

## **Norwegian Department/Nordic Studies Report 2008**

The Norwegian department, with a 3.66 FTE and 351 students this year, continues to be the largest Norwegian program in North America, with more faculty members and more students of Norwegian language and culture than any other college or university. We actually had seven faculty members teaching this year. The large number of “bodies” was necessary because of Anne Sabo’s continued involvement in the Great Conversation, and the administrative appointment of one of our tenured faculty members, Solveig Zempel, who served her third year of her second term as Associate Dean of IGS. The Norwegian department has been able to successfully negotiate this mix of full-time, part-time permanent staff and adjunct because of the high quality of our full- and part-time adjunct faculty members. We were very happy to be offered sufficient FTE to keep our class sizes below 20 in Norwegian 111, 112 and 231. We are fortunate that we have a deep pool of qualified people who are willing to come in and teach a course or two. This year we were well served by Torild Homstad, who has taught for us for many years (see below) and Louis Janus, who has recently rejoined us part-time, after having taught at St. Olaf for several years in the 1980’s and Kari Lie, who is a PhD student at the University of Texas, and who has taught for us before. In addition Nancy Aarsvold continues to provide excellent service and teaching.

We are particularly proud that one student has been awarded a Fulbright to Norway next year, and one (a Nordic Studies concentrator) is alternate. There is currently one student in Norway on a Fulbright, so we continue our good record. In addition Solveig Zempel was awarded the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit by the king of Norway. We can all bask in reflected glory!

### **Norwegian Department Activities in 2007-08**

We taught 164 students in the fall, 53 during interim and 135 in the spring semester. Five students, including one Norwegian native, lived in the Norwegian House. We had six students from Norway who worked in the department and shared their knowledge of Norway with the American students of Norwegian.

We graduated two Norwegian majors and one Nordic Studies concentrator this spring.

Work continues with the Tromsø music conservatory with two former visiting scholars from Norway, Ole Christian Brose and Michael Stroebel. Ten students traveled to Tromsø in January 2008 on the music interim. While there was a music focus, several of the students were or are taking Norwegian language (Dan Dressen in the lead).

Margaret O’Leary and Todd Nichol have launched a new musical group, Olelaget, with subgroups the Runestone accordions (Todd) and Oleanna singers (Margaret).

The Norwegian department, often in conjunction with the Norwegian House, sponsored a number of public activities for our students. Attendance at these events is excellent, due at least in part to an activities requirement in all our language courses. These include:

- Annual fall ice cream social, attended by over 80 students.
- Norwegian conversation table every Monday evening.

- Homework help sessions run by students in the Norwegian House Wednesday and Sunday evenings.
- Film evenings (four per semester).
- Christmas party (Norwegian House).
- Post-conversation table talks
- Norwegian Christmas chapel service, with participation by Norwegian exchange students, Norwegian language students and audience. Attended by over 250 people from the college and the community.
- Annual Scandinavian Retreat, near Eau Claire, WI. This year ten students attended with Margaret, Nancy and Torild.
- Nordic Bash (first annual) evening with accordion, brass and Irish music, singing, drama, dance and more. Attended by over 150 students and faculty.
- 17.mai breakfast, attended by nearly 220 people, including 104 students and 115 faculty, staff, and the general public.

Numerous guest lectures, concerts, exhibits, that the Norwegian department either sponsored, co-sponsored, or otherwise participated in:

- **Poster sessions:** Vikings in Literature Mythology Poster session
- **Lectures:**
  - Ingeborg Kongslien: “Literary voices of the Immigrant Experience: Scandinavian-american and Contemporary Nordic Perspectives,” First Annual Frederick Gaylord Grose Lecture in Norwegian Studies.
  - Ishaana Rambachan, Rand Scholar, “Global Development Strategies.”
  - Norwegian Ambassador to the U.S. Wegger Christian Strømmen, “Norway and the United States in the Next Century: Working Together in Our Changing World.”
  - Magne Supphellen, Department of Strategic Management, Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (Bergen), in cooperation with Bruce Dalgaard of CEL, “The IKEA Affect.”
- **Readings:** Per Petterson, author of *Out Stealing Horses*.
- **Concerts:**
  - Andrea Een with Ruth Sylte and Mikkel Thompson
  - Sinikka Langeland (cosponsored with Student Activities and Music Department)
  - Karin Gilje, Hardanger fiddle concert

The Norwegian department and St. Olaf College are in the special position of hosting many visitors from Norway each year, some of whom are prominent writers, politicians or other cultural, royal or educational figures. These were hosted this year:

- Ambassador Wegger Christian Strømmen
- Aud Kolberg, second in command in the Norwegian embassy, Washington, D.C.

- Magne Supphellen, Department of Strategic Management, Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (Bergen), in cooperation with Bruce Dalgaard of CEL. “The IKEA Affect: Effects of Consumer Co-production.”

In addition to all of the above, members of the Norwegian department have also been professionally active and are looked to nationally and internationally for their expertise. Torild, Louis, Kari and Margaret all serve on the NORTONA board. We all attended the annual Norway seminar in Austin, TX, and Torild attended the 98<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society for the advancement of Scandinavian study (SASS) hosted by the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, Solveig also serves on Boards of Directors of NAHA and Nordmanns-Forbundet in Oslo. Kari, Margaret, Torild, and Louis attended a workshop on language standards and materials development preceding the Norway Seminar in Austin. Margaret and Louis also participated in a workshop devoted to developing national standards for Nordic languages held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and sponsored by the Center for European Studies. Margaret attended an international translators conference in London in March. Anne is a member of the MLA’s Scandinavian Discussion Group’s panel, serving as president of the executive committee for this group. The delivered a paper at the MLA conference in December.

Members of the Norwegian department are also active in the local community as members of Nordmanns-Forbundet (The Norse Federation) and Sons of Norway. Margaret serves as the Commissioner of the Northfield chapter of Nordmanns-Forbundet and Torild is local chapter co-chair.

### **Individual Department Members**

**Nancy Aarsvold** taught beginning and intermediate Norwegian language courses full-time this year in the Norwegian department. She served also as an academic advisor, the advisor for the Norwegian House, and the student work supervisor. In her role as advisor to the Norwegian House, Nancy was responsible for organizing weekly departmental events as well as several large events for the general public. In addition, Nancy has developed online and print pedagogical materials, attended conferences and given presentations.

### **Publications:**

- Aarsvold, Nancy and Kari Lie: *Sett i gang II: An Introductory Norwegian Language Curriculum* (Textbook). St. Peter: NorWords, 2008
- Aarsvold, Nancy and Kari Lie: *Sett i gang II: An Introductory Norwegian Language Curriculum* (Workbook). St. Peter: NorWords, 2008.
- These books were self-published by NorWords, the small business partnership of the authors. Nancy and her co-author, Kari Lie, also spent two weeks in Oslo, Norway last summer recording the audio for *Sett I gang II*. The approximately 250 audio clips are available free of charge on the NorWords website ([www.norwords.com](http://www.norwords.com)) for listening online or for downloading to computers of MP3-players. The first textbook/workbook in this series, *Sett I gang I* was released in the summer of 2007.

### **Presentations:**

- Chapel speaker on National Coming Out Day at St. Olaf College, October 2007.
- Presentation about on-demand printing and self-publishing for Lang and Lit, April 2008.

### **Conference Attendance:**

- Attended Norway Seminar, University of Texas-Austin, October 2007.
- Attended Scandinavian Retreat near Eau Claire, WI with three colleagues and 13 students, February 2008.

### **Department and College Service:**

- Advisor for the Norwegian House:
- Responsible for the weekly departmental events, such as conversation tables and homework help sessions, and for the monthly events such as film evenings and panel presentations.
- Organized three large community events:
  1. **Norwegian Wall Welcome Event** (30 students and faculty).
  2. **Norwegian Christmas Service** (full house in Boe Chapel)
  3. **17<sup>th</sup> of May Breakfast** (230 students, staff, faculty and general public)
- Norwegian department student work supervisor.
- Academic advisor.
- Led study tour to Norway August 1-12, 2008.
- Webmaster for SOLGEN (St. Olaf Lesbian and Gay Employee Network).
- Banquet and program planner for the GLBT Welcome Lunch (September 2007) and the second annual Gender and sexuality Senior Banquet (May 2008).
- Board member for Philip N. Knutson Endowment in Lutheran Campus Ministry.

### **Community Service:**

- Member, usher, and volunteer for youth activities at First Lutheran church in St. Peter.
- Fundraising Committee member for the St. Peter Chapter of Habitat for Humanity.
- Webmaster for the St. Peter Chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

### **Memberships:**

- NORTANA (Norwegian Teachers Association of North America)
- SASS (Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study)

**Margaret Hayford O'Leary** completed her fifth year as chair of the department and director of Nordic Studies. In addition she served as outside member of a tenure-track search committee in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology, and served on the academic sub-committee of the Pandemic

Task Force. She has been invited to write a volume in the Culture and Customs series of Greenwood Press: culture and Customs of Norway, with a deadline of December 2009.

### **Conferences:**

- Co-planner of NITLE conference on technology in language houses at Austin College, September 27-30, 2007 (attended with Marc Robinson).
- Participated in NORTANA language standards workshop, Austin, TX, October 11-12, 2007.
- Attended annual Norway Seminar, Austin, TX, October 12-14, 2007.
- Represented St. Olaf College at the US-Norway Forum, Austin, TX, November 1-2, 2007.
- Annual Scandinavian Retreat near Eau Claire, WI with ten students and three faculty members, February 2008.
- Attended Nordic Translators Conference, London University College, London, March 2008.
- Wimba Conference (presented paper), March 2008.
- Nordic Standards Workshop (invited participant). Co-authored first draft of standards for Norwegian, University of Wisconsin, Madison, April 2007 (with Louis Janus).

### **Publications and Presentations:**

- Worked on *Syng og lær norsk*, a songbook intended for use in language classes. The hope is to have it published by 2009, after spending one more year editing music and recording the songs.

### **Department and College Service:**

- Developed a new course on Nordic Crime Fiction.
- Write Intended Learning Outcomes statement for Norwegian and Nordic Studies.
- Served as outside member of Biochemistry/Molecular Biology search committee.
- Served on academic sub-committee of the pandemic task force.
- Department Webmaster.
- Academic advisor.
- Convened Faculty Advisory Committee to World Languages Center.
- Study Abroad Advisor for DiS (Denmark's International Study Program), 1987-present.
- Met with numerous prospective students.
- Master of ceremonies and song leader at 17.mai breakfast.
- Directed Norwegian Christmas Choir.
- Served on Boldt chair task force.
- Norwegian language coach for the St. Olaf Choir and Manitou Singers.
- Served on Rand Scholarship selection committee.

### **Community Service:**

- Taught a course on Contemporary Norwegian Society at the Oslo International Summer School.
- Webmaster for Nordic Studies in the Midwest.
- Coordinator of Bjørn Jensen apartment (for NORTANA).
- Served on NORTANA board.
- Served on planning committee for NITLE conference on technology in language houses.
- Canto and usher at St. John's Lutheran Church.
- Member of Worship and Arts Board at St. John's Lutheran Church.

### **Memberships:**

- NORTANA (Norwegian Teachers Association of North America) board member.
- SASS (Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study).
- NAHA (Norwegian-American Historical Association) (lifetime member).
- Vesterheim (Norwegian-American Museum, Decorah, IA).
- Nordmanns-Forbundet.
- Lakeselaget.

### **Anne G. Sabo:**

I spent the end of last summer and beginning of fall writing and completing an article based on research conducted during my last sabbatical titled "A vision of new port: How women are revising porn to match a time of greater gender equality." The article was published in *Generation P? youth, Gender and Pornography*. Eds. Susanne V. Knudsen, Lotta Löfgren-Mårtenson and Sven-Axel Månsson. Copenhagen: Danish University of Education Press, 2007.221-237.

I also spent last summer and fall putting together a capstone course for women's studies, which I'm teaching for the first time this spring. This course is also based on research conducted during my sabbatical. The course's title is "Third Wave Discourses on Gender" and explores current discourses on gender, sexuality, and intimacy.

In December, I delivered a paper at the 123<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association (MLA), hosted in Chicago, December 27-30, 2007. My paper was titled "What's this thing called sex? Screening Sex in Scandinavia," and it investigated the attitudes to sex and mediated sex among youth in Finland as portrayed in the Finnish film *Hymypoika* (Restless). The paper was a part of MLA's Scandinavian Discussion Group's panel, which focused on popular culture. This year I serve as President of the executive committee for this Group, which means I've been busy this winter and spring distributing call for papers and evaluating paper proposals for our panel (focusing on new pluralisms) at the next MLA convention.

Throughout the year, I have been busy writing grant proposals and planning for my leave next year. While I've been happy to apply my sabbatical research in my teaching (in particular for women's studies and in my film course), I have also found that teaching for Great Conversation at the same time has reduced the time I have for my own research and writing to a minimum.

Therefore, I am pleased that St. Olaf has granted me a leave next year during which I will return as guest researcher to the Center for Gender Studies at the University of Oslo, where I also spent my sabbatical, in order to work on a book based on research conducted during my sabbatical. This book investigates attitudes to gender and sexuality in Scandinavia and the United States, comparing new pornographic films by women that circulate in the United States with those that circulate in Scandinavia, while also considering new sociological studies on e.g. the effects of comprehensive human sexuality education, and on youth's attitudes to and uses of pornography.

In terms of service for the college, I've been happy to continue my service on the Film Task Force. This spring we're finalizing a proposal for a film studies concentration that we hope to present to the faculty early in the fall.

I've also served on the Gender and Sexuality Center's faculty advisory board this year. While an Honor's house this year, the GSC hopes to get a permanent space on campus sometime in the near future to foster a safe climate on campus for students to approach issues of gender and sexuality.

Last fall, I served on a women's studies sub-committee to develop Intended Learning outcomes for the major and the concentration. I served on the Curriculum Committee until this spring when I asked to be excused due to health reasons. Teaching for and being involved with film and women's studies administrative work, has been a good way for me to connect my current research with my teaching and service for the college. Yet, I have also been happy to continue teaching our upper level Norwegian literature courses. Last fall, I also had the pleasure of hosting a visit by distinguished Norwegian author, Per Petterson. In addition to reading from his book and answering questions from a large audience that had gathered in Viking Theater, he also visited my Norwegian literature course and one of our intermediate language courses, to the delight of our students.

**Solveig Zempel**, in addition to serving as Associate Dean for IGS and teaching two courses, has also been active professionally, attending conferences, writing grant proposals, and giving lectures. She was awarded the royal Norwegian Order of Merit by the king of Norway. The ceremony was held at the Minneapolis Club in April. This is a very important event, which reflects well on both the college and the department.

### **St. Olaf College Service:**

- Associate Dean, Interdisciplinary and General Studies
- Fulbright Program Advisor
- Hosted Fulbright Day at St. Olaf College
- Ex-officio member of Curriculum Committee
- Library Committee
- CEL Advisory Committee
- Helped arrange and host International Career Day with CEL
- Africa Studies Task Force
- Grant writing (FIPSE, DoE, Freeman)
- Administered proficiency and placement exams in Norwegian and Swedish

- Worked on Global Good Reads proposal
- Gave plenary lecture of Ibsen to Great Con students
- ISS scholarship committee
- Numerous other committees, meetings, events, and duties

### **Memberships:**

- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
- Association for Computers in the Humanities
- Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing
- Ibsen Society of America (Advisory board 2000-2003)
- Immigration and Ethnic History Society
- Lakselaget
- Nordland Heritage Foundation (Board of Directors 1986-1992)
- Nordmanns-Forbundet (Officer 1995-98, Board of Directors, 2000- Present)
- Norwegian American Historical Association life member (Board of Directors. 2990 – Present)
- Norwegian Teachers Association of North America (Officer, 1996-99)
- Phi Beta Kappa delta of Minnesota Chapter (Officer 1996-97)
- Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study
- Vesterheim Museum (life member)

### **Community Service:**

- Nordmanns-Forbundet, Board of Directors.
- Norwegian-American Historical Association, Board of Directors.
- Gave a lecture to a visiting group of Norwegian teachers of English led by Renee Waara of Nesna College.
- Was interviewed by TPT (Twin Cities Public Television) for broadcast as part of their Northfield history series.
- Served on Fulbright National Screening Committee for Scandinavia.
- Presented talk on Peer Gynt to alumni group in Twin Cities.
- Served on ISS scholarship committee.
- Speaker at Syttende Mai joint event for local sons of Norway and Nordmanns-Forbundet groups.

### **Conferences Attended:**

- Attended NAFSA conference in Minneapolis, met with representatives of Handelshøyskolen in Bergen and other Norwegian institutions of higher education.
- Attended annual meeting of Norway-America Association.
- Attended Annual meeting of Nordmanns-Forbundet.
- Was present at the Nordmanns-Forbundet centennial celebration.
- Attended the first meeting of the Norwegian Ex-patriate parliament (Utenlandstinget)
- Attended the opening of the Oslo International Summer School.

- Attended Norwegian Science Week meetings in Washington, D.C., hosted by Norwegian Embassy.
- Attended ACAD-PBK meetings in Washington, D.C.
- Attended NASILP conference in Washington, D.C.
- Attended US-Norway forum meetings in Minneapolis.
- Attended AACU meeting in Washington, D.C.
- Attended ACM meeting in Chicago to discuss study abroad programs.

**Torild Homstad**, part-time adjunct faculty member, has also been very active both in the department and in the community, contributing far beyond her .17 FTE in the department by attending conversation tables, Norwegian House activities, supervising library book orders, and more.

**College and department services:**

Participated in department/professional/community activities  
 Advisor for Oslo International Summer School program  
 Assisted with 17.mai breakfast  
 Attended Scandinavian Retreat

**Community Service:**

Co-president/program committee for Nordmanns-Forbundet  
 Newsletter Editor: NORTANA (Norwegian Researchers and Teachers Association of North America)  
 Member: SASS, NORTANA, NAFSA, Nordmanns-Forbundet, Sons of Norway, Lakeselaget, MSAP (Minnesota Study Abroad Professionals group), AFP (Association of Fundraising Professionals)

**Conferences Attended:**

US-Norway Forum, Nov. 1-2 Minneapolis, MN  
 NORTANA pedagogy workshop, Oct. 11-12, Austin, TX  
 Norway Seminar, October 12-14 Austin, TX  
 SASS, Fairbanks, AK, March 15-17  
 Attended Midwest Scandinavian Retreat near Eau Claire, WI Feb. 14-17

**Kari Lie**, part-time adjunct faculty member. Kari taught 3 courses for us this year, and we look forward to having her back next year. In addition to continued work on Sett I gang (with Nancy Aarsvold), Kari is in the throes of completing her dissertation. She expects to defend on June 18, in Austin, TX

**College and Department service:**

Attended conversation table  
 Shared her expertise in Moodle, putting most Norwegian 111 workbook exercises on Moodle.

**Conferences Attended:**

NORTANA pedagogy workshop, Oct. 11-12, Austin, TX (served as co-planner)  
 Norway Seminar, Oct. 12-14, Austin, TX

She will also attend a national Moodle conference in San Francisco in June.

**Publications:**

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Aarsvold, Nancy and Kari Lie: *Sett i gang II: An Introductory Norwegian Language Curriculum* (Workbook). St. Peter: NorWords, 2008.

These books were self-published by NorWords, the small business partnership of the authors. Kari and her co-author, Nancy Aarsvold, also spent two weeks in Oslo, Norway last summer recording the audio for *Setti gang II*. The approximately 250 audio clips are available free of charge on the NorWords website ([www.norwords.com](http://www.norwords.com)) for listening online or for downloading to computers or MP3-players. The first textbook/workbook in this series, *Sett I gang I* was released in the summer of 2007.

**Community Service:**

Board member and webmaster for NORTANA

**Looking ahead to next year**

A big challenge for us next year will be maintaining our course offerings with two tenured members (of three) on sabbatical (Solveig) or special leave (Anne). We will not be offering as many content (non-language) courses, but are pleased to be able to hire Kari Lie full time and Marte Hult part time. Kari will be teaching language courses, but will also develop a new course on the Sami, which we hope will count for MSC-G. Marte Hult will pick up the two literature courses for the major.

We are pleased once again to have been offered FTE to offer additional sections of Norwegian 111, 112, and 231. This will enable us to keep most of these sections below 20. We have scheduled the same number of sections of 111 and 112 as this year, but have left .34 in reserve incase our 111 enrollments are larger than expected. We already have 31 upper class students enrolled for Norwegian 111.

A big challenge continues to be retention beyond the three semester language requirement, though enrollments in Norwegian 232 (this spring) and 253 (next fall) are larger than in the past couple of years. The vast majority of students take Norwegian for the language requirement. As in years past, we have many more males than females taking our required sequence. In our overall enrollments for this year, we have 62% male and only 38% female, which is almost exactly the opposite of the college's total enrollment pattern. Since most language majors tend to be female, this gives a much smaller pool to draw from. The trend continues in next year's enrollments, although not quite as starkly. The students registered for fall 2008 courses are 45% female and 56% male.

We continue to happily serve the college in helping students fulfill their language requirement. The Norwegian department expends the majority of its effort and resources on the required language sequence, with full sections. We therefore appreciate the forbearance of the college to

continue to permit us to teach our upper level major sequence (particularly 253, 371, and 372) in small sections, sometimes as small as five or six students or fewer. Our major is as streamlined as it can possibly be; every course offered specifically for majors (and taught in Norwegian) is required of all (no alternate routes). We require nine courses for the major, yet teach only seven of these courses in Norwegian. Three of the seven also count for the language requirement, so that means there are only four courses specifically for Norwegian majors, and two of those also count for the Nordic Studies concentration. In addition, students can count up to two courses taught in English for their major, if they do not study in Norway.

We had hoped to get Professor Daniel Banik, of the University of Oslo to teach a course in development issues for the Sociology Department next January, but unfortunately he had to withdraw at the last moment. We will not try to get a replacement for January 2009, but I will begin making new contacts this summer in Oslo to try to find someone for January 2010.

We are also excited about the planning that has begun for new quarters in the Old Science building. We look forward to participating in the process over the next several months.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Hayford O'Leary  
Chair of Norwegian and Director of Nordic Studies  
May 30, 2008