Two Decades of Romanian Teaching at the University of Los Angeles, California

Courses in Romanian language, culture, and literature were first taught at UCLA from 1974 to 1986 by visiting Fulbright professors from the universities of Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, and Iași. In the 1990s the Romanian program was re-established as a part-time lectureship, the following three courses being taught during the regular academic year: *Elementary Romanian, An Introduction to Romanian Civilization*, and *A Survey of Romanian Literature*. Since 2003, a two-year cycle of *Advanced Romanian Language Instruction Tutorials* has also been offered, with funding from a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant. During the summer there are two sections of an intensive *Elementary Romanian* course.

UCLA is the only university on the West Coast where Romanian courses have been taught on a regular basis since 1990. As a result, these classes are attended by UCLA undergraduate and graduate students, Los Angeles professionals and high school students, as well as students from other University of California campuses and universities from other American states.

Enrollment in the Romanian courses has increased steadily over the past two decades due both to the students’ growing interest in Romania and the quality of instruction. Overall, about 450 students took Romanian courses during the regular academic year from 1990 to 2010, and 210 students learned Romanian in the 2005–2010 Summer Intensive language courses.

In 2006 the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, where the Romanian courses are taught, established a new B.A. degree in *Central and East European Languages and Cultures*, and a new secondary specialization in *Central and East European Studies*. Within both the major and the minor, undergraduates must focus their studies on a particular country in the area, and some of the students have chosen a Romanian concentration.

Throughout the 1990’s and the first half of the 2000’s textbooks of Romanian as a foreign language published in Romania were used, while a new textbook was being slowly developed and tested. The language teaching methodology has fostered student participation and learning through exposure to authentic language content, personalized language use, cultural information, and carefully controlled language structures.