2014 International TESOL Conference in Portland. This forum is a venue for graduate students from all over the world to showcase research and ideas focused on language instruction pedagogy. In all there were 45 sessions and 20 different poster presentations. This year students from Georgia State University led the event, and next year, MSU will take the lead. Congratulations Spartans, on a job well done!



*Left to right: Maggie Bullock, Seongshin Kim, Abigail Ruth Yoder (GSU), and Hima Rawal, Maggie Vosters, and Olga Khodakov (MSU)*

## A Cold Winter but a Melting Pot: The ELC's Indoor Soccer Team

The long, harsh winter has kept most of us in Michigan inside for the last few months, dreaming of warm sunshine, blue skies, and green grass. It can be tough to stay active during this annual deep freeze, so the ELC fielded an indoor soccer team to help pacify our "goal-driven" international students. ELC Fun Captain Laura Ballard started beating the drum for participants in early January, and didn't have any trouble finding enough players to create a team. The ELC Exclamation Points are made up of students, teachers, and spouses of teachers from a variety of backgrounds. During Saturday night practices at Demonstration Hall, you could hear Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Korean, and Chinese mixed in to the English-speaking medium.

Captain Juan Carlos Royo, or "Juanka" as the team calls him, is the husband of ELC instructor Nadine Royo. He organizes practices, positions, and playing time, and encourages the guys to work as a team and play together. "I joined the team because I wanted to get myself back into shape, and indoor soccer is a lot of sprinting," said Javier Salas, husband of ELC instructor Carlee Salas. "But the best part has been seeing guys from all these different countries who are used to playing different styles of soccer to blend in together and play as



*The Exclamation Points after a great game*

one team. We've learned a lot from each other and it's been really fun."

The team participated in the Men' B league which had 26 teams. They played 4 games and 1 play off game. While they lost their playoff game, the Exclamation Points put a positive punctuation mark on the end of the winter season. You're likely to see many of the guys playing pick up soccer in the spring, summer, and fall, before starting another indoor season next Fall.

Contact Juan Carlos Royo (jroyaster@gmail.com) for more information about playing!

## IEP Students and Instructor Participate in Cook and Learn Project

On the evening of March 11, 2014, five ELC students and ELC instructor Stacy Sabraw participated in a Cook and Learn Project in the basement kitchen of McDonel Hall. This came courtesy of an undergraduate student named Andrew “Drew” Najor who is researching whether or not teaching students to cook an authentic recipe in a different language enhances their foreign language skills.

As Najor puts it: “When students are presented a recipe in another language with a guide who cooks the dish alongside them, students use their language skills, contextual clues, and prior knowledge in order to complete the task. This is a far more realistic environment than a paper test about grammar and vocabulary, and also, who doesn’t like eating food?” Najor works under the guidance of Angelika Kraemer who is the Director of the Center for Language Teaching Advancement (CeLTA) Language School and CeLTA’s Executive Associate Director.

The students who participated had to take a short cooking vocabulary test before and after the class. The students had varying levels of cooking knowledge from just a little to very practiced. The recipe they learned to make was Macaroni & Cheese, a traditional American dish, which is vegetarian (for those with dietary restrictions) and is not too hard to make.

The five IEP students who came were Habib Albharani, Ali Al Satarwah, and Nouf Alshehab from Saudi Arabia; Qifeng Chen from China; and Arivan Zanluca from Brazil. Under the guidance of Ms. Sabraw, the students followed the recipe and did everything from grating the cheese to whisking the sauce to sprinkling the topping. While the Macaroni & Cheese was baking in the oven, Ms. Sabraw and Ms. Alshehab made a salad with lettuce, cucumber, red bell pepper and grape tomatoes. Once the dish was cooked, dinner was served. Everyone agreed the food was delicious and the class was fun. The results of Andrew’s study showed that the students who participated in the cooking lesson were more likely to remember and produce vocabulary words from the lesson than those who did not.



## ELC to Teach a Course for MSU’s Support Staff

### Bilingual Support Staff: Advanced Communication Skills

Speaking more than one language is an amazing asset, yet sometimes in this fast-paced world it’s difficult to find the words or expressions to say exactly what we want to say. This series of workshops will cover written and oral communication strategies, grammar, and guidance for effective personal interaction. (Designed for MSU professionals who are advanced speakers of English as a second language.)

June 5, 12, 19, and 26 2014  
2:30-4:30pm, Wells Hall B243  
\$250 each

More details: <http://professionaldevelopment.hr.msu.edu/>