

## 2022 Newsletter

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## Message from the Chair



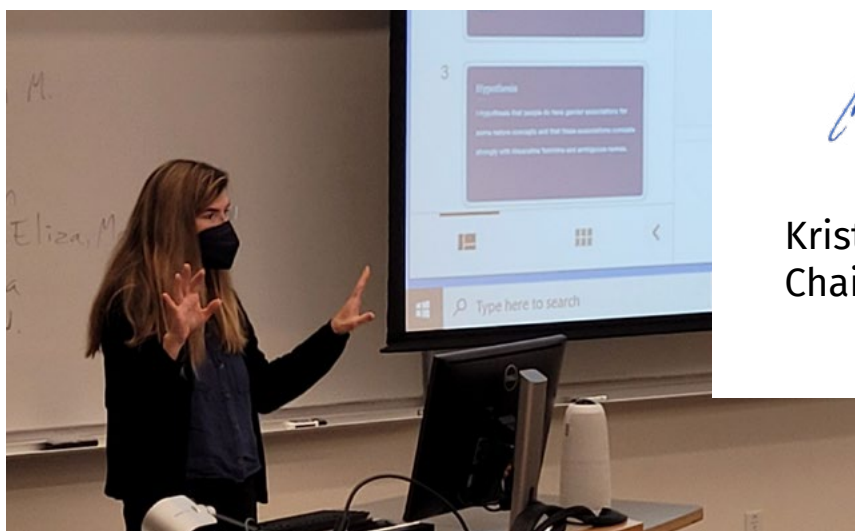
*Dr. Jordan Sandoval, Dr. Virginia Dawson, Dr. Kristin Denham and Dr. Anne Lobeck enjoy the view atop Blanchard Mountain.*

We kicked off this year with a hike to Oyster Dome and with a great deal of excitement. We were so happy to be back in the classroom, after a year of online teaching and learning. I think the consensus was that Mask University was much better than Zoom University! It really was wonderful to feel the energy that comes with face-to-face learning and to have the kinds of conversations, discussions, and debates that emerge so much more easily in person. We've also enjoyed the casual hallway conversations that have happened this year in our department. We're never quite sure if it's our candy

bowl, our food pantry, our welcoming faculty, the friendly and helpful staff, or our fantastic work study students (who are often the first faces you see when you step into Bond Hall 418), but regardless of the motivation, we're very glad to see folks stopping by our department offices again.

We did manage to stay connected during the 2020-21 year, however. Students and faculty met monthly at an event called Connecting Over Coffee, hosted by our newest faculty members, Virginia Dawson and Jordan Sandoval. Folks gathered on zoom to chat about whatever – classes, research, favorite beverages, cute pets. We had virtual talks and events, and then some face-to-face ones again this year (which you can read more about below). And faculty also got together weekly, sometimes for department meetings, but also for a regular reading group discussion. Our conversations and readings have focused on equity and inclusion in our field, and we also have watched and discussed these videos from the [University of Chicago's Inclusive Pedagogy in Linguistics series](#), which generated some productive discussion and positive changes in our teaching. You can read more about our efforts to expand justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in linguistics here at Western [here](#).

Linguistics at WWU is thriving. Our students inspire us; our research fuels us; and we all support each other. Come visit!\*



Kristin Denham  
Chair, Professor of Linguistics

*Dr. Kristin Denham addressing her LING 204: Language and Society class, fall 2021.*

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To request this document in an alternate format, please contact Sara Helms, Linguistics Department manager, at 360-650-3914 or [helmss@wwu.edu](mailto:helmss@wwu.edu).

# Student Spotlight



*The 2021-2022 Linguistics Department student support staff. From left, Niko Attebery, Emma Ahmann, and Madison Peyton.*

## 2021-2022 Outstanding Linguistics Students

Each year, the Linguistics faculty recognize graduating seniors who have made an outstanding contribution to the department with their exceptional scholarship, with their engagement in department activities, and with their service as leaders and mentors.



### **Niko Attebery**

2021-2022 Department of Linguistics  
Outstanding Graduating Senior



## 2021-2022 Department of Linguistics Exceptional Student Awardees

Navor Tercero · Sylvia Cohen · Crow Chloupek · Carolina Valdez Velasco,  
Claudia Liu · Spencer deVries · Kate Panza

## 2021-2022 Exceptional Student in Spanish-Linguistics Awardees

Natalie Anderson · Sylvia Cohen · Amanda Fox · Carolina Valdez Velasco

## 2022 Linguistics Student Scholarship Awardees

Abigail Landaverde · Emma Ahmann · Emma Wheaton

## 2022 Shaw Gynan Memorial Scholarship Awardee

Javin Morrison

# 2020-2021 Outstanding Linguistics Students



### **Jess Costanza**

2020-2021 Department of Linguistics  
Outstanding Graduating Senior



### **Brahm vanWoerden**

2021 Presidential Scholar of the  
Humanities Division of the College  
of Humanities and Social Sciences

Read more about our amazing students on our website

# The Podling Podcast



The Podling was created by former linguistics student **Jess Costanza**, who set out to answer the question "What is linguistics?" through interviews with professors in Western's Department of Linguistics. In **season 1**, Costanza explored the academic and career paths linguists take, as well as the history and current vibe of the field.

"The idea was originally borne out of a plan to interview professors and provide students in the linguistics major and related studies a fuller picture of the work being done by the people they might connect with while at Western," Costanza said.

"Naturally, my own questions have seeped into the project's design — I love learning about something by hearing from the people deeply involved in a field, trade, or discipline and understanding why they're driven to do the things they do. I think those stories translate well to a podcast format, and they have conversational entry points for folks both very familiar and totally new to the subject at hand."

Costanza graduated as the 2020-21 Outstanding Graduate in Linguistics and was awarded a fellowship to continue working on The Podling.

Catch up on all of Season 1 today.

**Season 2** is produced and hosted by linguistics students **Emma Ahmann**, **Madison Peyton**, and **Niko Attebery**, and produced and edited by Western alumna **Jess Costanza** and **Fawn Dupras** of Pierce Community College. Season 2 takes a comical deep dive into the subsections of linguistics through topics like etymology, idioms, linguistics of the paranormal, as well as the ways we study linguistics in common activities like the playing of board games. This new season is targeted toward the broader Western community, not just linguists!\*



*Students Emma Ahmann (left) and Niko Attebery recording The Podling*

[!\[\]\(c50c8b7b2cc2cf9ff925edec0ee94c0d\_img.jpg\) Listen to The Podling on Spotify](#)  
[!\[\]\(8bed43dc33ecdde61e2f76c8f5517125\_img.jpg\) Learn more about The Podling](#)

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# Alumni Spotlight



**Scott Grinsell**, '10, B.A. linguistics, received a master's in teaching from Seattle University and now teaches at Maple Elementary in Seattle. During his studies at Western, Grinsell was very passionate about integrating linguistics into K-12 education. He began as an intervention teacher for multi-

lingual students before switching to kindergarten and now first grade. Grinsell teaches his students about linguistic principles such as phonemes, voicing, and syllable structures. His classes learn about a different language each month, the IPA hangs in their classroom, and Grinsell is working as a teacher leader to improve literacy instruction with linguistic principles.\*

**Nic Hartmann**, '10, B.A. linguistics, moved to Seattle with his wife Jessie. He is now a Senior Motion Designer and Director of Education at a Seattle-based design firm called Killer Visual Strategies, where he applies his passion for Linguistics to various localization and translation projects. He and his wife have traveled to Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Japan, the latter of which they resided in for half a year while working remotely. In January 2021, they welcomed their first child Jolene, who will someday document endangered languages of the Japanese archipelago.\*







**Emily Hillman**, '21, B.A., linguistics and Spanish, took a position teaching fourth grade in Idaho. She spent a semester learning classroom management, objective writing, and lesson planning while working with students from diverse backgrounds. In January 2021, Hillman moved to Honduras for a year of service at the Amigos de Jesús Home for Children. She immediately jumped into teaching fourth-grade math and English at a bilingual school. The following school year she helped form a curriculum development team that created trauma-informed lessons for students in immersive English classrooms. Hillman recently moved to Wisconsin and is excited to jump into another teaching role!\*

**Margot Lamy**, '18, B.A., linguistics, has returned to her hometown of Vancouver, Washington. She currently works as the Proposals Coordinator for Language Link, a company that provides translation and interpretation services across the United States and Canada. In her free time, she enjoys exploring the Pacific Northwest, reading speculative fiction and history books, and attending German class at the German-American society on the weekend.\*





**Katy Stevick**, '15, B.A., linguistics and creative writing, completed nearly two terms with AmeriCorps, where she assisted job seekers at her local job center with computer, resume, and job application issues. In 2017, she began working for the Washington State Employment Security Department, where she continues to work today. She primarily works as an Employment Connection Specialist but has held other positions within her agency as well. Stevick is currently pursuing her master's degree in library and information science through the University of Washington Information School. She intends to graduate this spring.\*

We'd love to hear from you. If you'd like to be featured in our next newsletter, email Sara Helms at [helmss@wwu.edu](mailto:helmss@wwu.edu).

## Faculty Spotlight

Now in her sixth year with WWU Linguistics, **Emily Curtis** (she/they) has been extending linguistics into First-year Interest Groups (FIGs) and Honors courses, including a winter 2022 FIG cluster, 'Language and Mind,' with 'Introduction to Philosophy' (PHIL 114) and 'Language and Brain' (LING 207) and two Honors Seminars: 'Bilingualism and Heritage Languages' (HNRS 358; spring 2022) and 'Language and Equity' (winter 2023). She taught a new course this winter, 'Korean linguistics' (LING 302) and has a seventh co-authored book for Korean learners forthcoming.\*

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**Kristin Denham's** article, "[Positioning Students as Linguistic and Social Experts: Teaching grammar and linguistics in the United States](#)" was published in *L1-Educational Studies in Language and Literature* in 2020. This research represents an important step in collaboration with international colleagues in the area of using linguistics in teaching about grammar. The book *Thinking Like a Linguist*, co-authored with colleague Dr. Jordan Sandoval, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2021. Denham also enjoyed jumping back into some psycholinguistics research when she taught one of our newer courses, 'Language and the Brain' (LING 207), which satisfies a general university requirement in natural sciences.\*



**Anne Lobeck** recently created and taught two new linguistics courses, both of which focus on language and power. 'Bad Grammar: The History of English and the Complaint Tradition' (LING 302) addressed the origins and legacy of prescriptive grammar, and how the study of prescriptivism informs our understanding of language change, language authority, and the history of English. 'Linguistics, Education, and Social Justice' (LING 402) focused specifically on the American education system, and the language ideologies that marginalize some speech communities and privilege others. Lobeck presented a virtual paper virtually at the EduLing SIG Conference in Nijmegen, The Netherlands on her research on prescriptivism and how it can be used as a tool to teach about language change and variation. She was inducted as a Fellow of the Linguistic Society of America in 2021 and will participate in a joint LSA-National Council of Teachers of English panel, *Antiracist Teaching and Translanguaging: Light from the Field*, at the NCTE Annual Meeting in 2022.\*

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**R. Mata** has just had his article "Discourse Markers in Spanish in the Tijuana-San Diego Border Area" accepted for publication in the pragmatics and sociopragmatics journal *Spanish in Context*. This spring term he is, coincidentally, teaching his first course on pragmatics (LING 431) -- specifically on discourse markers -- here at Western.\*

**To see a full list of current department, associated, and affiliated faculty, go to our website at [chss.wvu.edu/linguistics/faculty-staff](http://chss.wvu.edu/linguistics/faculty-staff).**

## First Generation Celebration

Western is committed to improving the experience and advancing outcomes of first-generation college students, and as such, has recently been recognized as a First-gen Forward institution by the Center for First-generation Student Success. To celebrate this honor, our department took part in the [National First-Generation College Celebration](#). During this week-long celebration, we handed out goodie bags containing, treats, stickers and words of affirmations to our first-generation linguistics students. We also put up a poster in the hallway inviting first-generation students to share thoughts about their college experience.

A first-generation college student is a student whose parents did not earn a 4-year college degree. About a quarter of Western's students identify as first-generation college students.



From left, Dr. Judith Pine, Dr. Anne Lobeck, Dr. Virginia Dawson, and Dr. Kristin Denham assembling goodie bags for our first-generation students.

See more pictures of our department's 2021 First-generation Celebration

## Fall 2020-Spring 2022 Events

By fall 2020, the Western community had eased into the remote workspace. Our department felt it was time to invite speakers back, albeit virtually. We also held a virtual roundtable event for applying to graduate school, a virtual resume writing workshop, and a virtual Peace Corps question and answer session. Once a month, we invited students to hop online for an informal morning get-together with our faculty called "Connecting Over Coffee." Below are some of our more notable talks.

**Oct. 29, 2020**

**"Pragmatic Detachability of English Discourse Markers in San Diego Spanish,"** featuring the research of Western Washington University Assistant Professor of Modern and Classical Languages **R. Mata**

[Read more about Prof. Mata's talk](#)

### March 4, 2021

**"Talking about kin in Tiwa,"** featuring the research of Western Washington University Assistant Professor of Linguistics **Virginia Dawson**.

[Read more about Prof. Dawson's talk](#)

[Watch the full talk on our YouTube page](#)

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### May 13, 2021

**"Language Attitudes of Speakers of a Critically Endangered Philippine Creole Spanish,"** featuring the research of Western Washington University Assistant Professor of Modern and Classical Languages **Sheryl Bernardo-Hinesley**.

[Read more about Prof. Bernardo-Hinesley's talk](#)

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### Oct. 14, 2021

**"Shaping conversation through gesture,"** featuring the research of **Schuyler Laparle** of University of California – Berkeley.

[Read more about Schuyler Laparle's talk](#)

[Watch the full talk on our YouTube page](#)

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### Feb. 24, 2022

**"Moving in the Salish world: investigating directional serial verbs in Hul'q'umi'num',"** featuring the research of Western alum **Lauren Schneider**.

[Read more about Schneider's talk](#)

[Watch the full talk on our YouTube page](#)

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### April 28, 2022

**"To (use) be or not to (use) be: Non-Verbal Predication Strategies in Eastern Bantu"** featuring the research of Western alum **Aron Finholt**.

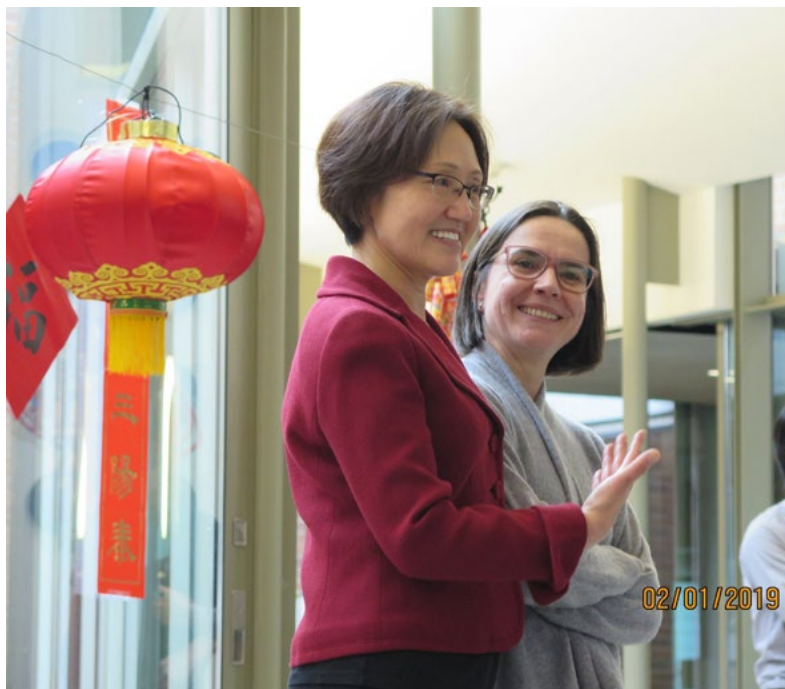
[Read more about Finholt's talk](#)

[Watch the full talk on our YouTube page](#)

If you'd like to learn about upcoming WWU Linguistics events, [join our email list](#).



# Retirement Tribute



*Dr. Janet Xing (left) and colleague Dr. Paqui Paredes Méndez celebrating Chinese New Year, 2019.*

**Dr. Janet Xing** will be retiring at the end of this year, 2021-22. Prof. Xing's research and teaching interests are in discourse analysis, historical linguistics, semantic change, grammaticalization, and Chinese language pedagogy and acquisition. Prof. Xing has been a dedicated member of the linguistics program faculty and a stalwart supporter of it throughout her time at Western. She also developed the major in Chinese Language and Culture and served as the program coordinator and academic advisor for a decade. Prof. Xing organized a number of national and international conferences on Chinese linguistics, grammaticalization, and teaching and learning Chinese as a second language, and she served as the editor for the journal of Chinese

as a Second Language. Her publications are too numerous to list, but one of her most recent ones is *A Typological Approach to Grammaticalization & Lexicalization: East Meets West* (Mouton de Gruyter) which came out in 2020 and grew out of a conference at Western that she organized, which included scholars from Europe, Asian and North America (and also our own undergraduate Jeffrey Guptil!). Prof. Xing's linguistics courses on Chinese linguistics and, especially on her specialty grammaticalization, were some of the most popular – and challenging! - upper division linguistics courses. The research that came out of the Grammaticalization class was always excellent and was regularly represented at Scholars Week.

Jess Costanza interviewed Prof. Xing last year for The Podling where she discussed her research and how her language classes shape that research. In that episode, Jess and Prof. Xing also address hesitations and misconceptions some students have with taking linguistics classes. [Listen to that episode on Spotify.](#)

We can't even imagine the Linguistics Department without Janet Xing, and we here in Linguistics wish her a wonderful post-Western life!\*

# Donate Today

**Mark your calendars – Give Day is May 26, 2022. Every donation we receive on Give Day will be matched!**

This year, your financial support will have wide-ranging effects. We have some important new initiatives and opportunities for our students, and your financial gifts are critical to making these happen. Last year, we offered our first ever post-graduate fellowship. Jess Costanza, the 2020-21 Outstanding Graduate in Linguistics, was awarded this fellowship to continue work on the podcast she developed as a student at Western, The Podling. Your gift will help fund another fellowship this year. We also plan to offer a brand new Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) in the summer, which will provide full-time support for a student to conduct research with our faculty. Students will likely work with Dr. McNeel Jantzen in the Language and Neural Systems Lab or with Dr. Jordan Sandoval in the Sounds and Letters in Phonetics and Phonology (SLIPP) lab. Future REUs will also allow students to pursue research with Dr. Virginia Dawson, on her work with Tiwa in India, and with Dr. Sheryl Bernardo-Hinesley, on her work on Chabacano, a language of the Philippines, among other projects emerging from our faculty collaborations with students.

*Each of our donors will receive one of our unique WWU Linguistics stickers (Sticker is approximately 3 in x 3 in and is chosen at random).*



Donate to the Department of Linguistics

*Thanks for reading!*