

Deborah Cafiero

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Education

Yale University, Ph.D., Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 1997. Concentration: Contemporary Peninsular literature. Dissertation: Reading *La novela negra*: Post-Franco Detective Fiction in Spain

University of California, Berkeley, M.A., Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 1991

Universitat de Barcelona, summer programs, beginning and intermediate Catalan, 1989-1990

University of Chicago, A.B. magna cum laude, double major, Spanish and English, 1989

Teaching experience

Senior Lecturer, Spanish Program, School of World Languages and Cultures (SWLC), University of Vermont (UVM), 2018-present. New courses include:

- *Crime Fiction in the U.S. & Spain*: First-year seminar on *noir*, police procedural, and narco-literature in the U.S. and Spain
- *Crime Fiction in Spain & Mexico*: First-year seminar on *noir* fiction in Spain and Mexico
- *Detective Fiction: Spain & Mexico*: Global and Regional Studies course on *noir* fiction
- *Spain: Monarchy to Democracy*: Upper-level course on modern and contemporary Spanish history, literature and culture
- *Spanish Composition and Conversation: Migrant Tales*: Advanced Spanish course on migration
- *Intermediate Spanish 1 online*: Third semester Spanish online
- *Elementary Spanish 1 online*: First semester Spanish online

Lecturer, Dept. of Romance Languages and Linguistics, UVM, 2010-2017

- *Introduction to Hispanic Literature*: Sixth semester survey of Hispanic literature
- *Spanish Composition and Conversation*: Fifth-semester advanced Spanish
- *Intermediate Spanish 1 & 2*: Second year Spanish
- *Elementary Spanish 1 & 2*: First year Spanish

Lector, Dept. of Spanish and Portuguese, Yale University, 2008-2009

- Elementary Spanish 1
- Elementary Spanish 2

Adjunct professor, Dept. of Foreign Languages, Southern Connecticut State U., 2007-2008

- Elementary Spanish 1

Peer-reviewed articles

"Reimagining course objectives in the age of AI." *The FLTMAG*, Mar. 2026, <https://www.doi.org/10.69732/WCKE3888>

"El inmigrante en la novela negra española. La representación de una voz subalterna." *Bulletin of Contemporary Hispanic Studies*, Vol. 8.8. Forthcoming (Nov.-Dec. 2026).

"La polifonía en la trilogía Zarco de Marta Sanz: de la celebración a la manipulación." *Nuevas Poligrafías. Revista de Teoría Literaria y Literatura Comparada*, Vol. 9, Apr. 2024, <https://revistas.filos.unam.mx/index.php/nuevaspoligrafias/article/view/1985>.

"Language learning and identity: Helping students develop a sense of themselves as second-language learner, speaker, and community participant." *The FLTMAG*, Nov. 2021, <https://fltmag.com/language-learning-and-identity/>

"'Hard-boiled' detectives in Spain and Mexico: The ethical reorientation of a genre." *Crime Fiction Studies*, Edinburgh University Press, Fall 2021, Vol. 2.2: 154-170.

Presentations / Grants

"Technology for independent learning: How course, rubric, and prompt design can help students become more thoughtful learners." Invited talk and workshop at the Penn Language Center, University of Pennsylvania, March 2026, Philadelphia, PA.

"Immigrants in Spanish crime fiction: A rising subaltern voice." Captivating Criminality 12 (annual conference, International Crime Fiction Association) 2025, Melbourne, Australia (virtual participation).

"Challenges of language program assessment: Learning from our mistakes." American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Convention 2024, Philadelphia, PA.

"El inmigrante en la novela negra española: trazando una nueva red de injusticia." Congreso Internacional de Literatura y Estudios Hispánicos (CILH) 2024, virtual.

"Teaching genre fiction in the interdisciplinary classroom: A roundtable." Mid-Atlantic Popular & American Culture Association (MAPACA) Conference 2023, Philadelphia, PA.

"Is it true that 'A really good detective never gets married'? How international noir subverts the American values in an American genre." MAPACA Conference 2023, Philadelphia, PA.

"Post-pandemic assessment: Evaluating performance while supporting students." ACTFL Convention 2022, Boston, MA.

“*Black, black, black: novela negra de voz multicolor.*” CILH 2021, virtual.

“Technology practice that builds community.” IALLT Convention 2021, virtual.

“Teaching in a time of crisis: The big pivot.” MLA Convention 2021, virtual.

“The art of good enough: How to sustain continuous pedagogical improvement.” ACTFL Convention 2019, Washington, D.C.

“Memory and nostalgia in the literary detective.” NeMLA Convention 2019, Washington, D.C.

“Musical contagion: My efforts to instill love through songs.” NeMLA Convention 2019, Washington, D.C.

“Listen for the tone: Hearing voice in a foreign language.” NeMLA Convention 2018, Pittsburgh, PA.

“How online collaboration creates a learning community through literature.” ACTFL Convention 2017, Nashville, TN.

“Skyping to reach national standards for foreign language education.” ACTFL Convention 2014, San Antonio, TX.

“Using a simple online tool for a ‘flipped’ classroom: *escolero.com*.” ACTFL Convention 2013, Philadelphia, PA.

Instructional Incentive Grant 2012, College of Arts and Sciences, UVM. Awarded for *escolero.com*, a target-language homework platform combining authentic text and video with auto-graded exercises and online discussion.

Training and Professional Development

SoTL Group, faculty learning group on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), led by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at UVM, Fall-Spring semesters, 2025-2026.

Using AI Across the Disciplines, faculty learning group on using AI in different academic disciplines, Writing in the Disciplines (WID) at UVM, Spring and Fall semesters, 2025.

Artificial Intelligence and World Languages Instruction Symposium, 2-day symposium on generative AI and language instruction, SWLC at UVM, September 27-28, 2024.

Writing in the Disciplines Institute, 2-day workshop on designing courses for FWIL and WIL2 general education requirements, WID at UVM, May 17-18, 2023.

Post-Pandemic Language Teaching, 3-week course in online language pedagogy offered by the Center for Language Teaching Advancement at Michigan State University, April 11-29, 2022.

Promoting Equity and Inclusion through Writing Assignment Design and Feedback Practices, led by Shawna Shapiro, sponsored by WID at UVM, March 31, 2022.

Fundamentals of Online Language Teaching, 3-hour online workshop hosted by the Computer-Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO), June 4, 2020.

Certified Rater for the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL), ACTFL rater certified in February 2019 in Interpersonal Listening/Speaking and Presentational Writing in Spanish.

World Readiness Standards: Teaching Cultural Products, Practices and Perspectives, workshop focused on teaching intercultural competence, led by Christina Frei, Executive Director of Language Instruction, University of Pennsylvania, September 7, 2018.

Teaching Online Certificate, online certificate program with ACTFL, February-May 2018. Intensive mentorship program for teaching foreign languages online, with a focus on Spanish.

Teaching Effectively Online, online course with CTL at UVM, May-June 2017. General principles of effective online instruction.

Designing for Learning, workshop series with CTL at UVM, Spring semester 2016 with two class observations in Fall semester 2016. Course redesign according to Universal Design for Learning principles and best practices for student engagement.

Using Just-in-Time Teaching to Promote Critical and Reflective Thinking, workshop sponsored by CTL at UVM, May 20, 2015, led by Scott Simkins, Director of the Academy for Teaching and Learning at North Carolina A&T University.

OPI Training Workshop (Spanish), 5-day workshop for the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in Spanish, ACTFL, Middlebury, VT, July 2013.

Writing in the Disciplines Mini-Institute on Grading and Assessment, workshops on grading, assessment and feedback, WID at UVM, Fall 2012. Researched and developed best practices for rubrics, instructor feedback, and assessment-based course design.

Writing in the Disciplines Institute, 4-day intensive workshop on designing writing-intensive courses, WID at UVM, May 2011. Researched and developed curriculum design, assignment design, instructor feedback, and peer learning.

The Neuroscience of Teaching and Learning workshop, workshop series conducted by Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at UVM, February-May 2011. Researched and developed best practices for maximum student learning and long-term retention of course material.

Universal Course Design workshop, extensive curricular and course design training in Universal Course Design principles, UDL at UVM, 2010-2011.

Service

Spanish Placement Exam, School of World Languages & Cultures, UVM, Summer 2025. Design and implement placement exam for the Spanish Program at UVM.

Spanish Assessment Coordinator, School of World Languages & Cultures, UVM, Fall 2023-present. Prepare, implement, and score common assessments in the Spanish language program, as well as organize workshops on language pedagogy.

Writing and Information Literacy 2 (WIL2) Assessment, Writing in the Disciplines, UVM, May 20, 2024. Full-day outcomes assessment of the WIL2 program.

Language Performance and the Foreign Language Classroom, Department of Romance Languages, UVM, November 6, 2019. Prepared and led departmental workshop on the concept and application of “performance” as defined by ACTFL.

Language 096: Exploring Romance Languages, Department of Romance Languages and Linguistics, UVM, Spring 2019. Prepared and led class on January 28 titled “Questions of proficiency: Deborah Cafiero on ACTFL standards.”

Common Spanish Grammar Assessments, Department of Romance Languages and Linguistics, UVM, Fall-Spring 2016-2017. Discussion and preparation of common grammar objectives for all levels of Spanish courses from Elementary I-Intermediate II.

Teaching for Proficiency, Department of Romance Languages and Linguistics, UVM, February 18, 2016. Workshop on proficiency levels and proficiency-based teaching.

Hybrid Course Researcher, Department of Romance Languages and Linguistics, UVM, Spring semester 2012. Research, correspondence, surveys, and other information-gathering on hybrid language course design and implementation, including a departmental workshop and final report.

Scholarships and Honors Societies

Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, 1989-1993 and 1995-1996

Phi Beta Kappa (University of Chicago chapter)

Memberships

Modern Languages Association
Northeast Modern Languages Association
American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages
International Association for Language Learning Technology
International Crime Fiction Association

Editorial / Agency Experience

Independent editor, 2020-present

Dalfen, Layne. "Understanding Dreams." Blog, *Psychology Today*, July 2020-present. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/understanding-dreams>

Dalfen, Layne. "Dream Catcher Column." Column, *Oprah Daily*, April 2021-December 2022. <https://www.oprahdaily.com/life/a35876203/forgot-mask-recurring-dream/>

Independent editor, ghostwriter, and writing coach, 2000-2007

Published books include:

Williams, Christopher, M.D., *The Fastest Way To Get Pregnant Naturally*, Hyperion Books

Marks, Tinker, *Theoretically Dead*, New Victoria Publishers

Dalfen, Layne, *Dreams Do Come True*, Adams Media

Dickinson, Richard H., *The Silent Men*, Penguin Books

Associate agent, Lowenstein Associates, New York, NY, 1998-1999

Responsibilities included client representation, editorial assistance, foreign rights assistance

Assistant agent, Van der Leun & Associates, Easton, CT, 1997-1998

Responsibilities included editorial assistance, foreign rights assistance, administrative assistance

Editor, Advanced Testing Technologies (NASA subcontractor), Hauppauge, NY, 1995