

WCU SPANISH GRADUATION PROFILES

Four WCU students just finished their degrees in Spanish and four more are graduating with a Spanish minor! See some of their profiles below:

SPANISH B.A. and B.S.Ed.

COLA WILLIAMSON

What degree have you earned?

Spanish Education (B.S.Ed.).

Where do you call home?

Bryson City, North Carolina.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I plan on maintaining a weathered eye on the horizon for a Spanish teaching job. I also plan to take a minute or two to bask in the joy of accomplishing one of my lifelong goals, and as always, make music!

How do you plan to use Spanish?

Well, I plan on teaching Spanish for the rest of my life; furthermore, my wife and I plan on teaching English abroad throughout the summer months, with a predominant focus on Spanish speaking countries. My career aside, Spanish is also a personal interest, so I plan on remaining steadfast in continually educating myself about the language and different cultures that I have come to love.

How do you use it in your life now?

I am currently student teaching at Smoky Mountain High School in Sylva, NC in a Spanish classroom, and it is great because I get to talk about Spanish everyday! Furthermore, I get to explore new avenues and techniques for presenting this language and the various cultures to my students.

What is your most meaningful Spanish-related story?

Probably when I had my first dream in Spanish, and the time when I was in [Valencia, Spain](#) eating with my host family, and I tried to use the expression for “the little things” in Spanish the same way that I would in English, so when I said “*las cosas pequeñas*,” my family gave me this really strange ‘we don’t understand you’ look! Needless to say, I felt like an idiot.

Anything else?

I would just like to say thank you to my wife, Ashley Claxton, and our daughter, Scout, for their unwavering support; this would have been impossible without your continuous words of encouragement. I love you guys so much! I would like to thank Suzanne Tompkins, my Cooperating Teacher, for teaching me more about Spanish than I ever could have imagined while also listening to me constantly complain about edTPA. I would also like to thank Dr. Oxford for instilling in me a deeper passion for the Spanish language, and providing clarity for me when things didn’t always make sense. Thanks, Dr. Centeno-Pulido for all of your advice, patience and feedback throughout this student teaching experience, and for inviting me to your mom’s house for a delicious lunch in Mislata. I feel honored to have had you and Dr. Oxford as professors.



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BYRON TENESACA

What degree have you earned?

I majored in Studio Art and Spanish.

Where do you call home?

My home is San José, a small village in [Ecuador](#) where most of my family lives.

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans right after graduation are to find a job and a place to live so that I can financially get ready for graduate school.

How do you plan to use Spanish?

I plan to use my Spanish to find a side job as an interpreter or simply to communicate with the Hispanic community when needed.

How do you use it in your life now?

I use my Spanish to communicate with my family as well as my friends from Latin America.

What is your most meaningful Spanish-related story?

The most meaningful story would be getting to know so many people in the Spanish program that are passionate about learning the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures.

Anything else?

I would like to say that when you major in Spanish you are not only going to learn about the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures, but also about yourself and humanity in general.



JOSHUA LAWRENCE ENGLERT

What degrees have you earned?

Spanish B.A., International Studies B.A., Japanese Studies minor.

Where do you call home?

Matthews, North Carolina.

What are your plans after graduation?

The [JET Program](#), teaching English in Japan.

How do you plan to use Spanish?

With Spanish I plan to continue traveling and gaining more depth of experience.

How do you use it in your life now?

I use it daily through the Spanish program at WCU.

What is your most meaningful Spanish-related story?

Hard to pick the most meaningful experience with Spanish but during my stay in Spain I was able to experience [Semana Santa walking around the streets of Málaga](#).

Anything else?

Despite the limited resources and number of professors, I think the Spanish program kills it!!!

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SPANISH MINOR

RYAN KASTLE

What degree have you earned?

Communication with a focus in broadcasting is my major, and Spanish is my minor.

Where do you call home?

Canton, North Carolina.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to continue to work at [WPTL radio station in Canton](#).

How do you plan to use Spanish?

To assist others in any way, and possibly as an enhancer for a job in the communication field.

How do you use it in your life now?

I use Spanish mostly for fun right now, translating random sentences my friends say or answering questions in Spanish to confuse them.

What is your most meaningful Spanish-related story?

It would have to be my trip to Spain this past summer, as it really helped improve my comprehension and ability to speak the language.

Anything else?

WCU has been great to me with a fantastic education and a lot of fun to be had with intramural and club sports. Nothing but gratitude for such an amazing school and great teachers that fill it.



JUAN BAUTISTA

What degree have you earned?

I'm a Biology major, pre-med student, minoring in both Chemistry and Spanish.

Where do you call home?

I was born and raised in [San Luis Potosí, Mexico](#). I moved to Brevard, North Carolina when I was twelve years old and have been living there since then.

What are your plans after graduation?

Right after graduation I'm traveling to my hometown in Mexico with my parents to visit our family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.). After I come back from my little break I hope to work for [SAF \(Student Action with Farmworkers\)](#), which is an organization that works with migrant workers all throughout North Carolina.

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How do you plan to use Spanish?

If I get the opportunity to work for SAF, I'm going to be able to communicate in Spanish with the migrant workers who don't speak English.

How do you use it in your life now?

I use Spanish in my everyday life, at home, with friends, in classes. At home I talk to my parents in Spanish all the time, with my friends we talk "Spanglish" to each other, and in some of the classes I'm taking right now I use Spanish to communicate with my professors and my fellow students.

What is your most meaningful Spanish-related story?

I am a native Spanish speaker, born and raised in Mexico with its traditions and culture. This past summer I had the opportunity to study abroad in [Valencia, Spain](#) and with that I had the opportunity to learn about new traditions and a new culture. It was such a great experience that had a huge impact in my life, being able to communicate with people but at the same time having such big differences in the way we say certain words, or in the things we eat or the way of how we do things. A language makes us able to communicate with other people around the world but beyond that, it makes us able to get to know their culture, their beliefs, their traditions, and in my opinion that's what matters the most. I believe that more than just knowing how to speak and write a language, knowing a language opens up an opportunity for us to get to know more in depth the people behind it and get to know how they are as human beings.

Anything else?

I really encourage everyone to learn a second language if they have the opportunity to do so, whether it's Spanish, French, German, etc. Becoming bilingual can give you so many advantages and benefits, but above all, as I stated before, it would open up an opportunity for you to meet new cultures and new traditions. Knowing more than one language can open worldwide opportunities for you.

The students profiled here are not the *only* WCUSpanish grads who finished up this semester! **Luis Alfredo Gamez** is graduating with a Spanish B.A., and **Judith Wilber** is graduating with a minor in Spanish. The faculty and staff of the WCUSpanish program are immensely proud of our accomplished graduates!

¡Enhorabuena!

Summer 2016 Program in Valencia, Spain

WCUSpanish is happy to announce that the *WCU en VLC 2016* program is now accepting applications. Next summer will mark the seventh consecutive year that WCUSpanish students earn six hours of upper-level Spanish credit while living in [Valencia](#), which is Spain's third largest city.

For more info, see the flyer [here](#). Application packets can be accessed [here](#) and then submitted in person (signed originals).

Any questions? Contact [Dr. Alberto Centeno-Pulido](#) or [Dr. Lori Oxford](#) for more details.

Study in Spain!

In Summer 2016, you can spend three weeks (June 12 - July 4) in Valencia, a beautiful, historic, and cosmopolitan city on the Mediterranean Sea.

The program includes:

- 6 credit hours (2 classes) in Spanish
- guided walks all over Valencia
- room and board with local families in Mislata
- all meals (with host family or with group)
- all group transportation AND airfare to Spain
- day trips to ancient Roman ruins, a 1000-yr. old castle, a winery, museums

Estimated cost: **\$4686**

(Includes ALL meals, ALL transportation, ALL costs associated with this program. Students are responsible for purchasing their own airfare, but that cost is factored in this estimate.)

Comments from participants in previous programs:

- "This trip was one of the most exciting trips I have ever been on. I did not know that it was possible to have so much fun and learn all at the same time. I honestly can't say really anything negative about this trip. I would definitely go again and I would recommend it to everyone."
- "I thought the whole trip was amazing!"
- "Study abroad in Valencia, Spain helped me to grow and learn academically, spiritually, and socially. We experienced the culture through learning about it in our classes and then going into the city and see the culture 'come to life'."



Contact Dr. Alberto Centeno-Pulido (acentenopulido@wcu.edu) or Dr. Lori Oxford (lfoxord@wcu.edu) for details.

It is highly recommended (practically mandatory) that students complete SPAN 230 or 240 before participating in this program. WCU reserves the right to cancel or alter the course format or to change costs in case of conditions beyond its control.

Apply today! Only 10 spaces available!
In 3 weeks, you can earn 6 hrs towards your minor/major!

WCUSPANISH ALUMNI CORNER

WCUSPANISH wants to recognize achievements of WCU alumni with a major or minor in Spanish.

MARYSA BURCHETT (BA, Spanish with International Studies minor and Art minor, '10) is in law school in Charlotte and will be graduating with a J.D. this December. She is involved in the International Law Society and served as its Vice President for over a year, exploring many facets of public and private international law and cross-border transactions, which the Society hopes will help students get some experience in the international arena.

Marysa's first legal internship was at a non-profit organization called the Council for Children's Rights. While there, she used her Spanish daily to aid Spanish-speaking schoolchildren (and their families or guardians) in receiving the necessary resources such as ESL teachers, bilingual helpers, or even IEP evaluations for those in need of more skilled assistance. The non-profit had a relationship with the North Carolina division of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, and the Council received cases involving immigration and custodial issues in cases of refugees and asylees. Marysa's next internship was at the Office of the Public Defender, where she continued using Spanish to explain to the clients and their families

the ins and outs of the judicial process, the law, and what implications a guilty conviction could do for their immigration status.

Marysa currently works under a personal injury attorney who co-founded the national network of attorneys called Bike Law, specializing in cyclists who are hit by cars or involved in similar accidents.

After graduation, Marysa plans to move to Virginia to take the Bar Exam in February. She hopes to continue to use her Spanish in her legal career, working in either international law or governmental work while also aiding the cities and towns of Virginia to become more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. She adds: "I am saving up to do a bicycle tour in South America!"

¡Enhorabuena!

*Nosotros aquí en **WCUSPANISH** siempre estamos muy orgullosos de nuestr@s alumn@s.*

Alumni: share what you've been up to with the rest of the **WCUSPANISH** community! Send your info to [Lori Oxford](#) and be sure to pass the newsletter along to your family and friends so they can celebrate your achievements along with the rest of us.



Do you know a student in the Spanish program or an alumnus/alumna with an interesting story? Is there an event of interest to Spanish study that we should announce here? Let us know! Contact [Lori Oxford](#) with your news.



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Follow us on twitter: [@SpanishWCU](#)

Come by and talk to us in McKee or check us out on the [WCU Spanish program's webpage](#).

¡Muchas gracias!

