



Official Languages and
Bilingualism Institute



uOttawa



Annual Report 2023–2024

Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute (OLBI)

University of Ottawa - Hamelin Hall
70 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada
613-562-5743

✉ olbi@uOttawa.ca

🌐 olbi.uOttawa.ca

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📘 @ILOBOlBI

✂ @ILOB_OLBI

📷 @ilobolbi

📺 @ilobolbi70laurier

🌐 @ilobolbi



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Elena Valenzuela
OLBI Director and Associate Dean



Message from the Director

It is my pleasure to present the Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute's (OLBI) Annual Report for 2023–2024. This report highlights our many achievements and reflects our unwavering commitment to fostering bilingualism, both within the University of Ottawa and across Canada. The past year has been a period of growth, innovation and resilience, made possible by the dedication and hard work of our faculty, staff and students. Our OLBI team—passionate and skilled—are at the heart of everything we do, and their efforts are the driving force behind our success. As you explore these pages, you'll see their faces alongside the work that drives our mission: promoting bilingualism, supporting language learners, and shaping global citizens.

Over the past year, OLBI has continued to grow and expand its offerings. Our research agenda has also flourished, with our Institute serving as a hub to innovative research projects addressing topics such as language policy, technology-mediated language learning, artificial intelligence in language education, and translanguaging in classrooms. These initiatives have contributed to both national and international conversations about language education, positioning OLBI as a leader in applied linguistics and second language acquisition and learning.

As we celebrate over 55 years of leadership in bilingualism and language education, it is important to recognize the significant role OLBI plays in shaping not only the academic landscape but also broader societal efforts to uphold Canada's bilingual identity. The work we do in training future educators, supporting language learners, and advancing language policies is essential in maintaining Canada's commitment to linguistic diversity.

Looking ahead, OLBI's heritage and leadership will continue to guide our vision of excellence. Our colleagues remain central to this vision, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to OLBI's success this year. It is through their passion and dedication that we continue to make a lasting impact on language education in Canada.

I look forward to another year of shared accomplishments, driven by the exceptional team that makes OLBI thrive.



Elena Valenzuela

Director, Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute
Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts



The work we do in training future educators, supporting language learners, and advancing language policies is essential in maintaining Canada's commitment to linguistic diversity.

Elena Valenzuela

Management Team



Elena Valenzuela

Director and Associate Dean
Dir.ILOB-OLBI.Dir@uOttawa.ca



Catherine Elena Buchanan

Assistant Director, Administration
Dir.Adjoint.Admin.ILOB-OLBI.Assistant.Dir.Admin@uOttawa.ca



Reza Farzi

Interim Assistant Director, Administration (Jan 2024 – April 2024)
Dir.Adjoint.Admin.ILOB-OLBI.Assistant.Dir.Admin@uOttawa.ca



Beverly Baker

Director, Language Assessment
bbake3@uOttawa.ca



Renée Bélec

Director, Marketing and Development
rbelec@uOttawa.ca



Marie-Claude Dansereau

Second-Language Teaching Program Coordinator
mcdansereau@uOttawa.ca



Marc Gobeil

Director, French Immersion Stream
marc.gobeil@uOttawa.ca



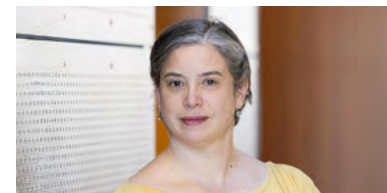
Evan Lavoie

Manager, Centre for Language Learning
elavoie@uOttawa.ca



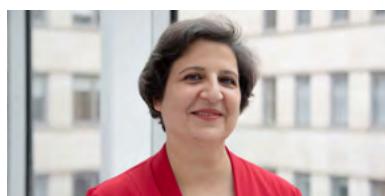
Kristina Laperle

Interim Senior Advisor, Program Management,
Language support services for employees
klaperle@uOttawa.ca



Catherine Levasseur

Director, Graduate Studies
ilobdirg@uOttawa.ca



Parvin Movassat

Director, Undergraduate Programs
ilobdiru@uOttawa.ca



Marika Giles Samson

Director, Court Challenges Program
dirpcj.ccp@uOttawa.ca



Nikolay Slavkov

Director, Canadian Centre for Studies and Research
on Bilingualism and Language Planning (CCERBAL)
ccerbal@uOttawa.ca

91^e Congrès de l'Acfas

Knowledge mobilization

From May 13 to 17, 2024, the University of Ottawa hosted the [91^e Congrès de l'Acfas](#), with the theme “knowledge mobilization in French.” OLBI was honoured to play an active part in this prestigious event, showcasing the contributions of many of its members.

OLBI colleagues shared their expertise through lectures, presentations and very instructive discussions, underscoring the importance of language teaching in a multilingual and global context. See Table 1 for more information about the full range of OLBI activities.

Historic partnership between the FIPF and OLBI to strengthen teaching of French

On May 14, 2024, alongside the conference activities, a landmark moment took place, namely, the [signing of an historic memorandum of understanding](#) between the *Fédération internationale des professeurs de français* (FIPF) and OLBI. This innovative partnership, symbolized by the collaboration between OLBI assistant director Catherine Buchanan and FIPF president Cynthia Eid, aims to promote the teaching of French around the world.

The agreement is based on the fundamental principles of excellence and cultural diversity, and is dedicated to creating opportunities for collaboration between the two organizations. Future actions will include the development of innovative teaching resources, increased international visibility for OLBI at key events and a Francophonie summit in 2025, aimed at promoting the exchange of ideas and professional development.

This historic partnership is the very first collaborative initiative between the FIPF and a Canadian university, and reinforces OLBI's central role in the promotion of education in the Francophonie and the representation of French within minority communities in Canada. It also ushers in a new era for teaching French worldwide.



Ceremony for the ratification of a memorandum of understanding between OLBI and the FIPF. From left to right: Catherine E. Buchanan, Martine Lagacé, Cynthia Eid, Aline Germain-Rutherford, Marc Charron, Elena Valenzuela, Yves Pelletier

Table 1: OLBI activities

Title	Responsible Parties
553 – Comment contribuer à l’insertion et à la réussite universitaires des étudiants internationaux? ↗	Catherine Elena Buchanan Valia Spiliotopoulos Reza Farzi Jérémie Séror
540 – Défis de l’enseignement de l’oral et pratiques langagières de jeunes adultes issus des programmes d’immersion française au Canada ↗	Catherine Levasseur Juanita Calderon Rodriguez
519 – L’écriture en français travaillée par le numérique : questionnements émergents et enjeux didactiques ↗	Marie-Josée Hamel Catherine Caws Nicolas Guichon Mackenzie Lugli
De l’insécurité à la sécurité linguistique (Séance d’échanges thématiques) ↗	Catherine Levasseur
460 – Regards croisés sur les dynamiques migratoires dans l’espace francophone international ↗	Luisa Veronis Aba Sadki Janaína Nazzari Gomes
635 – Défis de parole : fiches FLS pour l’expression orale ou comment aller au-delà de l’insécurité linguistique et prendre une part active à la Francophonie canadienne ↗	Paco Lalovic Dyhia Hammi Janna Saïd
314 – Bilinguisme et engagement étudiant : parcours sur mesure pour former des citoyens compétents ↗	Marie-Claude Dansereau Parvin Movassat
504 – Formation des maîtres –Le développement professionnel des formateurs des étudiants-maîtres en français langue seconde (FLS) : une enquête sur la formation de l’approche immersion ↗	Valia Spiliotopoulos



Banner of the 91e Congrès de l'Acfas



Professor Parvin Movassat



Professors Nicolas Guichon and Marie-Josée Hamel



Professor Catherine Levasseur and Juanita Calderon Rodriguez, uOttawa graduate



Presentation on Open Educational Resources (OER) with Bojan Lalovic



Professors Janaína Nazzari Gomes, Michelle Auzanneau, Luisa Veronis and Monika Jezak



Professor Jérémie Séror

Undergraduate Programs



Parvin Movassat
Director, Undergraduate programs



French and English Second-Language Programs

The mission of OLBI’s undergraduate French and English second-language (FLS and ESL) programs is to educate our students in both of Canada’s official languages by preparing them to use their second language in genuine social interactions. To that end, we favour instructional approaches based on second-language use in real life, where students’ sociolinguistic achievements enable them to communicate practically and effectively with peers. The popularity of some of our courses, coupled with a community service learning component, is also a testament to our students’ interest in this approach.

Our major, minor and advanced minor programs give learners the opportunity to master the use of their second language by improving their spoken and written linguistic and cultural competencies. Our microprograms, for their part, attract students from various disciplines who wish to maintain their second language without having to commit to a major or minor.

Table 2 shows enrolment in our FLS and ESL courses in 2023–2024, providing an indication of student interest in them, irrespective of enrolment in our programs. Indeed, OLBI continues to serve the entire University community, offering high-quality teaching in support of bilingualism, far beyond our institution.

Furthermore, we are continuing to explore opportunities for collaboration with University of Ottawa faculties, including Medicine and Social Sciences, and the Telfer School of Management. We are also maintaining our partnerships with national organizations.

Lastly, the cyclical evaluation process for FLS and ESL programs, which began in 2021, led to a report by two external evaluators in 2023. The report highlights the key role played by OLBI in promoting bilingualism in Canada, and suggests ways of optimizing certain aspects of its operations.

Table 2: Enrolment statistics in FLS and ESL courses in 2023-2024

2023-2024	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2024	Total
FLS	35	1468	1326	2829
ESL	164	579	468	1211
Total	199	2047	1794	4040



Celebratory showcase marking the graduation of students from the undergraduate FLS program



A portrait of Marie-Claude Dansereau, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and large hoop earrings. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a tree trunk on the left.

Marie-Claude Dansereau

Second-Language Teaching
Program Coordinator

Second Language Teaching

Honours BA in Second Language Teaching (SLT)



Ella Duncliffe, President of the Second Language Teaching Program Student Association

The program

The Honours BA in Second Language Teaching is a unique program in Canada that rigorously prepares students for careers in language teaching. This four-year program is an excellent introduction to the BEd in Education (Teacher Education) program.

Designed in collaboration with the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education, the program's varied course offerings and interdisciplinary approach can also open up opportunities in specialized fields, such as language skills assessment and instructional design, as well as graduate studies.

Students receive comprehensive and thorough training through innovative teaching methods and practice-oriented courses. Small groups create a student community where everyone can grow together in a supportive environment.

What students have to say

This year, promotional initiatives were undertaken in collaboration with OLBI's Marketing and Development section to increase the program's visibility, for example, through professional videos aimed at high school students and through social media clips. Here's one example: [Second Language Teaching Program promotional video](#)

These efforts enabled us to exceed our admission targets for fall 2024, illustrating the growing attractiveness of this outstanding training program.

Program evaluation

The year 2023–2024 saw the implementation of the second phase of the program's cyclical evaluation and the arrival of the external group responsible for it. This phase helped us to identify the measures to be put into place over the short and medium term in order to meet the needs of future teachers in training even more effectively.

By the numbers

The program accepts a new cohort each year, contributing to training the next generation of French and English second-language teachers in Canada.

Table 3: Enrolment statistics for the year 2023-2024

	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2024
Honours bachelor's	10	63	72
Major	2	11	11
Total	12	74	83





Marie-Pier Gauthier-LeVasseur, Sydney Brown, Edie Olender, Alexandra Pinet and Danika Goveas of the uOttawa French Immersion Stream

French Immersion Stream

The French Immersion Stream, launched in 2006, encourages students from French as a second-language programs to pursue their university studies bilingually. This option is available in our six direct-entry faculties in more than 80 programs, including Business Administration, Computer Engineering, Anthropology and Biopharmaceutical Science. This unique stream includes language courses tailored to various disciplines, along with language, academic and social support offered through various services from OLBI and the Immersion Mentoring Centre.

2023-2024 by the numbers

Admissions	Total enrolment	Graduates
625	2 205	320

Table 4: Number of graduates

Faculty	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Common Law					2
Faculty of Engineering		3	4	3	8
Faculty of Medicine				5	4
Faculty of Arts	36	28	46	38	37
Faculty of Science	39	29	35	47	49
Faculty of Social Sciences	103	96	128	134	127
Faculty of Health Sciences	32	37	43	45	58
Telfer School of Management	29	13	24	29	35
Total	239	206	280	301	320



The French Immersion Stream at the Ontario University Fair



Students in front of Hamelin Hall

Catherine Levasseur
Director, Graduate Studies



Graduate Studies

Master of Arts (MA) in Bilingualism Studies

The [Master of Arts in Bilingualism Studies](#), the only program of its kind in Canada, provides an in-depth education covering various fields of research related to bilingualism and multilingualism, including language policy, language management, new technologies and approaches in teaching and learning second languages, and language proficiency evaluation. The program welcomes a dozen full- and part-time students from Canada and abroad every year. These students come from a variety of backgrounds, with some having completed undergraduate degrees in second-language teaching, applied linguistics or translation. Others hail from the language-teaching sector, the public service, or the public or private sectors. Research paper and course-based/practicum options are offered in a one-year format, while the thesis research option spans two years.

- **Program director:** Marie-Josée Hamel (2023); Catherine Levasseur (2023–2024)
- **Program committee:** Beverly Baker, Valia Spiliotopoulos, Catherine Buchanan, Reza Farzi (interim), student representative (vacant)

Minor change to program

A minor change was made to the program to enhance the research thesis option. As a result, effective 2024–2025, admitted students will take five seminars instead of four. We are certain that this change will enable them to hone their expertise and contribute significantly to their thesis project.

Practicum

The BIL 5001 — Expérience pratique/Practicum course is part of the course-based master's program and the dual degree (DD) with Université Lumière Lyon 2 (ULL2). In both cases, students enrolled in BIL 5001 (spring-summer term) must complete a practicum of at least 65 hours in a setting where they can put their seminar instruction into practice.

This year, Ilonat Vallet (DD option) completed her practicum at the Julien Couture Resource Centre, while Yona Solmini (course-based option) did hers at OLBI's Language Assessment Centre. Anaïs Fanget (DD option) completed a teaching assistantship and a research practicum at OLBI. Other OLBI external partners, including [Collège La Cité](#), also offered practicum opportunities.

Dual degree agreement between Université Lyon Lumière 2 and OLBI

The ULL2-uOttawa dual degree agreement is in the process of being renewed. For this reason, the DD option will not be offered to the 2024–2025 cohort. The new agreement should be in place in time for the 2025–2026 cohort.

Scholarships and awards

OLBI awarded \$8,000 in mobility scholarships to international students and those enrolled in the DD option.

Samantha Toh and Djeride Jean-Baptiste, who are working towards their master's in bilingualism studies, were awarded a Francophonie scholarship for OLBI undergraduate and master's students. This scholarship is intended to support their participation in scholarly conferences.

Djeride Jean-Baptiste is also the recipient of the Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics 2024 Graduate Student Award.

Taegan Holmes, a graduate of the Master of Arts in Bilingualism Studies, took the 2024 Faculty of Arts Award for Academic Excellence.



Djeride Jean-Baptiste, graduate of the Master of Arts in Bilingualism Studies



Professor Marie-Josée Hamel and Taegan Holmes, graduate of the Master of Arts in Bilingualism Studies

Class of 2023–2024

Thesis

- Doloreux, Jade (Nikolay Slavkov, supervisor)
- Holmes, Teagan (2024). *L'utilisation de ChatGPT pour la rétroaction corrective écrite interactive en apprentissage du français langue seconde* (Marie-Josée Hamel, supervisor)
- Laperle, Kristina (Jérémie Séror, supervisor)
- Thibert, Anne (Jérémie Séror, supervisor)
- Toh, Samantha (Valia Spiliotopoulos, supervisor)
- Salakhutdinova, Alima (Nikolay Slavkov, supervisor)

Research paper

- Jean-Baptiste, Djeride Ernst (Beverly Baker, supervisor)
- Murison, Cailyn (Monika Jezak, supervisor)

Course-based

- Solmini, Yona

Dual degree and research paper

- Cole, Emma (2024). *An Inquiry into Allophone Students' Access and Success in French Immersion Programs in Ontario*. University of Ottawa (Valia Spiliotopoulos, supervisor)
- Dumont, Léa (2024). *Impact du sentiment d'insécurité linguistique sur les apprenants en contexte postsecondaire canadien : les causes, les manifestations et les conséquences sur l'identification linguistique et sur la réussite éducative et scolaire*. University of Ottawa (Catherine Levasseur, supervisor)
- Fanget, Anaïs, Université Lumière Lyon 2
- Vallet, Ilona, Université Lumière Lyon 2

2023–2024 graduates

Theses

- Douglas, Shayna (2023). *Exploring and Expanding Through "Real-World Tasks:" The Digital Practices of Generation Z Post-Secondary FSL Learners*. (Marie-Josée Hamel, supervisor)
- Sarpong, Annie (2023). *Adults' Motivation in FSL Learning and Teaching: A Comparative Analysis Between Ghana and Canada*. (Valia Spiliotopoulos, supervisor)

Research papers

- Agbewu, Linda (2023). *An overview of the Language in Education Situation in Ghana: The Failures, Successes and Recommendations*. (Catherine Levasseur, supervisor)
- Clément, Valérie (2023). *Politiques linguistiques dans les associations étudiantes d'une université bilingue : les enjeux liés à l'expérience étudiante*. (Monika Jezak, supervisor)
- Fillion, Danièle Sara (2024). *Linguistic needs versus linguistic rights: How to provide person-centered healthcare to Francophones in Ottawa*. (Nikolay Slavkov, supervisor)
- Peña Ramirez, Cindy Paola (2023). *Structures de gouvernance et certifications linguistiques comme gatekeepers pour l'immigration et la mobilité professionnelle et académique : le cas de la langue française en Colombie*. (Monika Jezak, supervisor)

Course-based

- Anier, Gaetjens
- Castano Laverde, Laura
- Mangle, Anthony
- McBride, Morgan
- Sharma, Yukti
- Verissimo, Carolina

Dual degree and research paper

- O'Reilly, Katelyn, University of Ottawa. (2023). *The bilingualism of young adults in French minority settings of Canada, through the lens of language ideologies, emotions and practices*. (Catherine Levasseur, supervisor)
- Boilesve, Gaël, Université Lumière Lyon 2
- Mollaret, Émilie, Université Lumière Lyon 2



Graduates from the Faculty of Arts at convocation



Nikolay Slavkov
CCERBAL Director

Canadian Centre for Studies and Research on Bilingualism and Language Planning (CCERBAL)

CCERBAL 2023 conference

The signature event of the Canadian Centre for Studies and Research in Bilingualism and Language Planning (CCERBAL) is its biennial international conference. The [2023 edition](#) was chaired by Nikolay Slavkov (OLBI) and included two guest co-chairs: Pierre-Luc Paquet (University of Texas at Tyler/Université de Montréal) and Nina Woll (Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières). The conference explored bilingualism and multilingualism as related to transversal competencies, mobility and well-being. It gathered over 200 participants from around the world, including researchers, practitioners, students, policy makers and other stakeholders. CCERBAL 2023 offered four keynote speeches, three roundtable discussions, four thematic symposia and four workshops, as well as a number of individual oral presentations and posters. The conference took place over three days as usual, but was ushered in by two pre-conference events: one on plurilingual language policies in migration and internationalization, and one on language immersion at the university level. OLBI's [members](#), [research groups](#) and [research chairs](#) were actively engaged in organizing many of the conference and pre-conference activities and contributed to the overall success of the event.

CCERBAL research forums

Over the course of the year, the CCERBAL Research Centre also hosted various guest speakers through its Research Forum series. The 2023–2024 speakers included Canadian and international researchers, as well as school board, non-governmental organization (NGO) and federal government representatives, who covered topics such as curriculum development, linguistic (in)security, bi/multilingualism and autism, psycholinguistic insights into second-language instruction, and metalinguistic awareness in Francophone contexts in Africa. For more details, please consult the full list of [speakers and abstracts](#).

OLBI Journal

The open-access bilingual peer-reviewed *OLBI Journal* continued on its ambitious path of publishing high-quality proceedings and special thematic issues. Its 13th volume, titled *From linguistic insecurity to security: Complexity and diversity of contexts*, was published in 2023. Editor-in-Chief Catherine Levasseur has recently taken steps to partner the journal with the Erudit platform to expand its distribution and impact even more. OLBI Journal issues are available in print as well as online through the [journal's website](#).

Collaboration with European institutions and stakeholders

OLBI and the CCERBAL Research Centre continued their long-standing institutional collaboration with the European Centre for Modern Languages ([ECML](#)) of the Council of Europe. In December 2023, OLBI Director Elena Valenzuela and CCERBAL Director Nikolay Slavkov participated in the ECML'S 2023 Conference and Professional Network Forum, where the new ECML four-year cycle of projects was announced and a consultation regarding the participation of Canada-nominated experts as associate partners in European projects was initiated. This process is expected to be complete in early 2025.

OLBI's collaboration with the European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism ([ECSPM](#)) has also deepened, with CCERBAL Director Nikolay Slavkov having served as an Executive Committee member at the ECSPM and having participated in the organization of various ECSPM [symposia](#) as well as meetings at the European Commission. The overarching goal is to increase collaboration between NGOs and government institutions with regard to digital equality and multilingualism.

For more details about the CCERBAL Research Centre's events, activities and networks, please visit [CCERBAL website](#).

Table 5: Funding summary*

Funding source	2023-2024
Total Funds	\$705,114
Tri-agency funding and other grants and contracts	\$96,312
Canada Ontario Agreement funding for the advancement of Francophone educational, pedagogical and experiential initiatives	\$533,802
OLBI Research Chairs	\$75,000

** Includes funding for research, as well as for pedagogical and community initiatives and resources.*

Publications and other activities

CCERBAL members actively participate in various interdisciplinary research projects as principal investigators or co-investigators. They regularly present at international conferences and publish books, articles, book chapters, and teaching material. For more details visit the [CCERBAL Research Centre members webpage](#).

Appreciation for Professor Nikolay Slavkov's leadership at CCERBAL

OLBI wishes to express its profound gratitude to Professor Nikolay Slavkov for his outstanding leadership and unwavering dedication as Director of the CCERBAL over the past seven years.

Under his guidance, CCERBAL has earned increased recognition for its contributions to research and collaboration in the field of bilingualism and language planning. OLBI is proud to acknowledge his role in further strengthening the Centre's reputation and fostering new avenues for academic engagement and collaboration.

As CCERBAL moves forward, OLBI warmly welcomes Professor Valia Spiliotopoulos as the new Director and looks forward to the Centre's continued success under her leadership.



Members of the Centre for Language Learning team: Aimée Jabour, Shayna Douglas, Ariane Gladu, Evan Lavoie, Sharon Carrier, Rachel Robillard

Centre for Language Learning

The Centre for Language Learning oversees intensive ESL and FLS programs for a variety of groups with different linguistic needs and from different backgrounds. The Centre's activities promote the University's vision of a bilingual campus and support internationalization efforts. Moreover, new curriculum and service initiatives developed each year further enrich overall student learning.

English Intensive Program

Offered three times per year over 14 weeks, the English Intensive Program (EIP) is the Centre's flagship program. With a focus on English for academic purposes, the EIP plays a key role in supporting international student integration into undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Ottawa. Students come from many countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Colombia, Kuwait, Korea, France and Congo. While in the program, students have the opportunity to take an academic course, CMN 1148 (*Introduction to Organizational Communication*), for which they can receive credit when they start their undergraduate programs. The EIP also focuses on helping students develop their inter-cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication skills in order to become an integral part of the University of Ottawa community through the University Integration Workshop series.

Academic English Accelerated Course

Running each summer from July to August, the Academic English Accelerated Course aims to facilitate the transition of international students into regular courses at an accelerated pace by condensing ESL 0140, the highest-level course in the English Intensive Program, from 14 weeks to eight weeks so that students can start their undergraduate programs in September. This course, consisting of 24 hours per week of intensive language training, offers students unique components such as "Writing for Discipline-Specific Purposes," "Academic Reading to Write" and "Academic Listening to Speak."

uOttawa English Experience Program

For the first time, the uOttawa English Experience (uOEE) short-term summer program was offered by the Centre. This program welcomed 12 non-degree-seeking students wanting to improve their English communication and comprehension skills while enjoying a transformative experience learning about Canadian culture and history. Students engaged in task-based assignments, such as analyzing an English song, writing a travel journal and conducting a survey.

Toyo High School Students (six weeks) TOEFL and Communication Skills Course

This tailor-made course offered to 10 Japanese high school students was designed to teach the necessary skills and strategies to excel in the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) examination. This integrated four-skill course focused on developing proficiency in all sections of the TOEFL, including reading, listening, speaking and writing. Students engaged in comprehensive study and practice to enhance their English-language competencies and improve their performance on the TOEFL test.

EAP + MED (four weeks)

This tailor-made program was offered in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine. We welcomed 34 students from the Shanghai University School of Medicine. They worked on the development of academic listening and speaking skills with a focus on medical terminology, introduction to critical listening, practice in note-taking, production of extended oral discourse, use of formal and informal registers, and refinement of vocabulary and grammar use and pronunciation skills.

Recruitment activities 2023-2024

- New partnerships with recruitment agents: 11
- New students enrolled through recruitment initiatives: 65
- Google Web campaign engagements – Quebec: 1,768
- Fairs attended as a participant: 4

The EIP plays a key role in supporting international student integration into undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Ottawa.



Trade Mission with Italian and Spanish Education Agencies, Banff, December 2023



Graduation ceremony for the English Intensive Program





Members of OLBI's Language Assessment Research Group: (Back) Ernst Djeride Jean-Baptiste, Atena Attaran, Mojtaba Heydari; (Front) Cindy Paola Peña Ramirez, Beverly Baker, Yiwei (Coral) Qin

Language Assessment

OLBI's Language Assessment sector directly supports our bilingual mission, offering language assessment solutions for uOttawa applicants, students, employees and professors for a variety of purposes. We also engage in outreach activities to support high-quality decision making and language instruction, and we participate in collaborative research projects that burnish our international reputation in the field of language assessment.

Below we share a few highlights of our work during the 2023–2024 academic year in test development and administration, in collaboration and outreach with our university and community partners and in research.

Language Assessment Development and Administration

Despite significant human resource challenges this year, Language Testing Services successfully administered more than a dozen different tests in both English and French to thousands of uOttawa clients. We recognize that language tests can be stressful. As a result, we are dedicated to supporting our test takers and improving our procedures and communications to continuously improve the test-taking experience.

- Examples of the many tests we offer include placement tests for applicants to the MPH+ (Master of Public Health) program in the Faculty of Medicine; placement into personnel support courses; second language certification testing for students of all programs; and specially designed tests for professors seeking promotion and tenure.
- In the past year, we were able to hire current and recent students from OLBI's MA in Bilingualism Studies as novice item writers for our test development. Participants benefited from extensive training and feedback as they honed their content generation skills.
- Following the successful development of a new English placement test last year, we would like to thank all the FLS instructors who worked closely with us this year to pilot our new placement test into French credit courses. This innovative test includes a self-placement component in addition to more traditional language test items, with questions aligned to each level of our program for more efficient placement.

Collaboration and Outreach

Our sector continues to make itself available for consultation and collaboration with our colleagues in other uOttawa units and services across campus, on any questions related to the determination and certification of language proficiency.

- Recent examples of collaboration include working with Graduate Studies to establish minimum admissions requirements for graduate programs across campus, and with Human Resources to draft standardized descriptions of four levels of employee language proficiency.
- As in years past, students enrolled in the language assessment course in OLBI's MA in Bilingualism Studies participated in a project for the assessment sector as part of their course requirements. They drafted specifications and new tasks for the Language Testing Services Proficiency Test (used for a number of purposes, including graduate admissions). In addition to providing an opportunity to work on an authentic test development initiative, the project resulted in an official OLBI internal report that students could add to their résumés.

Research and validation

Combining outreach and research, members of OLBI's Language Assessment Research Group (LARG; pictured), organized and delivered a series of workshops on the use of language test scores in university admissions to two groups of uOttawa employees—the Undergraduate Admissions team, and faculty-based staff and faculty involved in graduate student admissions. The research team would like to thank the members of OLBI's own Graduate Studies Committee, Catherine Lavasseur and Valia Spiliotopoulos, for their help in piloting the workshop.

This year also saw the completion of a major project to align OLBI's Second Language Certification Test with the Canadian Language Benchmarks and the Common European Framework of Reference. The resulting equivalence tables (refer to table) serve to make our tests more meaningful for outside audiences, adding value for students' future studies and employment.

Table 6: Alignment of Second Language Certification Test (SLCT, ESL 3100) Levels with the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) and the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

SLCT (ESL 3100)	CLB	CECR
3	8, may have some aspects of 9-10	B2, may have some aspects of C levels
2	6 or 7	B1, may have some aspects of B2
1	5, may have some aspects of 4	A2, may have some aspects of B1

The Language Assessment Research Group (LARG)

LARG held two lunchtime sessions in November 2023.

- On November 23, postdoctoral student Mojtaba Haydari presented his recent research on text mining, a method that uses data drawn from social media platforms for second-language research.
- On November 30, Cindy Paola Peña Ramírez, who is completing an MA in bilingualism studies, presented her research on the gatekeeping role that French certifications play in immigration and in academic and professional mobility in Colombia.

Selected research output from 2023–2024 from the language assessment sector:

Appel, R., Arias, A., Baker, B., & Loignon, G. (2023). Insights from lexical and syntactic analyses of a French for academic purposes assessment. *Assessing Writing*, 58, 100789. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2023.100789>

Baker, B., Arias, A., Bibeau, L.-D., Qin, Y. (Coral), Norenberg, M., & St-John, J. (2024). Rethinking student placement to enhance efficiency and student agency. *Language Testing*, 41(1), 181-191. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02655322231179128>

Baker, B., Cole, E., de la Vega Sanchez, I., Doloreaux, J., Dumont, L., Hamache, R., Jean-Baptiste, E. D., Murison, C., Salakhutdinova, A., Solmini, Y., & Toh, S. (2023, December). *Spécifications et ébauches de tâches de compréhension orale et écrite pour le test de compétence en anglais et en français de l'Université d'Ottawa*. Report #2023 submitted to Language Testing Services, Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute, University of Ottawa.

Baker, B., Arias, A., Bibeau, L.D., & Qin, C. (2023, June). Incorporating progression of learning in a revised placement assessment with self-directed elements. Language Testing Research Colloquium (International Language Testing Association conference), New York.

Hirsch, R., & Wu, Y. (2023, June). Adapting score mapping methodologies to the constraints of a local context. Language Testing Research Colloquium (International Language Testing Association conference), New York.

This year saw the completion of a major project to align OLBI's Second Language Certification Test with the Canadian Language Benchmarks and the Common European Framework of Reference. The resulting equivalence tables serve to make our tests more meaningful for outside audiences, adding value for students' future studies and employment.



Kristina Laperle, Jessica Adams and Cindy Paola Peña Ramirez



Bianca Jeanveaux, Senior Advisor, Program Management, Language support services for employees and Kristina Laperle, Interim Senior Advisor (2023-2024)

Language Support for Administrative Staff and Professors

Language support services for administrative staff

Our English and French as a Second Language (ESL and FLS) classes for University of Ottawa administrative staff are increasing in popularity every year. Furthermore, with current budget limitations, OLB has found creative ways to meet the increasing demand for language support services. Language classes are offered at the Beginner, Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels for APUO, APTPUO, SSUO, PIPSC, Section 771-A and -B and NUEA members, non-union employees, managers and administrative employees on contracts with benefits, as well as postdoctoral fellows and research associates. CUPE members are also welcome to participate when space is available. In addition to our course offerings, we have renewed our website to highlight additional language support options for those employees who prefer to learn at their own time and pace.

This year, we have stepped up our collaboration with other faculties and services on campus. We are continuing to work with Francophone Affairs at the Faculty of Medicine to provide language training for physicians, students and residents, professors, researchers and administrative staff in their community. We have also introduced a series of customised language development courses for employees in the University of Ottawa Facilities Department.

We continue to seek out opportunities to provide our staff with the language training they need to create a more supportive and welcoming bilingual community for all.

Table 7: Number of courses offered in 2023-2024

	Number of courses offered
ESL courses	10
FLS courses	24
Faculty of Medicine FLS Courses	11
Facilities Department FLS Courses	4

Language support services for professors

The number of requests for language support services for professors has again increased compared to last year. Professors have expressed a preference for one-on-one tutoring to prepare for taking active and passive language tests and teaching in their second official language, or to work on improving pronunciation and grammar for both oral and written language use in their various academic and administrative roles. Our website has also been updated to highlight our other services, including language classes and conversation workshops designed specifically for our faculty and teaching staff, online resources for self-study, and a service for reviewing and editing classroom materials for professors teaching in their second language.

Table 8: Number of tutoring contracts in 2023-2024

	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2024
Tutoring contracts	63	40	38





Bojan (Paco) Lalovic
Documentalist,
Julien Couture Resource Centre

Julien Couture Resource Centre

The Julien Couture Resource Centre (JCRC) continued to showcase its versatile physical and virtual space, as well as its services throughout 2023–2024. The University community can congregate there for some 20 undergraduate and graduate study sessions, as well as for general-public events, such as the Human Library and social gatherings for the French as a second language (FLS) and English as a second language (ESL) cohorts.

Our Conversation Partners initiative—one-on-one sessions to support speaking practice in English and French—continued to prove its worth as an essential strategy for addressing language insecurity and the need for language skill development in a positive and stimulating setting. The number of participants grew since its launch in February 2023, climbing to 150 in December of that year.

The JCRC has also positioned itself as a community partner, offering regular volunteer opportunities in collaboration with the Community Service Learning Program and OLBi colleagues responsible for FLS 3773, FLS 4500 and FLS 2791, thus adding another type of service to its support for the official-languages learning community.

Lastly, we opened up the Centre’s space to collaboration with faculty in the Department of Modern Languages to establish language twinning opportunities between people learning Mandarin, Spanish or Irish and speakers of those languages looking to hone their English or French skills.

By diversifying its range of services and opening its doors to collaboration with relevant departments and services across campus (International House, Bilingualism Centre, etc.),

the JCRC continues to fulfil its mission of supporting teaching, learning and research in the fields of bilingualism and the Francophonie as pillars of community life at the University.



Amel Kaufid et Dyhia Hammi, Work-Study Program students at OLBi



Julien Couture Resource Centre



Members of the Marketing and Development team: Bojan (Paco) Lalović, Renée Bélec, Chloé St-Louis, Amel Kaufid, Dereck Bassa

Marketing and Development

During 2023–2024, OLBI's Marketing and Development section carried out a number of strategic initiatives aimed at raising the institute's profile and promoting its bilingual mission.

Celebrating Francophone Culture: *Mois de la Francophonie*

Among our flagship projects, the *Mois de la Francophonie* was a high point, underscoring the University's Francophone character, in close collaboration with the vice-president, international and Francophonie. Besides celebrating Francophone culture, our events, which attracted a large audience both within and outside the University community, underlined the University's commitment to bilingualism.

The *Mois de la Francophonie* was full of signature events. A workshop on how to showcase one's bilingualism in a job search gave participating students a better understanding of the importance of bilingualism in the labour market, as well as practical advice on how to maximize this asset. The premiere of the documentary *Le dernier Canadien français* was also a key moment, offering a deep reflection on the history and evolution of the Francophonie in Canada. Lastly, the panel discussion titled "*Francophonie excentrique : un chassé-croisé artistique!*" brought together artists and thinkers for a lively exchange on contemporary expressions of the Francophonie.

Revitalizing spaces and promoting bilingualism

The section also undertook a complete revitalization of the Julien Couture Resource Centre. By enriching its collection and updating its décor, we transformed the space into a warmer, more welcoming environment for students and staff. The project was guided by the desire to create a space that encourages learning and collaboration, while reflecting OLBI's values.

At the same time, several promotional campaigns were launched to encourage University students to take advantage of bilingual offerings on campus by enrolling in second-language courses. These campaigns used a variety of communication strategies, targeting both undergraduate and graduate students with a clear message about the importance of bilingualism in the academic and professional world.

Supporting research and global collaboration

Supporting professors in their scholarly activities was another priority. We focused on the presentations at Acfas by developing engaging and proactive messaging to promote research being done at OLBI.

The launch of a new strategic partnership with the *Fédération internationale des professeurs de français* marked an important milestone for the institute, opening up opportunities for global collaboration.

Expanding OLBI's digital presence

Lastly, the section contributed to the ongoing improvement of OLBI's website, particularly the pages devoted to language assessment and undergraduate programs. It also started up a LinkedIn account to strengthen OLBI's presence in the professional community. These digital efforts have raised the institute's profile and consolidated its linkages with its various audiences.

All of these achievements illustrate our commitment to promoting bilingualism and supporting OLBI's academic and cultural initiatives.

All of these achievements illustrate our commitment to promoting bilingualism and supporting OLBI's academic and cultural initiatives.



Franco-Ontarien flag



Photos of various events organised by the OLB Marketing and Development team

Court Challenges Program

The Court Challenges Program (CCP), hosted at OLBI since 2018, is an entity that provides financial support for cases of national importance related to constitutional and quasi-constitutional guarantees in matters of official languages and human rights. The CCP-funded test cases are unique in that they have the potential to advance or clarify the rights covered by the program. Cases brought before the courts can therefore have an impact that transcends the situation of the individual litigants involved, making a broader contribution to the respect and understanding of the rights of all Canadians. In so doing, the CCP, like the University itself, aims to advance the state of public knowledge.

Funded by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, the CCP is administered by the University of Ottawa, to ensure the independence of its decisions. This independence is especially valuable given that most of the cases funded by the CCP, both in matters of human rights and official languages, challenge laws, policies or actions of the federal government itself. Based on the recognition that access to justice is beyond the reach of most Canadians, and that it can be even more difficult for people whose rights have been violated to self-finance a complex constitutional case, the CCP strives to provide them with access to the courts so the latter can rule on the government's constitutional compliance.

For the CCP, 2023–2024 was a time to take a look back at the first five years of operation since its creation in its current form. In this thought-provoking context, the program team took stock of the ground covered over this period, while looking to the future. The fact that the CCP, from its reinstatement in 2018 to March 31, 2024, received 673 applications for funding is testament to the critical financial needs of those seeking constitutional justice. Of those applications, 346 cases were funded, from actual initiation to hearings before the Supreme Court of Canada, for a total investment of over \$22 million. These results illustrate the decisive role played by the CCP in public policy on linguistic duality and respect for human rights, a responsibility that is entirely in line with OLBI's mission.

Building on the solid foundations established since its inception, the CCP continues its efforts to promote equitable access to Canada's justice system. In fact, as we negotiate the renewal of the funding agreement beyond March 2025, the CCP is now focused on the road ahead to optimize the program's contribution and ensure that it can continue its contribution to the evolution of case law in matters of language and human rights across the country.

[Find out more about the CCP.](#)



Marika Giles Samson, CCP Director

Selected Publications

Books/Edited Journals

Levasseur, C., Bouchard, M.-E., & Ntiranyibagira, C. (Dir). (2023). De l'insécurité à la sécurité linguistique : complexité et diversité de contextes. *Cahiers de l'ILOB / OLBI Journal*, 13. <https://uottawa.scholarsportal.info/ottawa/index.php/ILOB-OLBI/issue/view/659>

Chapters

Baker, B. (2023). Concluding Commentary: Literacy, transparency, and (mis)interpretations in communicating with testing stakeholders. In Papageorgiou, S. & Manna, V.F. (Eds.), *Meaningful language test scores: Research to enhance score interpretation*. (pp.58-66). John Benjamins.

Landry, J. & **Hamel, M.-J.** (2024). *Language Teachers as ERT Professionals During COVID: A Perspective from Professional Didactics*. In: Goertler, S. & Gleason, J. (Eds). *Technology-mediated Crisis Response in Language Studies*. Advances in CALL Research and Practice. Equinox Publishing, UK. <https://www.equinoxpub.com/home/view-chapter/?id=45098>

Schulze, M., Caws, C., **Hamel, M.-J.** & Heift, T. (à paraître). *Adaptive Instruction*. In: Stockwell, G. & Wang, Y. (Eds). *The Cambridge Handbook of Technology in Language Teaching and Learning*, Cambridge Press, UK.

Séror, J., & Gentil, G. (2023). Direct observation of writing activity: Screen capture technologies. In Manchón, R. & Roca de Larios, J. (Eds.), *Research methods in the study of writing processes* (pp. 141-160). John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/rmal.5

Spiliotopoulos, V. (2024). Faculty Engagement and content-based language education: An appreciative inquiry approach to French teacher education in western Canada. In Ballinger, S. Fielding, R. & Tedick, D. (Eds.), *International Perspectives on Teacher Development for Content and Language Integration*. Multilingual Matters. (pp.83-98)

Spiliotopoulos, V. Van Viegen, S., Early, M., & Lam, C. (2024). Teacher professional learning communities and language assessment reform in western Canada. In **B. Baker** & L. Taylor (Eds.). *Language Assessment Literacy and Competence Vol. 2: Case Studies from Around the World*. Cambridge University Press. (pp.08-19)

Papers

Baker, B. & Gebriel, A. (2024). Editorial: The assessment of writing in languages other than English. *Assessing Writing*, 60, 1-2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2024.100840>.

Miguel Addisu, V., & **Séror, J.** (2023). *Apprendre à distance pendant la pandémie : pratiques déclarées de 1270 élèves plurilingues à l'AEFE*. *Contextes et Didactiques* [En ligne]. <https://doi.org/10.4000/ced.4614>

Séror, J. (2024). Enseigner en immersion à l'ère de l'apprenant numérique et de l'intelligence artificielle. *Le Journal de l'Immersion*, 46(1), 49-54.

Slavkov, N. (2023). Linguistic Risk-Taking: A New Pedagogical Approach and a Research Program. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 26, 2, 32-59. <https://doi.org/10.37213/cjal.2023.33038>

Invited Speakers

Ambrosio, L. & Dansereau, M.-C. (2023, June 16-17) Languages in education for work and social integration. Global Citizenship and Multilingual Competences Conference 2023 – Graz, Austria,

Ambrosio, L. & Jezak, M. (2023, 21 July) – University of Ottawa. Community Service Learning as social cohesion paradigm for learners, teachers, and social actors. Changing perspectives towards multilingual education: teachers, learners and researchers as agents of social cohesion AILA 2023, Lyon. Symposium: Online: <https://aila2023.dryfta.com/program-schedule>

Ambrosio, L. (2023, May 15-16) – Le rôle « d'acteur social » de l'apprenant de langue : expérience subjective et apprentissage dans la réalité de la communauté. Pratique(s) et théorie(s) 10th International Conference on Second Language Pedagogies: "Looking back and moving forward". SLPC10/CIDLS10 University of Guelph - May 15-16, 2023.

Baker, B. (2023, Sept). Opening invited plenary: Considering multilingual assessment: Twenty questions—and the beginnings of a response. Midwest Association of Language Testers (MwALT) annual conference, Urbana-Champagne, Illinois.

Bouchard, M.-E., **Levasseur, C.**, & Conseil jeunesse francophone de la Colombie-Britannique. (2023, 4-6 May). *Favoriser la sécurité linguistique des francophones dans les contextes anglo-dominants du Canada* [Table ronde]. Colloque du CCERBAL 2023, Université d'Ottawa, Canada.

Buchanan, C. E. (2023, June), *Au-delà des étiquettes : Construction identitaire chez des étudiants d'un régime d'immersion universitaire*. Communication présentée dans le cadre du colloque intitulé *Plurilinguisme, enseignement-apprentissage, complexité et intégrité : perspectives épistémologiques, didactiques et politiques*, à Montpellier en France.

Buchanan, C.E. (2024, May) *L'humanisme au cœur de la mission de l'Institut des langues officielles et du bilinguisme*. Communication présentée dans le cadre du colloque intitulé *Comment contribuer à l'insertion et à la réussite universitaires des étudiants internationaux?* Congrès de l'ACFAS, Ottawa.

Dansereau, M.C. & Movassat, P., (2024). Bilinguisme et engagement étudiant : parcours sur mesure pour former des citoyens compétents. *91e congrès de l'ACFAS*, 13-17 mai, Université d'Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada.

Farzi, R. (2024). *Enhancing EAP writing instruction : Exploring generative AI for automated formative and summative feedback* [Paper presentation]. IX DILLE Conference on «Technological Innovations in Linguistic Education,» University of Basilicata, Matera, Italy.

Farzi, R. (2024). *Programmes passerelles ESL: Intégration des littéracies universitaires et plus encore* [Paper presentation]. L'ACFAS 91e Congrès, University of Ottawa, Ottawa.

Hamel, M.-J., Tiwari, A. & Douglas, S. (2023). *eTASC: a web-based environment for error annotation and written corrective feedback*. CALICO Conference, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, USA.

Levasseur C., & Ntiranyibagira, C. (2023, 4-6 May). *Les diverses formes de l'insécurité linguistique : une perspective internationale. The many forms of linguistic insecurities: an international perspective* [Symposium]. Colloque du CCERBAL 2023, Université d'Ottawa, Canada.

Séror J. et Buchanan, C. E. (2023, May) *Réflexions sur les meilleures pratiques pour soutenir le développement des littéracies universitaires.* Communication présentée dans le cadre *Formation langagière sur objectif universitaire : enjeux et défis, Congrès de l'ACFAS, Montréal.*

Slavkov, N. (2023) Learner Engagement and Language Teaching in the 21st Century: A Perspective from Canada. Keynote at the 2023 ICC Conference – Integration of 21 Century Skills in the Language Classroom. Belgrade, Serbia, May 13-14, 2023.

Spiliotopoulos, V. & Doloreux, J. (2024). L'engagement et les cours de langue d'immersion universitaire en format hybride : Défis et affordances. *Colloque Agi-lang : Agentivité, engagement et apprentissage en didactique des langues dans des contextes numériques.* Grenoble, France.

Papers Read, Workshops, seminars and posters

Farzi, R. (2024). *Revolutionizing EAP: Reinventing teaching and testing with AI* [Workshop presentation]. Professional Advancement Canadian EAP Virtual PD session, University of Ottawa, in collaboration with Queen's University, the University of Saskatchewan, Acadia University, Trent University, and Saint Mary's University.

Rhéaume, M. (2024). Le projet d'échanges linguistiques et culturels virtuels Promouvoir la joie de partager le français entre l'Amérique et l'Afrique : Echanges linguistiques et culturels virtuels entre le Canada, l'Égypte, le Bénin et la Côte-d'Ivoire, a été pré-sélectionné pour le premier prix du Groupe des Ambassadeurs et Ambassadrices du Canada (GAF) 2024.

Slavkov, N. (2024) Linguistic Risk-Taking: Reflections on Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and resilience. Invited webinar presentation. Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS), University of Limerick, Ireland, March 11, 2024.

Valenzuela, E., Pirvulescu, M. and Simon, J. (2023). *Genericity in the Grammars of Spanish Heritage Language Speakers in multilingual contexts*, 10th National Symposium on Spanish as a Heritage Language, Harvard University, MA, USA.

Other Contributions: Technical Reports; Conference Proceedings; Book Reviews

Rhéaume, M. & Slavkov, N. (June 2023). Language learning through linguistic risk-taking: Pedagogical and technological innovations à l'Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, en France.

Valenzuela, E. (2024). *Study matters relating to minority-language health services*, witness at the Standing Committee on Official Languages, Senate of Canada.

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