Maribel Soriano’s mother instilled in her a strong work ethic, but Maribel discovered that education, along with hard work, was the path to a rewarding career. Early in her career she saw the positive impact she could have on children as a teacher…and teaching became her passion. She sought out children in communities where education was not highly valued and concentrated on infusing their families with the importance of education. It was a natural segue to teaching in a community college, inspiring one teacher at a time to make a positive difference in the community.

Ms. Soriano is also active in providing infant massage classes for incarcerated mothers and their infants. “Many students I come across have had to face many life challenges and decide to use education to improve their lives and the lives of those close to them,” Ms. Soriano observes. “It is thrilling to see students progress from basic knowledge to become critical thinkers when discussing issues in class. One of my greatest pleasures is hearing that graduates are applying what they learned in my courses to their jobs teaching young children.”
Learn how to learn with elac’s great teachers

Maribel Soriano,
Child Development
“My most gratifying experience is to help students who are overwhelmed by their personal obligations to develop as scholars,” says Dr. Lim. “One young man had an extremely demanding work schedule, missed the midterm and asked for help. He worked hard, asked me a lot of questions, and eventually got a B in my class. Now he is finishing up at ELAC and has already been accepted to CSULA. I am really proud of him and the kind of effort he put into school despite the myriad of other things he is responsible for. I’m always ready to match a student’s effort with my own.”

Dr. Lim brings a wealth of scholarly achievement to his Logic and Philosophy courses. He received his Ph.D. from Cambridge University. He is active in the philosophical community, presenting papers at conferences and publishing. His hope is to incorporate some of the cutting edge ideas in the philosophy of the mind and religion into his courses at ELAC.

For the past decade, Susanne Spangler has directed the ELAC Honors Program, a series of academically enriched courses designed for students with a minimum 3.0 GPA who plan on transferring to a four-year college or university. Approximately 350 Honors students enroll in general education Honors courses that require critical analysis, discussion, writing and research. Students who complete the program are guaranteed priority admission consideration at eleven participating universities including UCLA, UC Irvine and UC Riverside.

“One of my most rewarding experiences is watching our students speak at the Honors Research Conference held every March at University of California, Irvine,” observes Ms. Spangler. “Over the past ten years approximately 250 ELAC students have had the opportunity to present research papers written in their Honors classes. I have seen these student scholars mature when they realize that they can conduct research and command an audience while presenting their findings and answering questions. Witnessing this intellectual awakening and boost in self confidence is a thrill I never tire of.”
“The new Theater Arts building is a major paradigm shift for acting and stage management students” observes Tom Atha, publicity director for the ELAC Theater Department. “Distinct space for classrooms, costume and stage design workshops, and two performing theaters will allow classes to be taught without interruption while rehearsals and show production are in progress. Now our challenge is to mount entertaining plays that highlight our students’ unique talents.”

Teaching students to wield swords and daggers in pitched battle is Tom Atha’s passion. Directing stage fights to generate exciting action without harming the actors requires careful choreography and skilled handing of weapons that have dull edges, but can nonetheless do significant damage. Tom has an extensive history as a film and theater actor, as a speech instructor and acting coach.

“Over thirty-plus years, I have taught dance at ELAC and my students have helped me hone my skills of cultivating their ability to want more, take risks and strive for excellence,” says Ms. Evans with a big grin. “They have taught me the value of reciprocity of teaching and I love them for that.”

After graduating from UCLA with a degree in dance, Wanda-Lee Evans built an active career as a television and film actress, working in popular shows such as Cold Case, The Practice, and Will & Grace, as well as numerous commercials. At the tender age of 12, Ms. Evans began her stage career as the understudy for Eartha Kitt in the Broadway show Timbuktu. This experience influenced the rest of her life, which has been dedicated to teaching and all aspects of the performance arts: dance, singing, writing, producing and acting.