

English Department Graduate Newsletter

Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator

FO 110

(408) 924-4439

 awilli@email.sjsu.edu

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Paul Douglass and Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinators

Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing

DEADLINES: AUGUST AND DECEMBER GRADUATES

If you are planning to graduate in August or December of 2006, you should already have filed your approved program (i.e. been formally advanced to candidacy). If you missed the deadline, please see your advisor immediately. Remember, you need to file your program nearly two semesters before you plan to graduate. Remember, too, that you must apply for graduation (at the Graduate Studies office, 10th St. Garage) early in the semester you plan to graduate. For August graduates, the deadline is June 9. For December Graduates, the deadline is September 22. August graduates must present their completed theses to the Graduate Office by July 7. December graduates must present completed theses by October 27

PROGRAM APPROVAL DEADLINE: MAY 2007 GRADUATES

If you plan to graduate in May 2007, you will need to file your approved program very early in the fall. To be on the safe side, you should file before the close of this spring semester. Course descriptions for the fall seminars and a tentative list of spring offerings are included in this issue of the newsletter. Once you have determined what courses you will take to complete your program, fill out the official form and get your advisor's signature.

REGISTRATION FOR FALL 2006

The Schedule of Classes for fall will give you detailed information on how to register for next semester's courses. Touch-tone registration for graduate students will begin in mid-May. It is important that you register as early as possible. Questions? Contact your advisor.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR FALL 2006

201 M 1600-1845 Mitchell

201C T 1900-2145 Soldofsky

202 W 1900-2145 Pollock

208 W 1600-1845 Krishnaswamy

215 M 1600-1845 Stork

217 T 1900-2145 Eastwood

230 M 1900-2145 Rice

240 R 1900-2145 Maio

241 W 1600-1845 Berman

242 T 1600-1845 Miller

254 R 1600-1845 Douglass

255 T 1600-1845 Shillinglaw

256 W 1900-2145 Wilson

259 R 1600-1845 Cullen

201 Materials and Methods of Literary Research (Prof. Mitchell)

With an emphasis on instilling grant writing and conference presentation skills, English 201 examines problems in critical writing and literary history through academic and bibliographic research.

201C Materials and Methods of Literary Production (Prof. Soldofsky)

This course introduces Creative Writing graduate students to the resources, traditions, techniques, and culture associated with the field of Creative Writing both inside and outside academia. The class will study the role of the individual writer within the literary and academic communities, and explore various forms of literary activity that commonly support "the literary life." A creative writer's work is both a personal journey toward increasingly masterful artistic expression as well as an increasing understanding of what the literary world requires of a writer as a professional. In order to succeed, an MFA candidate needs to understand how the interlocking networks within the literary, academic, and publishing communities function. In 201C students will learn to evaluate dominant and alternative literary magazines and publishers, book review indexes, academic journals, and online and other electronic resources. Students will also write a book review, a personal essay, a conference paper, and a book proposal. By means of this course, they will learn to apply their knowledge of these of real-world tasks to their own writing, in their other courses, and in fulfilling the MFA requirements. This course is a co-requisite for students in the MFA program to be taken with their first graduate writing workshop or first graduate literature seminar. The course fulfills the Graduate Studies requirement in written communication.

202 Poetic Craft and Theory (Prof. Pollock):

We'll begin the semester with Mary Oliver's *A Poetry Handbook* as a review of the basic elements of poetry, and then proceed to a quick survey of the overall evolution of poetic styles from medieval to modern times. The central focus of the seminar thereafter will be on the theories of "New Criticism" and the application of those theories to lyric poetry, with particular attention to the sonnet as a genre. We'll study critical works by Cleanth Brooks and I.A. Richards and the sonnets of Shakespeare, Donne, Wordsworth, E.B. Browning, John Berryman, and Vikram Seth, in addition to selected critical works and poems by other writers as well. The aim of the course will not be to give the student an exhaustive knowledge of the sonnet as such, but more generally to challenge his or her analytical skills, at the same time developing the student's sense of historical perspective and critical acumen in dealing with poetry as an art form.

208 Comparative Literature (Prof. Krishnaswamy)

Images of America's war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan are instantly relayed across the globe from Boston to Bahrein, from Bombay to Beijing. The world wide web stretches across virtual space linking ideas and peoples on different continents. Multinational corporations relocate overnight across national frontiers taking with them money and jobs which workers desperately chase. As transportation and technology shrink distances, we seem to be living in a veritable global village. Hollywood films and McDonald fries are as easily available in Tokyo and Istanbul as Chinese cuisine and Caribbean music are in Boston and Cleveland. For some, these changes hold out hope for the creation of new communities and unforeseen solidarities; for others, they are producing a clash of civilizations, tribal warfare on a global scale; for yet others, these changes merely veil corporatization and imperial expansion. Drawing on recent debates about globalization, this course considers the relationship between literary studies and a "global" world order. What does it mean to look at literature from a global rather than a national perspective? What is the basis for doing comparative literature in a global age? How is "world literature" being constituted as a field of study and what role does the English language play in this? What are the terms with which we might speak about differences or distinctions among different cultures/literatures? (How) Can literary interpretation and aesthetic judgement escape ethnocentrism? We will pursue these and other questions through a reading of selected fiction from around the world. (We'll begin with Salman Rushdie's latest novel *Shalimar, the Clown*, to see why we need to know the whole history of the Indian subcontinent in order to solve a murder in L.A.!!-complete reading list will be posted soon)

215 Myth and Symbolism (Prof. Stork).

This course will offer a broad overview of mythology and symbolic literature, beginning with creation stories and the "Classic" folk tales. We will also read the Song of Songs, selections from the Gnostic Gospels, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the Grail Legend as examples of Classical and Medieval mythologies. We will also read some modern symbolist poetry, as well as Anne Sexton's *Transformations* and C. S. Lewis' *Till We Have Faces*, both examples of modern mythmaking. If time allows we may also read Russell Hoban's *Ridley Walker* a futuristic mythic tale set in post-Holocaust Britain. Along the way we will consider the major critical schools of thought, including: Propp, Malinowski, Turner, Eliade, Levi-Strauss, Barthes, Jung and Campbell.

217 English Renaissance (Prof. Eastwood)

Representations of Elizabeth I. Elizabeth I had an enormous impact on early modern English culture. Although she proved herself a capable, efficient, and politically shrewd monarch, Elizabeth's reign was fraught with struggles and tensions due to her status as unmarried (and therefore heirless), female ruler in an emergently patriarchal culture. This

course will provide students with the opportunity to explore representations of this fascinating and controversial figure in a variety of early modern texts. Students will examine the deft manner in which the Virgin Queen represented herself to her people in her speeches, portraits, and court entertainments, analyzing the ways in which she turned her culture's assumptions about gender to her advantage. We will also explore the more complex ways in which Elizabeth I was represented by the major poets and playwrights of her day including Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare. Secondary texts will include biographical material, some historical essays, and a variety of criticism on the topic of Elizabeth's representation.

230 Eighteenth Century British Literature (Prof. Rice)

The class will be devoted to three masterpieces of the eighteenth-century comic novel: Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, and Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* (all in Norton Critical Editions). While familiarizing ourselves with these three classic examples, we will attempt to arrive at a definition of the form, one allowing for its intersection with other literary genres (Fielding's "comic epic in prose," Sterne's idiosyncratic Shandeanism, and Smollett's hybrid blend of comedy and satire).

240 Poetry Writing Workshop (Prof. Maio)

The development of the student's poetic voice will be the principal focus of this course. To that end, there will be some reading-and much discussion-of poetry and theory relating to aesthetics. There will be assignments to write in metrical lyric forms and in nonmetrical genres (such as Imagism and vers libre, for example). A lot of our in-class time will be devoted to the intensive, professional workshopping of students' original poems. Also, translations will be acceptable (and encouraged!), depending on a student's preparation and desire to work in translation.

241 Fiction Writing Workshop (Prof. Berman)

The most advanced fiction writing workshop offered at SJSU. Regular assigned readings and emphasis on the quality of written and verbal criticism give this workshop a special rigor.

242 Nonfiction Writing Workshop (Prof. Miller)

Travel Writing.

One survey found travel writing to be the second most desired profession on the planet-after rock star. In this semester's nonfiction workshop we will explore its nuts and bolts by doing writing exercises, critiquing manuscripts, reading examples, discussing

markets and meeting with some of the genre's finest practitioners. Luckily we live in one of the most desirable travel destinations in the country, so even if you can't trek to Nepal, you can write marketable stories about the Bay Area.

254 Genre Studies in American Literature (Prof. Douglass)

The Literature of Change. Some of the literature of socio-political intent is sentimental, some is sensationalist, some is as overtly didactic as Plato's *The Republic*. Whether sentimental, sensational, teacherly, preacherly, or stealthy in its approach, however, a great deal of American literature has been produced from the desire to change the world. Politically engaged literature took a critical beating in the past century, as the New Criticism elevated the art object above the fray of particular political and social lives, but the critical schools that flowered in the soil turned over by the New Criticism have argued that art is always implicated in the cultural conflicts that produce power and wealth. Instead of looking for the hidden or subconscious intent in works that ask to be accepted as "nonpolitical," this course will focus on literature which overtly engages the social and political issues of its day, from *The Declaration of Independence and Common Sense* to Sherman Alexie's *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*. We will consider this literature in the light of aesthetic standards and from perspectives of Marxism, Feminism, Queer Studies, and Postcolonialism. Some other writers who may be included in the syllabus (either as core or extended reading) include Henry David Thoreau, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Helen Hunt Jackson, Stephen Crane, Booker T. Washington, Harriet Wilson, Walt Whitman, Ralph Ellison, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mark Twain, Upton Sinclair, Sinclair Lewis, e. e. cummings, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Lillian Hellman, Dalton Trumbo, John Steinbeck, Randall Jarrell, Arthur Miller, Lorraine Hansberry, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Kurt Vonnegut, Allen Ginsberg, Barbara Garson, Amiri Baraka, Margaret Atwood, Adrienne Rich, August Wilson, David Henry Hwang. Requirements: All students will read the core texts for the class, while evolving personal reading lists in collaboration with the instructor and fellow students. Writing will include a seminar paper and an exercise in criticism, together with short weekly responses (generally in the form of "cogent questions" about the reading for that week). One oral presentation also required.

255 Thematic Studies in American Literature (Prof. Shillinglaw)

William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor: Southern Voices. In this seminar we will read Faulkner's major novels and selected short stories by Flannery O'Connor, focusing on differing approaches to Southern history, narrative voice, sense of place. Novels will include *The Sound and the Fury*, *Go Down, Moses*, *Light in August*. *Absalom, Absalom!*, and *As I Lay Dying*. Students will also read O'Connor's *Wise Blood* and *A Good Man is Hard to Find*.

256 Twentieth Century British Literature (Prof. Wilson)

The first half of the course will be devoted to a study of novels by Conrad, Joyce, Lawrence, Woolf, Beckett, and Amis. The second will cover the poetry of Yeats, Auden, Thomas, Larkin, Heaney, McGuckian, Carson, and Muldoon.

259 Seminar in Composition Studies (Prof. Cullen)

Current Approaches to Composition. English 259 will address a broad range of topics in composition studies, including how students write and revise, how teachers evaluate compositions, and how instructors can design courses to accommodate a diverse student community. We will examine the styles, genres, and audiences available to student writers. The seminar will address both highly practical issues (preventing plagiarism, surviving holistic scoring sessions) and those with a more theoretical flavor (liberating education, second-language acquisition). The required reading load will be light, so expect to do lots of independent research. Major assignments will include a seminar paper/project and a presentation to the class. Students will also be required to observe at least two college writing classes. English 259 is required for new Teaching Associates.

A NOTE ABOUT COURSES LIKELY TO BE SCHEDULED FOR SPRING 2007:

Seminars for Spring 2007 will probably include the following: 203, 204, 211, 216, 225, 232, 233, 240, 241, 242, 253, 257

CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED GRADUATE STUDENTS

Conditionally classified students must complete their required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; you need to see your advisor to file the necessary form.

APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH MA AND MFA

Except for undergraduate courses you may have to take if you are a conditionally classified student, it is assumed that your graduate work will consist in 200-numbered English classes. Courses taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from your advisor before you take such courses. Similarly, upper-division English course work will not count unless you have convincing reasons to take undergraduate courses and you secure the cooperation of the instructor. Again, get approval in advance.

ENGLISH GRADUATE ORGANIZATION

The English Graduate Organization needs YOU! EGO consists of grad students in both the MA and MFA programs here at SJSU, and it is exactly what you make it. Need study partners for your exams? Someone to critique your new poem? Just want to hang out, have a beer, and play Scrabble? (Since we all have SO MUCH time on our hands!) Look no further than your friendly neighborhood EGO! We have a Yahoo! group where we list upcoming conferences, calls for papers, and general announcements of concern to our members. Stop by <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SJSUEnglishGradOrg/> to sign up. There's no obligation, and best of all, it is 100% FREE! For those who are already EGO members, we need new officers, as all of us have or will have graduated shortly. We are looking for a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. responsibilities are, again, exactly what you make them. This is your group, do what you want with it. Post your interest on the site, and let's get an election going! Contact Matthew Kraft for more information: eurokrafty@hotmail.com Join the Enggrad list by sending an email message to: listproc@listproc.sjsu.edu and in the body of the text type this: SUBSCRIBE EngGrad [your first name] [your last name].

PH.D. AND OTHER FUTURES

The department would very much like to know about your plans after graduation. Are you returning to an old job? Looking for a teaching gig in the area? Applying to Ph.D. programs? Please let your advisors know what you are planning and how things are working out.

GRADUATE BULLETIN BOARD AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

Important dates and other useful information will be posted on the English Graduate Bulletin Board in the first-floor hall of the Faculty Office Building. New information will be posted as we receive it. The latest version of "The MA in English: A Guide for Students," a six-page brochure is available in the rack outside the English office. The Guide answers most questions about the program. It is also available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english> The SJSU Graduate Studies Office also publishes important deadlines, rules, and information for graduate students: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in help developing proposals for conference papers or submitting your work for publication, let us know! A number of faculty in the department are eager to be of assistance. For help of this kind, contact your advisor. MA students should get in touch with Professor Harris kharris@email.sjsu.edu .

ALUMNI AND STUDENTS IN PRINT

Laima Kardokas, MA '00, has published "The Twilight Zone of Experience Uncannily Shared by Mark Strand and Edward Hopper," in the June 2005 issue of Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature, which is sponsored by the University of Manitoba. The essay argues that Hopper and Strand "are haunted by ghosts of their doubles whom they resourcefully elude, poem after poem, painting after painting." [If you know of a publication by an Alum or current student in the Graduate Program, tell the graduate advisors about it so it can be noticed in the Newsletter.]

IMPORTANT DATES

April 7: MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed (9 AM).

April 8: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 1, 9-12 AM, FO 104

April 10: MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5 PM).

April 15: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 2, 9-12 AM, FO 104

June 9: Deadline for August 2006 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.

June 6: Last day to for May 2006 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for binding.

July 7: Last day for August 2006 graduates to submit approved thesis to Graduate Studies. **Sept. 1:** Last day for August 2006 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for binding.

Sept. 5: Last day to drop courses.

Sept. 22: Deadline for December 2006 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.

Oct. 2: Deadline for May 2007 graduates to file Departmental Request for Candidacy form.

Oct. 27: Last day for December 2006 graduates to submit signed MA and MFA thesis to Graduate Studies Office.

Oct. 30: Deadline to submit thesis proposals for spring (2007) 299 credits to Department Graduate Committee.

Nov. 3: MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed (9 AM).

Nov. 4: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 1, 9-12 AM, FO 104.

Nov. 6: MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5 PM).

Nov. 11: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 2, 9-12 AM, FO 104.

Jan. 5: Last day for December 2006 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for binding.

