John T. Maddox IV
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Assistant Professor of Spanish
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AATSP Board of Directors

Statement

I have wanted to teach languages since my high school Spanish 1 teacher in a small Georgia town showed me the world was much bigger than our immediate surroundings. She inspired me to teach at the secondary level for five years. I met my future wife, Luciana Silva, at the University of Georgia’s Mary Lyndon Spanish immersion program, and she inspired me to learn Brazilian Portuguese. I trained in Brazilian and Spanish American literature at Vanderbilt University. I tell my students that languages have shaped my personal and professional lives, and that education is about more than getting a job.

I am grateful for the opportunities AATSP has granted me. I am College and University Representative. As Chair of the Higher Education Committee, I have spearheaded the Graduate Student Day presentation competition at the 2020 AATSP Conference. Three of my articles have appeared in Hispania (97.3, 100.5, 101.2), including one in issue 97.3 on the Brazilian Afro-Reggae cultural movement that received the journal’s 2015 Outstanding Scholarly Publication Award. I have been a reader for Hispania and the Spanish and Portuguese Review. I have contributed Portuguese translations to Phi Lambda Beta Collegiate Portuguese Honor Society and Hispania. The organization’s broad scope has inspired my scholarly work, and the annual conference is always a supportive, creative environment. It was there that I met my collaborator in the forthcoming Dictionary of Latin American Identities (University Press of Florida), Thomas M. Stephens.

Working with K-16 educators through AATSP has helped me grow as well. I served on the AATSP K-12 Articulation Committee and did a 9-12 conference workshop on Brazilian Portuguese, where I enjoyed getting to know other teachers. I served as AATSP Alabama Chapter President and Vice President and got to bringing K-12 and postsecondary educators together at the Alabama World Languages Association Conference. The 2016 UAB/Vanderbilt Black Resistance and Negotiation in Latin America Colloquium I organized included a workshop in which Afro-Colombian activist Bernardino Pérez Miranda, Colombian professor Graciela Maglia, and I taught 9-12 teachers about Afro-Latin America before dancing and cooking a traditional dish with them.
I am advisor to the Omicron Mu chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, and I successfully nominated Cayla Hamilton for the national Mario Vargas Llosa Award, which she received at the centennial celebration in Salamanca, Spain. She plans to be a high school Spanish teacher. I am just as proud of all my students who have chosen different careers but who have used Spanish and Portuguese to enrich their work life and personal life, like Charli Tyree, who is training as a pharmacist but who is also a published author in The Kennesaw Tower (6 September 2017). I encourage my students to see the world firsthand and make new friends they would not have because, with languages, they can overcome so many barriers.

**Biography**

John T. Maddox IV is Assistant Professor of Spanish at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. There, he has taught on Afro-Hispanic and Latinx literatures, and medicine in literature. He has also taught Portuguese and Brazilian culture. He has published articles on Brazil and Spanish America. His forthcoming book, *Nuevo Muntu Novels Bigger than the Black Atlantic: Manuel Zapata Olivella and Ana Maria Gonçalves* (Bucknell University Press), argues that these novelists from Colombia and Brazil map black histories and identities that are more expansive than British critic Paul Gilroy’s.