



ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

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Noelle Brada-Williams, MA Advisor

April/May 2015
Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing

SPRING OFFICE HOURS

MA students should find Professor Brada-Williams in her office at FO 102 this semester Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-4:00, and other days by appointment. Phone: 924-4439; email: *Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu*. MFA students should consult Professor Soldofsky in FO 106; hours: Monday nad Tuesday, 2:30-4:00 PM, Wednesday 1:00-2:30 PM, and Thursday by appointment; phone: 924-4432; email: *alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu*.

DEADLINES: AUGUST AND DECEMBER GRADUATES

If you are planning to graduate in August or December of 2015, 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 early in the semester you plan to graduate. Forms for both are available at the GAPE website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>. For August graduates, the deadline to apply for graduation is June 5, 2015. For December Graduates, the deadline is September 11, 2015. August graduates must present their completed theses to Graduate Studies by July 1, 2015. December graduates must submit completed theses to Graduate Studies by October 28, 2015.

PROGRAM APPROVAL DEADLINE: MAY 2016 GRADUATES

If you plan to graduate in May 2016, you will need to file your approved program (“Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy” form available on the GAPE website) by October 1, 2015. Course descriptions for the fall seminars are included in this issue of the newsletter. The spring lineup should be publicized by next September. 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 2015

MySJU should give you appointment times and information on how to register for next semester's courses in May. Registration for graduate students will begin in June. **It is important that you register as early as possible.** If there are not enough people signed up for a course, even a graduate course could be cancelled. Contact your advisor if you have any questions. MFA's need to be sure and sign up for any workshops they need for their degree as soon as possible.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR FALL 2015

201	Monday	1600-1845	Mitchell
201C	Monday	1600-1845	Soldofsky
202	Thursday	1900-2145	Karim
215	Tuesday	1600-1845	Stork
241	Monday	1900-2145	Taylor
242	Tuesday	1900-2145	Miller, Cathleen
254	Thursday	1600-1845	Engell
259	Wednesday	1600-1845	McNabb

English 201 Materials and Methods of Literary Research, M 4:00-6:45 PM (Professor Mitchell)

English 201 is a hands-on approach to the collection, evaluation, and presentation of research materials. Course work includes the history of manuscript/book technology, transcription, editing, textual histories, journals reviews, book reviews, a grant proposal, introduction to the scholarly community (i.e. libraries, conferences, protocols for submitting and giving papers), and bibliography. The course also requires a conference paper that includes an abstract, research, a polished draft, bibliography, and an oral presentation. This class is a requirement for students working toward an MA in English.

English 201C: Materials and Methods of Literary Production, M 4:00-6:45 PM (Professor Soldofsky)

ENGL 201C introduces MFA students to the resources, traditions, techniques and culture associated with professional creative writing both inside and outside academia. The class will explore the role of the individual writer within literary and academic communities, and explore various forms of literary activity that commonly support "the literary life." Students will learn what's published in dominant and alternative literary magazines and journals, write book reviews, write essays for presentation at literary conferences and for publication in creative writing and academic journals (print and online), and write a practice thesis proposal. Through this course, students will apply their knowledge and skills in ways useful to their own writing, and in fulfilling their other MFA requirements.

English 202 Poetic Craft and Theory, R 7:00-9:45 PM (Professor Karim)

Walt Whitman and the Bardic Tradition in Modern Poetry

Bardic poetry is associated with the tradition of minstrel (musician)/poets who celebrated the exploits of heroes and chieftains or who composed verse that told what Ezra Pound called "the tale of the tribe." Walt Whitman is considered the poet at the origin of the Modern bardic tradition, particularly as it manifests itself in modern and contemporary American poetry. In this seminar we will investigate the nature of the bardic tradition in as it can be seen in Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and others of his works. We will read Whitman's with the guidance of Pulitzer Prize-winning poet C. K. Williams' new book *C. K. Williams on Walt Whitman*. We will go on to investigate the bardic elements in the work of several 20th century poets, including Hart Crane (*The Bridge*), William Carlos Williams, Garcia Lorca (in English translation), Pablo

Neruda (*Heights of Macchu Picchu* in English translation), Allen Ginsberg, Galway Kinnell (*The Book of Nightmares*), Muriel Rukeyser, Gerald Stern, Anne Waldman, Adrienne Rich and others.

The course will require writing two seminar papers, with the option, for the second project, of completing an original poem or cycle of poems modeled on the bardic elements in the works assigned to be read for the course. The course will be of great interest to MFA students in poetry as well as MA students who wish to increase their knowledge of Romantic and Modern poetic craft and theory.

English 215: Seminar in Myth and Symbolism, T 4:00-6:45 PM (Professor Stork)

This wide-ranging course will cover ancient Eros, Celtic fairy lovers, Norse werewolves, Chinese monkey kings, European fairy tales and the symbolist poetry of Baudelaire. We will also read some of the history of 19th and 20th century scholars who created our modern understanding of mythology.

Primary texts (many available on-line) will include:

The Song of Songs

Ancient Egyptian Love Poetry

Sappho, Hymn to Aphrodite

Perceval

The Lais of Marie de France

The Classic Fairy Tales (Norton Critical Edition, ed. Maria Tatar)

Saga of the Volsungs

Journey to the West

Baudelaire, "Correspondances"

Theorists of mythology may include: Frazer, Tolkien, Turner, Eliade, Geertz, Campbell

English 241: Fiction Writing Workshop, M 7:00-9:45 PM (Professor Taylor)

This is the most advanced fiction workshop offered at SJSU. Experimentation, risk-taking, and stretching of all kinds will be encouraged. Students submit two original pieces of fiction for plus a significant revision in lieu of a final exam. The texts for the semester are Best American Short Stories 2014 (eds. Jennifer Egan & Heidi Pitlor) an anthology of published short stories chosen by the class. Registration priority goes to MFAs with a primary concentration in fiction, followed by those with a secondary concentration in fiction, and finally graduate students in other programs. If you are not in the MFA program, you must submit a writing sample to the instructor before you may register.

**English 242: Nonfiction Writing Workshop, T 7:00 – 9:45PM (Professor Cathleen Miller)
Travel Writing Workshop**

One survey found travel writing to be the second most desired profession on the planet—after movie 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.

English 254: Seminar in Genre Studies in American Literature: The Novel, R 4:00-6:45 (Professor Engell)

In the fall 2015 version of English 254 we will study six American novels grouped

into three pairs. The first pair will be Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, two "Romantic" novels of the pre-Civil War period. The second pair will be Willa Cather's *My Antonia* and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, two "Realist" or "Early Modernist" novels of the first few decades of the twentieth century. The third pair will be Eudora Welty's *The Optimist's Daughter* and Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, two "Late Modernist" or "Early Post-Modernist" novels of the second half of the twentieth century. Four of these six novels were written by women. These novels focus on different regions of the United States and different groups of people. All explore profound social and moral issues; all are great "reads." Students in this graduate seminar will give six brief in-class presentations, one on each novel, all six accompanied by a two-page analysis essay on a specific topic. In addition, each student will write a tightly focused research essay on one or more of the novels, an essay of approximately ten pages in length, plus bibliography. I am excited about teaching this combination of novels and discussing the great breadth of the tradition of the American Novel.

English 259 Studies in Composition Studies, W 4:00-6:45 PM (Professor McNabb)

How do people write? How do people learn how to write? And, more importantly, how can we—or should we—teach writing? Through course readings and class discussions, you will become acquainted with the history of writing studies and the different theoretical strands that inform the contemporary practice of teaching writing. We will also focus on the practical aspects of writing instruction such as syllabus design, course management, writing assessment, and assignment sequences. English 259 is a prerequisite or co-requisite for Teaching Associates and is highly recommended for any student, M.A. or M.F.A., who contemplates teaching writing as part of a career.

ADDITIONAL COURSES OF INTEREST FOR THE ENGLISH MA AND MFA

A limited number of upper-division undergraduate English courses can count towards the degree but you must secure the cooperation of the instructor and notify the graduate advisor of your plans. Again, get approval in advance. One course that is offered in the Fall that is not taught as a Graduate Course but that would nonetheless be very useful for undergraduates is Professor Eastwood's honors course on *The Faerie Queene* (English 190 MW 1:30-2:45).

CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED GRADUATE STUDENTS

Conditionally classified students must complete required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. A list of upper-division literature courses approved for conditionally classified students is available from Professor Brada-Williams. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; see your advisor to file the necessary form (found at http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/forms/).

ENGLISH GRADUATE GOOGLE GROUP

Please be sure to sign up for the google group for our English Graduate Program. To sign up, send a blank email to: enggrad-group+subscribe@sjsu.edu. Key information is sent out via the google group that is essential for all MA and MFA students. Program descriptions, course descriptions, the most recent Newsletter, and other documents are posted on the **Department website**:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/>. The SJSU Graduate Studies Office website publishes important deadlines, forms, and information for current students at:

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/index.htm

PH.D. AND OTHER FUTURES

The department would very much like to know about your plans after graduation. Are you staying with your current employment? 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.

For MA's graduating this May, stopping by the coordinator's office (FO 102) or calling for an informal "exit" interview should be considered a necessary part of your preparations for graduation. Letting us know about your future plans helps us to evaluate the program and assess how well we are preparing students for their chosen paths.

ELECTRONIC THESES

Graduate Studies is now accepting theses electronically and making them available to the public via open access on the web. For those of you who hope to publish your thesis, we suggest you file a form to see that your thesis is "embargoed." That means it will still be available electronically within the library (just as the hard copies of our alumni's theses are available to visitors to the MLK library), but will not be available to people who do not have access to the SJSU library. Currently Graduate Studies' policy is that you can request an embargo for a set number of years (three) and then file an additional form to have the thesis embargoed further. This is new territory for the university and policy is being made as we speak; but the graduate faculty encourages those of you with the desire to later publish part or all of your thesis to protect your creative and intellectual property. For those of you with no desire to publish your thesis materials in print form, open access will provide you with the immediate and ultimate distribution of your scholarship (or creative work).

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS WHEN FINISHING YOUR THESES

Both MA and MFA students need to be aware that the MLA modified their works cited format in 2009 with the seventh edition of the *MLA Handbook*. Please be aware that Graduate Studies will expect your thesis to be consistently formatted in whatever style you choose for your thesis. They will not allow you to mix styles and they will expect you to be up to date or they will require you to revise before they accept your thesis. MFA students should note that MFA theses must be accompanied by a 2000 - 3000 word (approximate length) preface, in which the author provides a literary context for her/his work, including literary influences, stylistic and theoretical influences, the influence of historical events, cultural and/or linguistic background, etc. It is hoped that the proposal-writing process will help MFA's to flesh out their ideas for their preface.

MFA AND MA EXAM SCHEDULES

Please note that the MFA exams for Fall 2015 are now scheduled September 25th to 28th. Please contact Professor Soldofsky immediately in order to sign up for them. You will need to send him your student ID number, all three of your thesis committee members' names, your primary and secondary genre tracks, and your projected date of finishing their degree. The MA exams for the Fall semester will be on August 29, 2015 (part 1) and September 5, 2015 (part 2). MA exam-takers will need to send Professor Brada-Williams a completed reading list (click on the "Guidelines" at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps.html> to find your own version of the form) and receive your special MA exam ID number.

GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS:

MA Gayathri Goel has been accepted into the PhD program at Tufts University which has awarded her with full funding for five years. MFA Leslie Jacoby has been chosen to participate in the 2015 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers, a five-week study in Belfast, Ireland, Douglas, Isle of Man, and Glasgow, Scotland on *The Irish Sea Cultural Province: Crossroads of Medieval Literature and Languages*.



IMPORTANT DATES IN 2014-2015

- May 9:** MFA in Creative Writing Program's Graduation Reading and Celebration on Saturday, 2:30 - 4:00 PM in the MLK Library 225/229
- May 21:** Department Graduation Ceremony, 5:30 PM Student Union Barrett Ballroom (5 PM lineup of graduates). Department Graduation ceremony and reception (contact the department office if you have not already received an invitation and plan on graduating this May).
- May 23:** University Graduation Ceremony at Spartan Stadium with Speaker Nancy Pelosi
- June 1:** Last day for August 2015 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.
- June 5:** Deadline for August 2015 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.
- June 12:** Last day for May 2015 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for electronic publication (or embargoing).
- Aug. 15:** Sign-up for the MA Comprehensive Exams by this date.
- Aug. 20:** Fall Courses Begin.
- Aug. 29:** MA Comprehensive Exam Part I 9:00 AM in SH 229
- Sept. 5:** MA Comprehensive Exam Part II 9:00 AM in SH 229
- Sept. 11:** Deadline for December 2015 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.
- Sept. 11:** Last day for August 2015 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for electronic publication (or embargoing).
- Sept. 25:** MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed electronically (9:00 AM)
- Sept. 28:** MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5:00 PM)
- Oct. 1:** Deadline for May 2016 graduates to submit candidacy forms to GAPE
- Oct. 26:** Deadline to submit thesis proposals for Spring 2016
299 credits to Department Grad Committee.
- Oct. 28:** Deadline for December 2015 graduates to submit approved thesis to Graduate Studies.
- Jan. 28:** First day of Spring 2016 classes.
- Feb. 6:** Spring MA Comprehensive Exam Part I 9:00 AM in Sweeney Hall 229
- Feb. 13:** Spring MA Comprehensive Exam Part II 9:00 AM in SH 229

