

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Fall 2015 Newsletter



SAN JOSÉ STATE
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A Stretch for the English Department: What Is Stretch English?

By Hannah Wiltbank

Stretch English is a pilot program that spreads English 1A content over two semesters of instruction. Stretch students complete all the same papers as English 1A students, and they receive credit for English 1A (as well as three units of elective credit) if they successfully complete both the fall semester and the spring semester of Stretch. This answers the question of *what*, but the more important question is *why*? SJSU already has LLD 1 and 2, which are remedial English courses designed to prepare students for English 1A. Why do we need a different course sequence?



The answer, according to Stretch Program Director Cindy Baer, is that labeling students “remedial” problematizes them unfairly. “The word ‘remedy’ is right there in the name,” says Dr. Baer. “It suggests that the students need to be fixed. But these kids are bright. Don’t let their fractured syntax confuse you: they can do college-level work. They just need more support, and that’s what Stretch gives them.” The extra support comes in the form of additional instructional scaffolding, the creation of a classroom writing community, frequent hands-on research and writing activities, and double the time to make revisions and receive instructor feedback.

One of the logistical benefits for successful Stretch students is that they receive six credits towards graduation, whereas LLD 1 and 2 are remedial and do not grant college credit. Stretch also has the potential to shave a semester off the time it takes a student to fulfill the Written Communication lower-division GE requirement compared to the three-semester LLD1-LLD2-English 1A sequence.

Another benefit of Stretch English is that students are kept in the same group and with the same professor for both semesters, so they are able to develop a close and trusting writing community. Dr. Baer has developed a curriculum that uses group work to help students learn from one another.

Michelle Hager, Director of SJSU's Writing Center and a current Stretch instructor, also finds the community building one of the best things about Stretch, and she encourages other English instructors not to be scared of diving into a new program: "The students have been great to work with. They're interested in learning and being successful in college." She, too, feels strongly that removing the remedial label is important. "It's demoralizing for [the students]," she says. "I think Stretch will prove to be an effective model and a good thing [for SJSU]. It's already been proven at other universities."

In fact, about 80% of the schools in the CSU system have at least proposed a Stretch pilot program like SJSU's, and many have already implemented one. All of these CSU Stretch programs are based on the original Stretch Program, a research study on composition at Arizona State University (ASU).

David Schwalm, ASU's Director of Composition, and John Ramage, then Director of ASU's Writing Across the Curriculum Program, got the idea for the Stretch Program in 1992 when they saw how few of the ASU students who were sent to community colleges to satisfy remedial English requirements came back to ASU to finish their degrees. What these at-risk writing students needed was not remedial instruction, they discovered, but regular English instruction that offered more time to complete assignments. Their Stretch pilot, which spread the regular freshman English course over two semesters, was so successful that it became a permanent part of the ASU writing curriculum and a model for composition instruction across the country.

Who is the average Stretch English student at SJSU? Perhaps unsurprisingly, most of the students who test into "remedial" English are multilingual, but most of them are *not* foreign students. A survey of SJSU's 2,826 freshmen composition students (LLD 1, LLD 2, Stretch, and English 1A) found that of the approximately 60% who responded, 75% were from multilingual households and 97% had graduated from an American high school. And those numbers, says Dr. Baer, are fairly consistent over time. "We have to stop stigmatizing multilingual students and separating them from the rest of the student body. With Stretch English, once you're admitted, once you're in the university—you're in."

The Stretch Program pilot is currently in its second year, and a full rollout will replace all LLD 1 and 2 courses in the fall of 2016. The English Department is bound to experience growing pains with next year's rollout, Dr. Baer admits, especially given that the number of sections

of freshman composition courses in the department will be increasing by almost 50%. Faculty will have to work with a more set curriculum than they're used to and learn to scaffold and model concepts more thoroughly. "Teaching Stretch can be a challenge," she says. "It's time-consuming, and it's hard work, but the rewards are great. I can't think of a moment on this campus when the writing program has had a more dynamic set of opportunities."

Worth Waking Up For: SJAWP's Saturday Seminars

By Elizabeth Ávila Barcelos & Danny Spiteri

Describe a course that offers applicable knowledge and college credit for two days of attendance, one paper, and no fee, and it sounds like a fantasy conceived from the mind of some wishful, idealistic undergraduate. However, for students not frightened away by the term "Saturday school," such a fantasy exists: the San José Area Writing Project (SJAWP)'s Saturday Seminars are designed to educate teachers and aspiring teachers about useful ways to teach writing in the classroom. For English majors planning to become teachers, the program is an ideal way to network, garner useful information, and earn extra college credit.

SJAWP offers three Saturday Seminars each semes-



ter. Each seminar focuses on a different topic that fits the theme of the semester. (This semester, that theme is classroom writing projects.) Within each seminar, three presentations are given that are each tailored to a different range of grade levels. For example, this month's seminar offered one presentation on heritage portfolios, a writing project for students in grades 8-12 to explore their heritage creatively, and another on how to implement project-based learning with students in grades K-3. Dividing seminars according to age group allows teachers from each group to gain specified knowledge rather than broad information that applies to all grade levels. It also allows them to interact in smaller groups, which

heightens the collaborative aspect of the project.

Because teachers at a variety of experience levels attend, undergraduates are provided with the opportunity to interact directly with the local education community. “That’s the most valuable aspect of the Saturday Seminars. You can actually collaborate with teachers and bounce ideas off of them because the way that they structure the classes is that you break off sometimes into groups. In groups with other teachers, I can ask them questions that my peers can’t answer because they’re not teaching yet,” says Mike Espinoza, a senior at San José State majoring in English, Preparation for Teaching (Single Subject). That’s where the Saturday Seminars have a leg up on traditional college courses: they take undergraduates one step closer to the real world than they ever could be in the classroom. Dr. Jonathan Lovell, SJAWP’s director, agrees and expands on the benefit of working with teachers: “You get to talk to [current teachers] about good districts to work for, and all those things that are really important when you’re looking for a job.” While students are limited in their regular courses to working with inexperienced students and teachers outside the K-12 spectrum, the Saturday Seminars allow them an actual glimpse into the next phase of their careers.

Longer than a single workshop but far shorter than a semester-long course, the Saturday Seminar is smart to meet in the middle. Instead of forcing attendees to retain information delivered all in one session, SJAWP allows attendees to absorb the information and put it into practice between sessions. A quote from the SJAWP website reinforces this philosophy: “SJAWP maintains that significant change happens over time rather than through single “one-shot” inservice programs.” By putting this notion into practice, SJAWP finds a balance in providing substantial education within an efficient timeframe.

SJAWP also benefits students by being so affordable. In fact, for undergraduates, it’s entirely free. Normally, attendees pay anywhere from \$25-\$35 per seminar, but that fee is waived for undergraduate students. SJAWP also offers one unit of college credit for \$150 or two units for \$300 and participation in the Professional Learning Community, which only requires two meetings in addition to the three seminars. However, for undergraduates interested in those units, those fees are waived as well. All students have to do to earn a unit is choose one of two options: they can either attend two of the three seminars and write a five-page paper, or they can attend all three seminars and write a three-page paper. (Students interested in earning two units write the five-page paper and attend all three seminars.) That’s a striking deal for

“In groups with other teachers, I can ask them questions that my peers can’t answer because they’re not teaching yet.”

students who are used to paying hundreds of dollars per unit.

For aspiring teachers willing to sacrifice a few Saturday mornings, the Saturday Seminars are a bit of a no-brainer. It is not uncommon for college students to take a course because it is required and feel as if the college credit is the only reward of substance, but these Saturday Seminars offer knowledge that is undoubtedly useful, some of which may even feel more applicable than what is taught in the classroom. One of the most difficult parts about entering the workforce after college is transitioning from the safety of a classroom to the bustle of the workplace. The Saturday Seminars help ease this transition by acting as a bridge between the two settings. For students concerned about feeling like fish out of water when beginning work as teachers, these seminars can help the experience feel less frighteningly unfamiliar. And undergraduates, if you still feel unconvinced, remember this: it’s free! The seminars are located on SJSU’s campus at Sweeney Hall, too, so the location is even reasonable. Rarely do opportunities so convenient yet enriching present themselves.

Interested in next semester’s Saturday Seminars? Here are the dates and specific topics:

Sat, February 6, 2016

Theme—Side by Side: Long-term Writing Projects

Developed with Students

K-5 – Ana Magallon and Patty Carrillo

6-8 – Susan Leftwich

9-12 – Paula Haaser

Closers: Ryan Alpers and Andrew Christian

Sat, March 5, 2016

Theme—Monitoring Student Writing Projects as They Unfold

K-5 – Jane Murphy

6-8 – Jamie Neumeister

9-12 – Babak Shahrivar

Closer: YA author Matt de la Peña

Sat, April 16, 2016

Theme—Assessing Student Writing Projects: Beyond Rubrics

K-5 – Susan Seyan and Margarite Galvan

6-8 – Kathleen Cohen

9-12 – Janet Tinoco

Closer: Scott Myers-Lipton

Luke Goebel: A Creative Force in Our Midst

By Izamar Flores & Cecellia Alvarado

There's a new presence among our English department faculty, and he's ready to infuse creative ink into our literary souls. Luke Goebel is the new face you'll be seeing around the English Faculty Offices, and like our current instructors, he has a vast amount of experience and knowledge to share—specifically in the creative writing field. He is a professor, an award-winning writer, a former editor, and now, a great addition to our English department.

Even though he grew up on the West Coast as a native from Portland, Oregon, Luke has lived on the East Coast, as well as in the South. He received his B.A. in English from the University of San Francisco and went on to receive his M.F.A. in Fiction from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He lived in New York for a few years, and before coming to San José, he was living in Texas. Luke has had a variety of living experiences, but he finds he gravitates toward the Bay Area. "I grew up in the West Coast and lived in San Francisco for six years," he says, "I think of living in San Francisco as the happiest time of my life."

Luke is no fluke when it comes to teaching. In 2011, he became an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Texas at Tyler and helped build their Creative Writing Program. "I had fun building the program," he says. "It went from one section every other semester to six sections every semester." He was proud of his students for getting published and being accepted to grad schools. However, he expresses discomfort with some of the happenings at the university: "It made me feel uncomfortable once students were allowed to carry guns to class, and I wasn't finding inspiration in Texas." After working at UT Tyler for a few years, Luke began to look for a new job and was offered a tenured position at a university in Oklahoma. However, this never came to be, and he decided to take a teaching position at SJSU due to the location and his positive correspondence with Shannon Miller, the English Department Chair, and Richard McNabb, the Teaching Associates Coordinator and Writing Programs Administrator. He was excited to be going to the Bay Area instead of accepting a tenured position. Luke believes in "feeding your life with what makes you feel inspired and [what] feeds your artistic practice rather than security."



Apart from having teaching experience, Luke also has knowledge in the editing business. He was a co-editor and guest editor for the New York literary magazine *New York Tyrant*, and he is an advisor for *Tyrant Books*, which won the Pen/Faulkner Award. He remembers working in the founder's "little sloppy apartment where a beautiful piano sat in the middle with piles and piles of manuscripts." He also remembers going through 600 submissions in two days. "Going through the slush is what they call it," he recalls. He enjoyed being able to "know and trust [his] ear" when it came to reading different authors' submissions, claiming it was as simple as "yes, no, or keep reading."

It's clear Luke Goebel is a talented and versatile man, and his 2014 fiction novel *Fourteen Stories, None of Them Are Yours* highlights his creativity further. The novel deals with H. Roc's (his alter ego's) deepest thoughts.

The stories deal with heartbreak, loss, and terror with a touch of humor. Some of the themes include exploration, Americana, and spirituality. He says he intended the novel to be a "hybrid genre...to raise questions about politics and other topics." He also looked into making a novel with personas because he was able to do things with the story that wouldn't be possible in non-fiction. "Fiction is total freedom with a lot of critics," he says. His novel has earned him the Ronald Sukenick Prize for Innovative Fiction, along with a stack of positive reviews from both critics and readers. Some have compared his writing to that of Jack Kerouac in *On the Road* due to its experimental elements, long and short prose, and overall modernity.

What can our students expect from Luke as a teacher? He enjoys diversity and watching students become engaged and submersed in their writing, as well as seeing them during his office hours. "There's something nice about students not being jaded or privileged," he says, "because there is an appreciation for learning." He loves to give his students freedom with their writing and is "hungry to read their work." Luke says his students can get an A based on sheer determination and dedication. He brings both qualities out in them by allowing them to write as many rough drafts as they'd like.

For those interested in creative writing, Luke Goebel will be teaching English 130: Writing Fiction this spring.

ENGL 110: Designing Writers

By Daniel Rodriguez & Patrick Shamoun

Starting Spring Semester 2016, the Professional and Technical Writing Program will introduce a new visual design course to all English majors. Visual Rhetoric and Digital Document Design for Writers (ENGL 110) will teach students how to make documents look neat, clean, and professional through the use of design software. Dr. Mark Thompson, the director of the Professional and Technical Writing Program and the creator of ENGL 110, was happy to sit down with us and provide some insight about the new course and why it should not be overlooked.

When Dr. Thompson became the program director three years ago, he knew the Professional and Technical Writing Program had good fundamentals; however, he wanted to improve and update the curriculum. He says, “I wanted the program to provide the skillsets that students today need, so after doing research and talking to employers, I concluded that professional writers need visual design knowledge.” The course aims to bring professional writing students into the world of applied visual design.

ENGL 110 fuses visual theory and design to teach students the interplay between words and visual elements. During the first part of the semester, students will learn visual design theory and do visual analyses of ads and websites. The course will move to document design, asking students to combine theory and practice by creating websites and interactive documents using design software. All the visual design elements learned will culminate in students laying out future issues of *The Writing Life*. One of the more exciting projects will have groups updating and producing promotional materials for local non-profits.

Being a class that focuses on visual design for writers, ENGL 110 will have students working with the latest design software, including Photoshop, InDesign, and Dreamweaver. Dr. Thompson explains that the majority

of work that requires software will be done in class, but if students want to become really proficient with the software, San José State offers students the latest Adobe software bundle for free while they are attending the university. Therefore, if students would like to practice at home, they will have the opportunity to do so.

With the expanding need for technical writers, the time to pursue professional and technical writing has never been better, but the career will inevitably start to become competitive. As Dr. Thompson says, “Beyond possessing basic skills, professional writers need to be versatile because it provides more opportunities.” There are many ways technical writers with design knowledge make themselves a significant asset on production teams. Because professional writers will be working on teams with designers, it’s important to be able to speak their language in order to avoid misunderstandings and confusion. While on small teams without dedicated artists, writers may be required to create user manuals, style guides and document designs; writers can find themselves inheriting something awful but being asked to make it appealing without the assistance of professional artists. Professional technical writers need to be able to prove that they will add value to whichever production team they work on.

In order to gain more insight on the class, we decided to interview an alumna of San José State, Elizabeth Real. Elizabeth is currently a freelance editor and writer. She also works for an educational website. “I thought that knowing how to write and edit content was enough,” she says, “but I learned to look at the document as a whole—not just the words. There are a lot of components to a document, manual, flyer, or business card.” When trying to get internships, Elizabeth explained that an understanding of visual design is necessary in the workforce. “In my experience, I found that although tech companies may say that they want an English major with little to no coding or design experience, they will almost always prefer the candidate who is familiar with those subjects. I realized that if I wanted to be in the technical writing field, I would have to take some coding and design courses as well.” ENGL 110’s goal is for students like Elizabeth Real to stand apart from other competitors when looking for internships and jobs.

The Professional and Technical Writing Program is going through some exciting times. Dr. Thompson is going out of his way to make the program as robust as possible so that students can possess modern skillsets and professional resumes upon graduation. Not only will tech-writing majors greatly benefit from this course, but all English majors can enhance their skillsets by adding visual design fundamentals to their repertoires. “All writers must make their work look as professional as possible,” says Dr. Thompson. No matter which English major concentration students choose at San José State,



it's beneficial to take units from other concentrations in order to increase their knowledge base. ENGL 110 is a big step in expanding the English Department, and if students show interest in courses such as this, more can be offered in the future.

ENGL 110 will be a three-unit elective, requiring upper-division standing. Please contact the Department of English and Comparative Literature at (408) 924-1000 for more information.

Fellows Helping Fellow Students

By Melody Grace Burdick & Shana Estahbanaty

Writing, especially trying to use correct grammar, is a common struggle among even the brightest of students. San José State University addresses this issue by providing various programs that help students and instructors develop methods to achieve proper writing skills. SJSU offers writing tutoring programs through the Writing Center, the Writing Fellows program, and Writing Across the Curriculum; these programs have set up avenues to guide instructors and students across multiple curriculums through the confusing jungle of grammar. One particular program that benefits instructors and students alike is the Writing Fellows program directed by Dr. Thomas Moriarty, a professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literature.

The Writing Fellows program is still in its infancy, having been started in the spring of 2015. This is when Dr. Moriarty began as the director. The program is focused on training students to support writing-intensive courses across campus, such as ENGL 100W, Stretch English, and upper-division capstone seminars. In this program, "Writing Fellows" (tutors of the program) consist of a variety of undergraduates and graduate students, majoring in any discipline, who show exemplary writing skills. To become a Writing Fellow, students who apply are interviewed and, once accepted, placed into various classes to provide help. A Writing Fellow's role ranges from in- and out-of-class assistance for the instructor to

one-on-one and group tutoring for students. This differs from other similar programs SJSU offers because Writing Fellows have direct access to the course and instructor, so they are better able to understand assignments and, in turn, to help students with their writing.

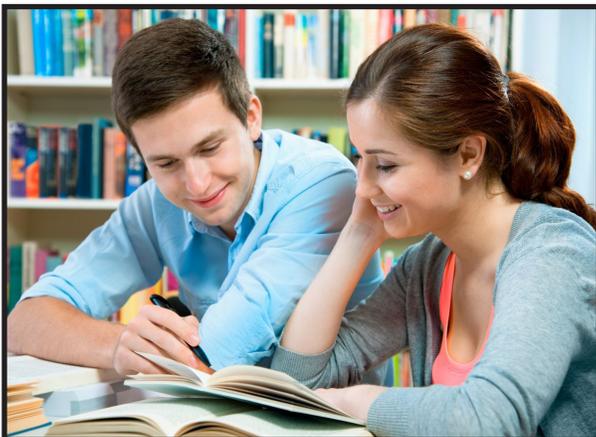
Writing Fellows provide a variety of supplemental assistance to instructors and students. They attend courses, provide in-class help with discussions, and give presentations on proper writing styles and grammar. Outside of class, Fellows are required to meet with students four hours a week. These out-of-class meetings are usually done one-on-one or in pairs so that Fellows can focus on helping students with particular difficulties they are having with their writing. A Fellow's job is not to grade assignments but instead to help students in the prewriting and brainstorming stages and give feedback on written drafts. The pay rate for being a Writing Fellow is \$14/hour.

The benefits of the Writing Fellows program extend to the instructor and students, as well as the Writing Fellow helping with the course. Dr. Moriarty explains, "Working with Fellows should make the students' papers better and reduce the amount of time faculty might spend working one on one with students." Students who have never had experience with writing-intensive courses (such as 100W) might have difficulties adapting to the grammatical and structural requirements that come with proper writing. Instructors who have to teach these courses, who are most likely simultaneously teaching other courses as well, might not have time to meet the high demands of helping individual students with their writing issues. Through the assistance of a Writing Fellow, instructors can focus more on in-class work and discussions, and students can find one-on-one help outside of class.

Writing Fellows often obtain many positive experiences through working alongside instructors and students. At the very least, Fellows are able to utilize and test their own writing skills while helping other students develop theirs. Dr. Moriarty points out that being a Writing Fellow "will give you practice coaching writing and working with writers who are not English majors." Although to *know* how to write is one thing, to be able to *explain* and *teach* how to write is an entirely different process.

Being a Writing Fellow also gives experience in tutoring, which is a job avenue they can consider while in school or after graduation. For students who are looking to get their teaching credentials, the Writing Fellows program will give them hands-on experience with assisting and instructing students in addition to knowledge of in-class procedures.

Samantha Crain, a graduate student in the English Department at SJSU, has been involved in the program for two semesters. She is currently a Fellow for both



sections of Maria Judnick's Stretch courses. When asked what benefits the Writing Fellows program has provided her for her life post-MFA, she expressed, "This program has already helped me gain a lot of practical knowledge about how to interact with students, how to give good feedback on their work, and how to speak in front of a class." Samantha's experience with the program has given her a foundation to pursue her future plans of receiving her PhD in Literature and becoming a college instructor. "Being a Fellow and interacting with college freshmen have also shown me that I *like* teaching grammar and giving feedback on papers, so I know I'm pursuing the right career." For those considering teaching in their future, the Writing Fellows program is the perfect gateway to honing in on teaching skills and gaining in-class experience.

Whether you are an instructor, a student, or a Writing Fellow, it's clear that the benefits of the Writing Fellows program are numerous and valuable.

For dates/deadlines and other information on the Writing Fellows program, please visit <http://www.sjsu.edu/wac/> and/or contact Dr. Thomas Moriarty at thomas.moriarty@sjsu.edu or (408) 924-4515.

Bringing Back the PWC

By Aubree Garber & Lisa Gunatileka

San José is known for being the heart of the Silicon Valley, a place where technology is developed and "the next big thing" comes to life. Every day is fast paced, bringing with it constant change, like the myriad of start-ups that come and go through the city. However, the current community of San José seems to be lacking one thing: a vibrant art and culture scene. The Poets and Writers Coalition (PWC) was once the center of a rich literary community on San José State University's

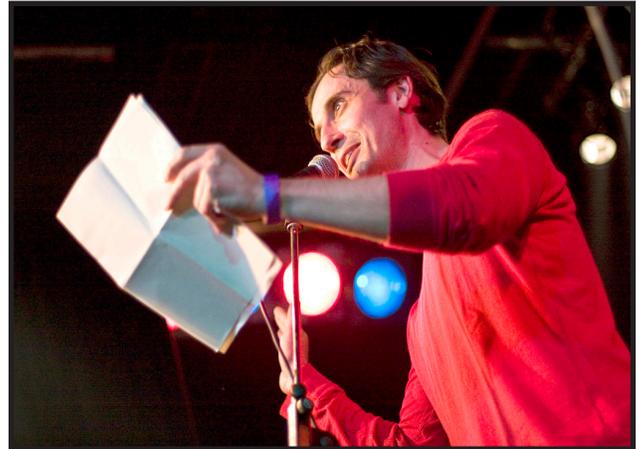


campus. Over the past few years, students in the English Department have come and gone without hearing of the coalition. What is the PWC, and how can we revive a culture of writing and literacy in San Jose?

The PWC is an organization that focuses on fostering the growth of the writing community at San José State University. They also reach out into the community by offering events and workshops for residents in the Bay Area. Their official mission is to help writing become more than a hobby—they wish to help people develop their writing into a powerful tool that they can use for various careers and community service opportunities. The PWC encourages writers of all genres to join them. However, because the PWC was formed from the ashes

of former literary groups on San José State's campus, it struggles to gain recognition and new members.

The literary community on SJSU's campus was strongest in the 1980s. Professor Soldofsky, a prominent voice in the literary community, fondly remembers one



specific event when the Student Union was still open on campus. The Student Union was a place where students in the literary community could come together and hold events to promote the club. They would hold what they called "Four Minutes of Mayhem," an open mic event where people could come and perform anything—read poetry, perform sections of plays, or even sing opera—as long as it was four minutes long. It was a great way for writers and other artists to be active on campus, and it was a perfect social event. "We [had] to make it social... people need friends. They need to feel like what they do isn't something that happens when they are alone late at night," Soldofsky comments. The PWC of the past was a place where students could be heard and, more importantly, find a place to share their interests with other writers.

The PWC has seemingly vanished from San José State's campus. Lack of funding and declining membership has forced the coalition into a corner. Professor Soldofsky comments that he feels the PWC "[is] still here. I think it's diffused. It's been stronger." He has many ideas about how to kick-start the coalition and bring it back to life. "The English Department needs to be aggressively looking for a venue and opportunity." However, the PWC cannot rely on teachers and staff alone to revive the club. Students must step in and take active positions within the coalition to gain publicity and bring more attention to the coalition. Literary activists on and off of San José State's campus have always been the driving force of the PWC. Since the 1980s, it has been propelled by students who want to create a space for writers in San José.

Despite these hardships, the PWC does offer events on campus, including poetry slams, open readings, and

workshops for student writers. On Facebook, the coalition offers weekly writing prompts and provides information about upcoming events. It encourages students to post their work on the blog and provides the option of doing so anonymously. This is a great resource for student writers who may have a difficult time sharing their work in personal workshops. It also demonstrates that the coalition is open to everyone and that it does what it can to be inclusive.

The best way to get involved in the PWC is to go to their meetings and to start receiving their emails. Meetings take place on the SJSU campus on Fridays from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm in FO 104. Their email address is pwcsjsu@gmail.com. The emails will notify you of the calendar of events so you can be active within the coalition. The coalition is also on all of the big social media websites, so you can keep in touch via Facebook and Twitter. Every new member will make a huge difference in what the coalition can achieve.

The Poets and Writers Coalition seeks to bring an art and culture scene to the Silicon Valley. It seeks to show students at SJSU that writing can be more than a hobby and that even if it is just a hobby, it can be a beautiful one. As Soldofsky says, “It’s not about grades; it’s just about you.”

How the Right Minor Gives Major Rewards

By Anthony Gribble & Drew Stanke

The Department of English and Comparative Literature at San José State University offers a variety of majors and minors for students interested in all things English. The majors are, of course, much more of a commitment for students to make. However, minors in Literature, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, and Professional and Technical Writing offer students the ability to improve their overall English skills in just 18 units. All of these choices are good, but in the burgeoning 21st century world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, professional and technical writing is especially helpful for students entering the workplace.

Most grads and undergrads would say they can write just fine, but studies are showing that isn’t true. A 2011 study by the National Center for Education Statistics showed that over 26% of recent college graduates produce writing described as deficient and only 3% produce writing described as superior or advanced. Also, the Pew Research Center reported that 64% of teens have used techspeak (abbreviations, slang, emojis, etc.) in school assignments and 58% of those same teens reported finding it difficult to write “academically” because of their frequent use of techspeak in non-academic life.

Not only does this affect students during school, but it affects them after as well when they are trying to find jobs. Anita Manuel, Interim Assistant Director of the SJSU Career Center, says that nearly all of the students who come in need help with cover letters and resumes. She says, “Some companies will barely look at cover letters. Some companies will comb through them to analyze your writing and look for mistakes.” She goes on



to say that “feedback from companies talk about a lack of professional writing” and that the ability to produce writing samples is imperative in “anything journalism, marketing, or creative writing related.”

It’s hard to think of a major that could not benefit from a minor in English. STEM careers and majors coupled with the minor in Professional and Technical Writing would increase their job-finding ability and versatility in the workplace. Any career and major that involves writing and reports could benefit from Creative Writing, Literature, and Comparative Literature minors. By coupling a major in English with a minor, the ability to find and retain a job increases significantly. The National Commission on Writing reports that over half of companies offering salaried positions take writing ability into consideration when hiring. More and more students transition from high school into college with poor writing skills, and more and more of them struggle with assignments and finding jobs. Don’t scoff at “grammar skills” and “professionalism” just yet, students! Taking the time to learn these and other simple, easy-to-learn writing and communication skills could help you from graduation to retirement.

While all the minors are useful, the Professional and Technical minor and certificate program have the most practical appeal to technical fields from chemistry to kinesiology. Many students don’t think about having to write once they graduate college, but they are sorely mistaken. While they won’t be writing essays or analyzing text, they will have to at least produce emails and written correspondence and at most produce documents such as reports, proposals, and manuals. Even before that, however, they must make it to the interview. Anita

Manuel says, “I couldn’t tell you how many resumes are thrown out because of misspelling and poor grammar,” indicating the amount is great. Of course not all students are “gifted” with good writing skills, but at the very least, by the time they graduate, they should feel confident about their abilities to create resumes and cover letters and find and keep jobs.

There are three core classes to the Professional and Technical Writing minor and certificate program: Editing for Writers (ENGL 106), Professional Technical Writing (ENGL 107), and Introduction to Career Writing (ENGL 129). ENGL 106 stresses the reorganization of documents with a review of punctuation and grammar. ENGL 107 focuses on research and audience-based writing for technical and scientific subjects. Finally, ENGL 129 prepares students to write various professional documents, such as articles, creative nonfiction pieces, and newsletters like the one you’re reading now. Taking just one class could help prepare a student for the ever-fiercer competition in job seeking.

Steinbeck Fellows: Write On!

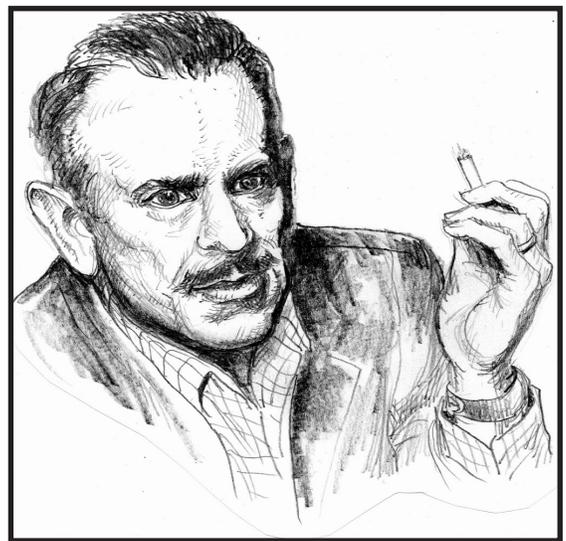
By Gabriel Melean & Rebekah Khuc

Are you an aspiring writer in need of some inspiration for any upcoming writing projects you currently maintain? If so, then the Steinbeck Fellows Program at San José State University can be just the boost of inspiration you need. The Steinbeck Fellows program, founded by scholar Martha Heasley Cox, presents the opportunity for writers of all ages and backgrounds to earn a \$10,000 fellowship toward any substantial writing ventures in need of completion. Directed primarily toward graduates who have seen glimpses of success with previous publications, the fellowship program offers writers the chance to take their writing to the next level. Current fellowships are being offered in all categories of creative writing except for poetry and Steinbeck Studies. Fellowships are earned in many fields, such as literary scholarships, fiction, drama, education, science, and the media. As long as applicants are residents of the San José area for the academic year, they have a chance of being inducted to the Steinbeck Fellows Program.

The fellowship is titled after Pulitzer Prize-winner John Steinbeck, the legendary local American author. Steinbeck serves as a model for up-and-coming writers; the man spent an entire lifetime working on literature, covering media, and promoting environmental activism. However, none of Steinbeck’s success would have come without the generous compassion of his father, who saw potential in his son and funded his writing. Cox recognized Steinbeck’s legacy, and through her compassion for writers like Steinbeck, she established the fellowship

program. The Steinbeck Fellows Program isn’t just about the stipend, though the additional support is nice. “It’s about *validation*,” says Nick Taylor, Director of the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies. “What writers are doing is important, but when you’re writing alone, there’s nobody there to pat you on the back. The fellowship gives confidence to emerging writers.” Taylor acknowledges the uncertainties all authors face, having successfully published several novels, short stories, and essays of his own. Current fellows include Candace Eros Diaz, whose work blends fact and fiction; Jennie Lin, currently working on a collection of short stories and a novel; and Gabriel Thompson, author of several books including *Working in the Shadows*, a behind-the-scenes look at the labor done by Latino immigrants. Each fellow has a chance to contribute a piece of his or her own significant literary work to the community in public readings. All things considered, the Steinbeck Fellows Program offers writers validation, confidence, exposure, and an overall greater chance of success.

According to former Steinbeck fellow Tommy Mouton, the Steinbeck program was “just what I needed, especially as an emerging writer, a very young writer.” The “branding” of being a Steinbeck Fellow can help open doors for fellows who are looking to publish their works after their completion. “In this business, you need leverage,” says Mouton. “What can you do to help set you apart from other emerging writers?” Mouton



received his Masters in Fine Arts at San José State, had a piece published in *Reed Magazine*, then went on to become a Steinbeck Fellow. The fellowship was the open door that allowed him to work on his novel, *What We Do Cherish*, while holding down his day job and being able to care for his family. He spoke about the feeling of validation that comes from having “your first paid gig” and how the Steinbeck program’s structure allowed him to workshop with other Steinbeck Fellows. “We met once

a month...we did two rounds of workshops and gave each other feedback,” Mouton says. The Steinbeck program is, most importantly, a stepping stone into greater opportunities in the writing community. “The doors that have been opened for me, the relationships I’ve nurtured, it’s pretty humbling,” Mouton says. “To have the financial support, access to the Steinbeck Center, and be in a community of writers, that was a year that I won’t soon forget.”

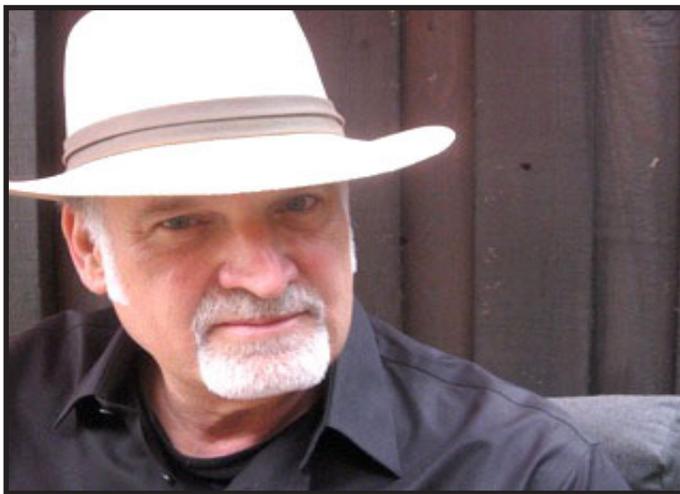
The Steinbeck program has been a great influence in the literary culture of SJSU; it is one of the most prestigious writing programs in the Bay Area. Public readings are a special aspect of the Steinbeck fellowship that allows fellows to have a ready audience in the community. “[The fellows program] essentially gifts you an audience,” Mouton says. “A lot of young writers don’t get that.” During these readings, fellows will share excerpts from the writing they are working on. The Steinbeck program is a unique opportunity for students at SJSU to witness writing in the making. Even if you are not an aspiring writer, being able to listen and be a part of the literary movement that occurs at SJSU is a wonderful experience.

The Song of Poetry: Professor Soldofsky’s Writing Journey

By Sara Robitaille & Chad Velasquez

Dating back to the 19th century, San José State University’s legacy of poetry was built by former students, faculty, and laureates. Professor Alan Soldofsky is one of the individuals at SJSU who continue this enduring legacy.

Professor Soldofsky earned his MFA at the University of Iowa Writers’ Workshop in 1972 before coming to the Bay Area. While he was a student in Iowa, renowned poet Robert Sward was his first poetry teacher, and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Donald Justice was his thesis director. “I graduated with my MFA a few months before my twenty-second birthday,” he says. “I was the youngest poet to have completed his MFA in Iowa.” In 1979, he lectured at UC Berkeley, where he directed and taught the Poems-in-Progress workshop course. Afterwards, he became a Professor of English & Comparative Literature at SJSU, where he became the Director of Creative Writing in 1999.



Throughout his career, his poems have been widely published in magazines and academic journals such as *The Antioch Review*, *Grand Street*, and *Poetry East*. He’s also written critiques, essays, and reviews in periodicals such as *Poetry Flash* and *The Writer’s Chronicle*. He has published four collections of poems: *Kenora Station* (1976), *Staying Home* (1977), *Holding Adam/My Father’s Books* (2003), and most recently *In the Buddha Factory* (2013).

His love for writing developed at a young age; his interest in folk music and involvement with a local band intrigued him into writing songs. Around this time, he also began reading E.E. Cummings, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Allen Ginsberg. “Suddenly, I started to imitate the beat poetry style in my writing,” he explains. After writing his first poem for a tenth-grade assignment, he started voraciously reading poems by contemporary and modern poets. The more he read, the more he learned about the craft of writing. By the time he was attending the Graduate Poetry Workshop at the University of Iowa, “writing poetry was becoming a biological necessity,” he confesses.

In consideration of this biological necessity, Professor Soldofsky dedicates a lot of time and care to writing. “Occasionally I can focus long enough to finish [a draft] in three or four hours,” he says. “Then I work on the text over and over again, reading it to myself aloud, for often 20 to 30 more drafts.” There are different ways he begins writing; one approach is pulling an abstract thought from memory and visualizing images that bring him back to that incident. “Writing a poem for me [is] finding a structure in which I can take the chaos of the language in my mind into some kind of order.” At times, he doesn’t know he’s working on a poem until an idea comes out of nowhere. For that reason, he always keeps a notebook and pen close.

Thinking of what inspires him, he says, “It’s words themselves...I’m interested in how they work, the gaps in their meanings, and how they relate to each other in syntax.” His role as a teacher also gives him the opportunity to be inspired by his students. Professor Soldofsky explains that there are moments when both he and a student make a discovery about a poem. “What gives me the impetus to write... is the process of discovery that happens in a workshop,” he says. “What a pleasure it is to earn a living teaching others to discover the depth that lies inside a poem.”

In the Buddha Factory is Professor Soldofsky’s most

recent collection of poems. The book was influenced by observations of familiar landscapes such as the South Bay, as well as his enlightening trip to China. As a poet, he explains that he has a natural tendency to be an Imagist, absorbing and commenting on what he sees. “It’s always been true for my poems that I’ve got more than one thing in my mind when I’m writing,” he states. “One of the stories is in the foreground, and the other comes up from the background—often in some unconscious or mysterious ways.”

As for future works, Professor Soldofsky is currently revising two thirds of the poems for his next book with the working title *Charts (For the End of Days)*. The title poem chronicles the slow degradation of the world—of its social, urban, political, and ecological environments. This idea is interwoven with Professor Soldofsky’s personal experience with a health emergency: “Like the environment, my body had experienced critical degradation,” he says. “[Shorter poems] and ones written earlier that I plan to include in the new collection contextualize my own health emergency through an unfolding series of...catastrophes.” A publication date has yet to be announced; however, you can visit his office hours for poetry discussion or read his poetry and information at <https://tsup.truman.edu/item.asp?itemId=479>.

Help from Outside: Job Hunting Tips for Technical Writers

By Zufishan Shah & Mariah Faris

“In elementary through high school,” Mariya Miksonova begins, “you are a train happily chugging along on your tracks...and then you graduate college and the tracks disappear.” For many students, graduation is usually a source of relief, something they’ve been looking forward to for a long time. In reality, graduation is a trip into the unknown. Mariya, along with Ariel Potter, graduated in spring 2015 with Professional and Technical Writing degrees. Ariel began working full time at Monolithic Power Systems Inc. a few months after, but Mariya has yet to get a full-time job in technical writing. While both of them are in different positions currently, Ariel and Mariya say that SJSU did prep them for the real world. They have experienced the terror of life after graduation, and they have plenty of advice for graduating students.

Mariya is currently working part-time at U.S. Computer Software as a Technical Writer/Proofreader, and she more recently has become an Assistant Teacher at the Russian School of Mathematics. Even though she doesn’t have a full-time technical writing job, she has the teaching job to show she hasn’t stagnated and is still making use of her time because employers like diligent



and dedicated workers. Job hunting is an anxious task for Mariya, but she remains positive. She notices that after every interview, she knows what to expect from the recruiter and how to handle their questions. In school, Mariya focused more on her GPA and part-time job rather than finding an internship or thinking about the future of graduation. Many students don’t have hands-on experience in the major, and Mariya insists that “to increase your chances [in the job hunt], an internship or job experience pre-graduation is a must!” An internship is valuable, even if it doesn’t end up being a full-time job, because it provides the experience that recruiters look for in a job applicant.

While Ariel didn’t have an internship, she used the other resources available to her at SJSU to get her job. The biggest of these were the professors. “They really know what they’re talking about, and they want to help you,” Ariel enthuses. Professors like Dr. Nancy Stork and Dr. Linda Mitchell help direct students in their education by assigning relevant course work and lending a helpful ear. Dr. Mark Thompson, director of the Professional and Technical Writing Program, has created an email list for students of the program. Companies who are looking for technical writers send their job and internship ads to him, who then forwards them to his students. Ariel applied to one of the job ads he sent out. She got accepted and is currently working at Monolithic Power Systems as a Junior Marketing/Technical Writer. Ariel says that most of her job involves editing, marketing, and communications, rather than creating new technical documents, but her classes at SJSU prepared her for her job nonetheless.

The Technical Writing Program has several classes that helped both Mariya and Ariel in the job search and the actual job. Mariya says that Professional & Technical Writing (ENGL 107) helps “you write all kinds of documents, like memos and corporate emails, and of course, the ever-important user manual.” In Dr. Mitchell’s Mod-

ern English (ENGL 103), both Ariel and Mariya opted to do a copyediting final project. Mariya translated a user manual from Russian to English, and that is one of the writing samples she shows recruiters. Editing for Writers (ENGL 106) is the class that prepared Ariel the most for her job because her job is mostly copyediting. Moreover, the textbooks from the courses are valuable resources. Ariel confesses, “I keep my 103 textbook [and] the reader guide for 106 at my desk.” They are in reach for when Ariel needs to brush up on the skills she has learned at SJSU. “Just always know your shit,” she quips.

Both alumni have advice for appealing to job recruiters. Here are certain programs that make your resume stand out:

- Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Adobe InDesign, FrameMaker, and Illustrator
- Camtasia
- MadCap Flare

There are many tutorials on YouTube for these programs. “If you can do a little bit of everything, it gives you value,” Ariel confirms. You should also create a LinkedIn account, which can also be referenced in your resume. LinkedIn is a networking site that functions like an online resume and helps create connections. Along those lines, Mariya emphasizes that SJSU has many resources that help students find jobs. You should do the following:

- Search the Sparta Jobs Website
- Visit the SJSU Career Center
- Attend Job Fairs

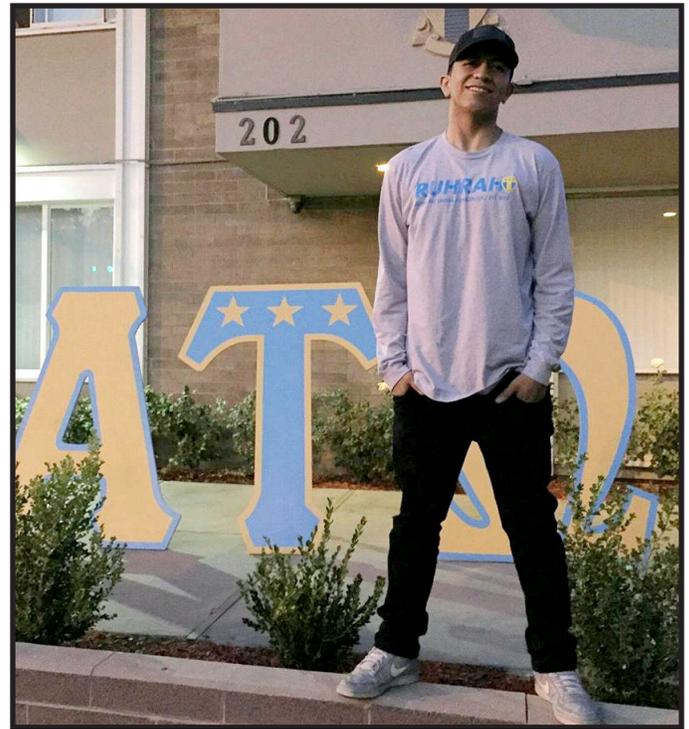
Even though there is no job fair tailored for technical writers, Mariya says that being the only one at the Engineering Job Fair helped her stand out. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Technical Writing field is expected to grow 15% by 2022. This is faster than most occupations. “With all these growing tech companies,” Mariya reassures, “there’s a high demand [for Technical Writers.]” Despite the difficulties of getting a job, remaining positive and persistent is important, because there *are* jobs out there. With these tips, you have the beginning of a new track laid out in front of you. Now, you just have to guide it to the destination you desire.

A Textbook Move by Spartans

By Annie Blaylock & Maria Puentes

It’s the first day of school, and the buzzing excitement for the fresh semester is sharply contrasted by the dread of the lengthy required reading lists. Textbooks can act as educational resources for students, but more often are a source of over-drafted checking accounts and frustration when their spines aren’t even cracked. Hundreds of dollars go to faceless publishing companies who release new editions annually at our

cost. But what if a fellow Spartan had contributed to the textbook you were reading? The lofty words (and prices) of academic authors may then carry a sense of pride for



your university. Well, fellow Spartan and first-generation college student, Fernando Sanchez, has done just that. Working with well-known writer Andrea Lunsford, he has helped create *The St. Martin’s Handbook*.

A third-year at San José State University, a proud brother of Alpha Tau Omega, and an Art and Design major, Sanchez emigrated from Michoacán, Buena Vista to Arbutle, California, bringing with him a fierce work ethic. With a visible vibrancy, he explains he has “always wanted to be an artist and have people give [him] money to draw,” and SJSU, although his second choice, had a big design program. When asked whether he would choose his education route again, he states, “I would repeat it and try even harder. It doesn’t hurt anybody but yourself when you don’t try hard enough.” His resolve can be traced back to his parents, who taught him about drive and passion. His parents rose early to work in the fields and encouraged him in all pursuits, even music, so long as he worked hard. But credit goes to Sanchez for taking his parents’ lessons and applying them; at 15 years old, he made a soundtrack for a TV show on FOX, and as a freshman, when approached with *The St. Martin’s Handbook*, he tackled it.

After submitting an essay in class, Sanchez was selected to work with Andrea Lunsford by Maria Judnick, his freshman English professor. However, Sanchez initially had doubts about joining the project and thought his writing was not strong enough. Lunsford, the author,

is a nationally recognized composition professor from Stanford University and has served as Chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Chair of the Modern Language Association Division on Writing, and a member of the MLA Executive Council. It's funny, then, that Sanchez did not realize who she was until a few days after he had agreed to work with her. Laughing, he states, "I didn't make the connection until I looked at my book and her name was on it."

As a collaborator to *The St. Martin's Handbook*, Sanchez was emailed entire documents and would "print it out, go over it, write notes by hand, and send it back." He annotated Lunsford's articles and added his opinions. He commented on "text-talk," a topic with particular interest to scholars studying possible literacy effects caused by the current generation's texting habits. Additionally, he was interviewed for a comic strip depicting college, and an illustrator will be animating him into the textbook. Kindly, he was compensated for his work although he did not expect to be so. The money did not motivate him; instead, it was the opportunity to work on such an interesting project. It seems that the notoriety of working with a famous author and being published is payment in itself (although he mentions that this is his second publication; his first was an essay about chihuahuas in sixth grade.)

Although Sanchez was originally worried about his level of writing, he admits that the greatest challenge was his perception of himself and how well he wrote, for he struggled to be "completely confident that [he] was doing a good job and presenting valuable information." This fear is now assuaged by his contributions to the textbook, the animation of him in the comic, and his picture and name—all published. Certainly, Sanchez gained many skills during the textbook process, but for many students, it is the validation of their work that nurtures significant professional and personal growth.

Furthermore, inviting students to join in academic writing encourages young people and creates a better product. Really, if you expect students to buy, read, and understand the text, shouldn't there be student opinions during the creation? Especially as technology competes with the traditional textbook format, it is crucial for authors and publishers to remain relevant. Inviting students to join the collaboration process is only of benefit to the readers and writers.

Although working on a rigorous English compo-

sition textbook is not every child's dream, it could be a student reality if given the chance. And a bonus? When the lines for the student bookstore grow windingly long, some complaints just may be traded in for pride about published Spartans in academia.

Scholarships and Awards

By Sean Staffieri & Kenneth Garrett

Every year, San José State University hands out thousands of dollars in scholarships. These aren't the same scholarships that are automatically calculated on your MySJSU; these are scholarships you actually have to apply for yourself. Don't be discouraged, though. Oftentimes, there are few applicants for these scholarships, so it is not as competitive as you might think. You honestly have nothing to lose by applying for free money. If for some reason you don't meet the qualifications, there are plenty of other scholarships around campus that might better suit your needs. Here are some tips on how you can apply for the plethora of scholarships around campus.

Let's start with the most common scholarship—the campus-based scholarship. In order to qualify for these kinds of scholarships, a student needs to have completed one semester of full-time units, which is twelve units for undergraduates and eight units for graduates. Once you have completed a semester, then you can apply for these scholarships at the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office. Generally, these kinds of scholarships are based on need or academic achievement. International students may only qualify for the merit-based scholarships. They range from \$100-\$2,500 in potential aid. It might not sound like a lot, but because it's a scholarship grant, you obviously don't have to pay this money back

like you would for a loan. If you think you have the grades or might qualify for the need-based scholarships, head on over to the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office, and they will let you know.

Less commonly known are the department-based awards. Each major department has various awards with accompanying cash for its students. Since these

are not open to the general student body, you have a better shot at landing one of these scholarships if you are



doing well in your major. However, all of these scholarships have their own specific criteria, deadlines, and application instructions. One English department scholarship that is offered here at SJSU is the James O. Wood Shakespeare Award, which goes to the best essay, reading, scene representation, musical presentation, costume, painting, sculpture, or other appropriate project related to any of Shakespeare's dramatic works and can award anywhere from \$750-\$1,500 to the winners. This scholarship is open to both undergraduate and graduate students, so there are no

restrictions on which English SJSU students can enter. While this does make winning the scholarship a bit harder because there are more people who can apply, the winnings are substantial, and it is certainly worth applying for if you feel competent in Shakespearean works. A lot of scholarships are available through faculty nomination, meaning that faculty members can consider

some of their best students from the current academic year for various scholarships. The Jack and Maxine Fink Scholarship goes to a graduate or undergraduate English major with financial need; awards range from \$500-\$1,000. The W.O. Crockett Scholarship goes to a full-time graduate or undergraduate student with a minimum of 12 completed units, a minimum 3.0 GPA, and financial need with some demonstration of a commitment to African-American culture and literature (\$1,250-\$2,500). The Roberta Holloway Award goes to an English major with junior, senior, or graduate student status demonstrating outstanding achievement (\$1,000). The Ruth MacLean McGee Scholarship goes to a graduate student with a minimum of 12 completed units (undergraduates must have a minimum of 24 completed units) with a minimum GPA of 3.0 with an outstanding achievement in non-fiction. The Lois King Thore Short Story Scholarship is for English majors who indicate that they wish to pursue a degree in English and show promise in short-story writing (\$1,000-\$2,000). The Dorothy Wright Children's Literature Award goes to outstanding work in children's literature by an undergraduate English major (\$450).

There are other scholarships that are specifically for graduate students, such as the Harvey Birenbaum Prize, which goes to MA students showing excellence in

the graduate study of literature (\$500). There is also the Owen Broyles Scholarship for outstanding achievement by a graduate student (\$1,500-\$3,500). The last graduate-exclusive scholarship is the Ida Fay Sachs Ludwig Memorial Scholarship, which goes to an MFA student for excellence in poetry or prose with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and demonstrated financial need (\$2,000-\$3,000). If you are interested in a department-based scholarship, then it is important to keep in contact with your major department.



Last are the private-based scholarships. These are the non-SJSU scholarships that come from private sources. They require a lot of outside research and are generally merit based with some kind of writing submission required. However, these kinds of scholarships can reward up to \$10,000 if you can qualify. The school has a scholarship database that helps students find private schol-

arships for free. Don't let anyone scam you into paying to apply. If you have to pay to apply for a scholarship, then it is not a scholarship. Also, the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office has plenty of listings for off-campus scholarships in case you need more aid. They are always willing to work with you to ensure financial difficulties don't inhibit you from attending university.

Congrats Scholarship Recipients of Fall 2015!!!

<i>W.O. Crockett Scholarship</i>	Robert Holmes
<i>Jack and Maxine Fink Scholarship</i>	Boris Slager
<i>Roberta Holloway Award</i>	Shane Diven
<i>Ruth MacLean McGee</i>	Jessica Keaton Cecellia Alvarado
<i>Doritt Sibley Award</i>	Kimy Martinez Vinnie Lopez
<i>Catherine Urban Scholarship</i>	Hannah Wiltbank Daniel Marovich Bethany Callahan
<i>Dorothy Wright Children's Literature</i>	Jenna Glover
<i>Josephine Chandler Scholarship</i>	Thao Nguyen Brooke Blankenship Roya Lillie Sheldon Hentschke
<i>Lois King Thore Short Story</i>	Richard To Neilson Vuong
<i>Harvey Birenbaum</i>	Samantha Crain
<i>Owen Broyles</i>	Aubrey Laughlin
<i>Ida Fay Sachs Ludwig Memorial Scholarship</i>	Kym Cunningham
<i>James O. Wood Shakespeare Award</i>	Kym Cunningham

Course Descriptions Spring 2016

(Note: These descriptions were accurate at the time of press, but class times can change. Consult the SJSU course catalog when you plan to register.)

ENGL 10: Great Works of Literature

Mary Williams, TR 10:30-11:45

Oh, the monstrosity! Ever wanted to read about monsters? Now's your chance! Readings will cover a variety of genres, times, and cultures. We'll explore cultural contexts that gave birth to the things that go bump in the night, tracing changes in monsters and their presentations. Several short papers, two formal essays, a final exam. No credit in the major, but satisfies Area A2. And, besides, MONSTERS!

ENGL 20: The Graphic Novel

Noelle Brada-Williams, F 9:30-12:15

This class focuses on the interplay of written and visual forms of narration in the illustrated texts that have come to be called "graphic novels," the styles and methods of which have come to have a profound impact on both literature and film production in the 21st century. English 20 will focus on a few of the graphic novel's obsessions: autobiography, war, and family—and the surprising frequency in which these three themes intersect.

ENGL 22: Fantasy and Science Fiction

Paul Douglass, TR 13:30-14:45

A survey of important works of science fiction and fantasy over the last 200 years, including such authors as, H.G. Wells, C.S. Lewis, Kurt Vonnegut, Ursula K. Le Guin, Neil Gaiman, William Gibson, Ray Bradbury, Connie Willis, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, Paolo Bacigalupi, James Tiptree Jr., and Mary Shelley.

ENGL 56A: English Literature to the Late 18th Century

Adrienne Eastwood, MW 12:00-13:15

This course is a survey of British Literature from its earliest works through the eighteenth century. The goals of the course are to help students gain an overview of the major literary periods, genres, authors, and works of English literature. We will discuss these texts from a variety of perspectives, including the dynamic relationship between heroes and villains throughout early English history, considering what these representations reveal about the various societies that produced them.

ENGL 56B: English Literature Late 18th Century to Present

William Wilson, TR 16:30-17:45

Major literary movements, figures, and genres from the Romantic age to the present. Writers may include Austen, the Romantics, Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Dickens, the Brontes, George Eliot, Hardy, Yeats, Joyce, Lawrence, Forster, Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Auden, Beckett.

ENGL 68A: American Literature to 1865

Balance Chow, MW 9:00:00 10:15:00

A survey of major and significant texts, movements, and writers exemplifying the literature of the United States of America, from colonial days to the period of the Civil War. Required: Student presentations, short papers, and exams.

ENGL 68B: American Literature 1865 to Present

Balance Chow, MW 13:30-14:45

A survey of major and significant texts, movements, and writers exemplifying the literature of the United States of America, covering the period from the end of the Civil War to the present. Required: Student presentations, short papers, and exams.

ENGL 71: Creative Writing (ONLINE)

Alan Soldofsky

An online introductory creative writing class using Canvas, the eCampus learning management system. Students will draft and revise original works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short-fiction, learning the basic craft of writing these genres through reading the work of published poets and writers. In workshops and small writing groups, students will discuss each other's work, making revision suggestions facilitated by the instructor and TA's. During the semester, everyone will participate in the workshops as both an author and a peer-critic.

ENGL 71: Creative Writing

Nick Taylor, MW 9:00-10:15

Sally Ashton, TR 12:00-13:15

Linda Lappin, F 9:30-12:15

Robert James, TR 13:30-14:45

Jessy Goodman, MW 13:30-14:45

Kirstin Chen, TR 15:00-16:15

Tommy Mouton, MW 12:00-13:15

Examinations of works of poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction as expression of human intellect and imagination, to comprehend the historic and cultural contexts, and recognize issues related to writing by men and women of diverse cultural traditions. Students will also write poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction.

ENGL 100W: Writing Workshop

Karen English, TR 13:30-14:45

Writing Workshop satisfies the English major requirement for learning how to write critical analysis of a variety of works of literature. This section focuses on the topic of Literature & Medicine. Texts include *Lying Awake* by Mark Salzman, *W;t, A Play* by Margaret Edson, *Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant?* by Roz Chast, and *The Best of the Best American Poetry, 25th Anniversary Edition*, ed. Robert Pinsky.

ENGL 100W: Writing Workshop

Adrienne Eastwood, MW 10:30-11:45

Avantika Rohatgi, F 9:30-12:15

Mark Dowdy, TR 16:30-17:45

English 100W is an integrated writing and literature course designed to provide English majors with a firm foundation for the study of literature. Through close and careful reading of literary texts, students will develop the following: The ability to read, analyze, and interpret literary texts intelligently, and to respond to them critically both orally and in writing Advanced proficiency in both traditional and contemporary research strategies and methodologies necessary for writing research-informed papers that communicate complex ideas effectively and appropriately to both general and specialized audiences; a rhetorically sophisticated writing style appropriate to upper-division university discourse; mastery of the conventions of standard English and manuscript format.

100WB: Written Communication, Business

Laimin Lo, F 9:30-12:15

This hands-on course is designed to simulate actual business communication scenarios (oral and written) that are encountered by business professionals daily during the course of their careers. Assignments will enable students to **practice** and immediately **apply** both practical and theoretical aspects of organizational communication directly in real-life work situations. Communication mechanics and style (practical), and the appropriateness of messages and methods based on specific organizational situations (theoretical) will be emphasized.

ENGL 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism

Noelle Brada-Williams, MW 12:00-13:15

This course will study various historical and contemporary approaches to literature, including New Criticism, structuralism and post-structuralism, New Historicism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, post-colonialism, feminism, queer theory, and ecocriticism. An emphasis will be placed on learning to apply these different methods of interpretation through a workshop format.

ENGL 103: Modern English

Linda Mitchell, MW 13:30-14:45; MW 15:00-16:15

This course provides a survey of Modern English phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, transformational grammar, and the universality of linguistic structures. Material in the course will also focus on some recurring problems of usage and/or correctness, regional and social varieties of English, the role of pragmatics in using language to communicate, and the historical development of English, especially as it affects the language today. The course also includes Reed-Kellogg Diagrams.

ENGL 106: Editing for Writers

Robert James, TR 9:00-10:15

Interested in the art of words and sentences? In this class, we will work on copyediting, proofreading, designing documents, editing and placing graphics, and organizational editing. We will focus on learning grammatical standards while also discussing changes in usage. Though this course is designed for students interested in the fields of professional editing and technical writing, it is beneficial for all who are interested in honing their language skills. Strongly recommended prerequisite/Co-requisite: English 103

ENGL 107: Professional and Technical Writing

Mark Thompson, MW 10:30-11:45

In this survey of technical and professional writing, you'll learn how to write and design persuasive documents that get real things done in the real world. Projects include resumes and cover letters, proposals, instructions (video and writing), presentations, and user manuals for phone apps. We also learn a number of digital tools used to author and publish writing in the current tech landscape, such as Adobe InDesign, SnagIt, and Madcap Flare.

ENGL 110: Visual Rhetoric and Document Design for Writers

Mark Thompson, TR 10:30-11:45

This course begins with readings in rhetorical theory and social semiotics to help students "read" visual design. We then move to the principles of document design, bringing theory and practice together in projects that draw upon digital tools like Photoshop, InDesign, and Dreamweaver. We'll work within genres of digital communication students will encounter as they move into the workplace. Throughout the process, students will engage in usability studies of their documents, letting them test the effectiveness of their documents in real-world use.

ENGL 112A: Children's Literature

Clare Browne, MW 15:00-16:15

Roohi Vora, TR 9:00-10:15

Step into a world of imagination! From fairytales to works of fantasy, historical and realistic fiction, we will delve into that special world of children's literature. We take a close look at plot development, characters, settings, themes, and authors' styles. You have the opportunity to create your own book for children, and you'll leave this class enriched with ideas.

ENGL 112B: Literature for Young Adults

Shannon Hervey, T 18:00-20:45

Study of selected literary material representing a variety of cultures, chosen to motivate secondary school readers.

ENGL 117B: Global Film, Literature, and Culture

Julie Sparks, F 9:30-12:15

The focusing theme of this course will be journeys, especially journeys by young people. We will watch films from all over the world and read stories that depict people leaving home to seek their fortune, to escape strife or chase adventure, to find their father or a seek a lover, or just to see the world beyond their little village. By experiencing these vicarious adventures, students will learn to appreciate and understand the narratives that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time.

ENGL 123D: Literature for Global Understanding: Asia

Balance Chow, MW 15:00-16:15

English 123D examines the literary production and cultural heritage of Asia. In this semester we will focus on modern works of fiction representing India, China, Japan, Korea, and other Asian countries, paying particular attention to social, economic, and political forces (esp. globalization) transforming the region. Students interested in any aspect of Asia will be able to study appropriate works of their choice. Knowledge of Asian and/or other modern languages will be most welcome. Presentations, short papers, research project, and exams.

ENGL 125: European Literature: Homer to Dante

Linda Mitchell, MW 10:30-11:45

This course offers an introduction to some of the major literary works of the first 2,000 years of Western Culture—works of great genius and superb craft. They are

as much a part of our heritage as that which we receive from our parents. Our goal this semester is to take possession of that heritage—like heirs who have come of age—by understanding how these works are connected to each other and to us via a series of parallel and contrasting patterns of ideas and experiences that form a path of human continuity across time and place. Students will engage and explore the texts from a variety of contexts and viewpoints: textual, literary, political, social, and cultural; become familiar with a range of critical approaches to the texts; and demonstrate a working knowledge of the texts' influences within the Western literary tradition.

ENGL 129: Intro to Career Writing

Mark Thompson, TR 13:30-14:45

In this course, students write to get published in the places that they read, drafting and revising about whatever they're into: food, video games, fashion, high-tech, science—whatever. Students also write and produce English Department magazines, an in-class podcast series, and their own blog. Expand your portfolio, learn some new skills, and march boldly forth with a publishable work in hand. Required class for the Professional and Technical Writing concentration.

ENGL 130: Writing Fiction

Nick Taylor, MW 12:00-13:15

Luke Goebel, MW 13:30-14:45

English 130 is a fiction workshop class in which each student will write short stories. Each of these short stories will be workshopped in class, after which each story will be rewritten. Both drafts—pre-and post-workshop—will be included in each student's end-of-semester portfolio. In addition to writing short stories and revising them, each student will be responsible for helping to workshop all stories written by classmates. And each student will be responsible for reading a number of assigned, published short stories that will serve as models for writing successful short fiction.

ENGL 131: Writing Poetry

Sally Ashton, TR 10:30-11:45

This course focuses on the work of the poet and the work of the poem. The poet's task is to envision, write, and revise using all the poetic tools necessary. What are they? Why choose one over the other? What are contemporary poets using today? The work of the poem is to become more than the sum of its parts, not merely well-chosen words, but art. Great expectations all the way around, but we'll get to work writing, reading, and discussing poetry, poetic device, your work, and discoveries.

ENGL 133: Reed Magazine

Cathy Miller, T 15:00-17:45

Reed Magazine is the oldest literary journal west of the Mississippi. In the spring semester we'll focus on the production aspects of publication: copyedit and proofread the submissions chosen in the fall, then design, layout, and print the journal. We'll also look at ways to market *Reed* by tabling at events and selling advertising. And last but not least, we'll host a launch party to celebrate the debut of our new issue! *You must receive instructor permission by contacting Prof. Miller to enroll in this course.*

ENGL 135: Writing Creative Nonfiction

Cara Bayles, R 18:00-20:45

Advanced writing workshop in creative nonfiction. In this class we'll experiment with four subgenres of nonfiction: the personal essay, travel writing, profiles, and feature articles. You will learn how to combine the reportage of journalism with the narrative techniques of fiction. In addition, we'll discuss strategies for publishing your work.

ENGL 139: Visiting Authors

Luke Goebel, TR 13:30-14:45

Students will read works of poetry, fiction and nonfiction by writers who are visiting campus this spring of 2016 (and who visited fall of 2015) as well as interact with these authors through our Center for Literary Arts (and other campus literary events). In addition to critical discussion of their work, we will also explore their biographies and writing processes to see what it might mean to live life as a writer. Students will give group presentations. Students will have the option of completing literary research or creative assignments.

ENGL 145: Shakespeare and Performance

Adrienne Eastwood, MW 9:00-10:15

In this course, we will examine in-depth several of Shakespeare's plays, specifically addressing issues of performance and interpretation. Placing each play in the context of its original performance during Shakespeare's time, and its life on stage and screen in the ensuing centuries, encourages an engagement with the ways in which re-imagining Shakespeare's works helps them retain their vitality and cultural relevance. Paying particular attention to modern productions, we will analyze the ways in which production elements such as setting, casting, staging, costumes, editing, and individual performances shape and create meaning (or fail to do so) for the audiences of today.

ENGL 147: Milton

Shannon Miller, TR 12:00-13:15

This course focuses on *Paradise Lost*, a wonderful epic poem that offers us a heroic Satan, a vengeful God, and occasionally a willful Eve. We will consider the poem alongside Milton's other writings, within the literary tradition of epic, and in relation to the turbulent historical and personal events in Milton's life, including his involvement in the execution of the English king. Major topics will include: governmental organization, gender, and the growth of the individual.

ENGL 163: American Literature: 1865-1945

Karen English, TR 10:30-11:45

American Literature 1865-1945 is a course that will focus on women writers of the 1920s and 1930s. Texts include *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton; *Plays* by Susan Glaspell; *One of Ours* by Willa Cather; *Complete Poems* by Dorothy Parker; *Bread Givers* by Anzia Yezierska; *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* by Katherine Anne Porter; *Dust Tracks on a Road* by Zora Neale Hurston.

ENGL 165: African-American Literature and the Discourses of Race—From the Emancipation Proclamation to Ferguson, Missouri

Persis Karim, TR 12:00-13:15

In this upper-division English course, we'll explore the ways that authors and critics have shaped the conversation about race in the United States. We will read seminal works that show the evolution of thinking about race and racism, as well as explore different genres such as poetry, fiction, drama, and essays including texts such as W.E.B. DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, August Wilson's "Fences," Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* as well as works by bell hooks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, Audre Lorde, James Baldwin, and Te-Nehesi Coates. We will also discuss the recent events in Ferguson, New York, and Texas, and the ways that current events and the Black Lives Matter Movement are shaping the discourse about race in the 21st century.

ENGL 177: Topics in Fiction Since 1900

Revathi Krishnaswamy, MW 9:00:00-10:15

Course will focus on different topics in modern fiction. Novels and short stories will be examined as works of art and as expressions of intellectual and social movements. May be repeated when course content changes.

ENGL 180: Individual Studies

By arrangement with instructor and department chair approval.

ENGL 181: Special Topics: Satire in Age of Terror

Revathi Krishnaswamy, MW 10:30-11:45

Would you find a cartoon or a story depicting President Obama as an ape, the Prophet Mohammed as a dog, or the Pope as a goat hilarious, witty, provocative, outrageous, insulting, or blasphemous? In the wake of the Charlie Hebdo terror attacks in Paris, the role of satire and its relationship to free speech, hate speech, blasphemy, national identity, race, culture, and politics has become a hotly debated issue. Although this ancient genre has served as a powerful instrument for challenging authority and undermining the status quo, it is unclear how satire will survive in the age of terror. Is global terror altering satire's critical terrain? What remain as targets for satire? Are there limits to satire? We will explore these questions by studying modern satire from across the world. As some students may find some course material offensive, participant discretion is advised.

ENGL 193: Capstone Seminar in Literature and Self-Reflection

Paul Douglass, TR 9:00-10:15; TR 15:00-16:15;

In this culminating course for English majors, students will be asked to reflect on their experiences and their progress toward meeting their own goals as well as the Department's. They will 1) participate in reading groups, writing workshops, and other activities; 2) write critical essays and other pieces; 3) submit a portfolio of writing from previous courses taken in the major with an introduction and notes; and 4) give feedback on the major. This should be a banquet celebrating the conclusion of a "major" journey.

ENGL 193C: Capstone Seminar in Creative Writing and Self-Reflection

Alan Soldofsky, MW 16:30-17:45

In this course, students will prepare for a career as a professional creative writer or prepare to apply for admission to a Creative Writing MFA program. Students will bring to the course a small portfolio of their previously written creative writing, preferably in two genres. Class members will revise older work as well as write new poems, short stories, and/or works of creative nonfiction. By the end of the course, class members will have completed a short manuscript in two genres (one a primary focus, the other a secondary focus), which can be used to apply to an MFA program or submit to publications.

Message from Shannon Miller, English Department Chair



The last few months have seen many terrible, and terrifying, events across the U.S. and the world. Many campuses have experienced significant racial tensions this fall, from University of Missouri, to Yale University, to Ithaca College, leading to protests, even

hunger strikes. At the University of Missouri, a university president and the chancellor of the University of Missouri system resigned, in large part because their actions seemed to diminish and disregard the concerns of students about the climate on campus. Then, weeks ago, the shocking, senseless attack on Paris by members of the ISIS terrorist group garnered worldwide sympathy and support for the people of Paris, as well it should. But responses from some politicians in this country have been disheartening, illustrating a profound misunderstanding of members of the Muslim faith. What are we, as English majors and English faculty, to do in the face of racial and religious insensitivity? Certainly we can participate in protests demanding more attention be placed on to issues of racial or religious mistreatment, and we can pressure our politicians to be more informed and more sensitive.

But I would also suggest that we, as sensitive readers of great literature, are particularly well suited to help our family, our peers, and even our politicians be balanced in their treatment of others, and to always engage complicated world events with emotional and intellectually complexity. We can do this because literature is working to train us to see the world in a complicated, nuanced way, and to push for a better world as a result. Some of you may recall a recent study—which received a fair amount of press—that claims reading literary works increases one’s empathy. Two psychologists at the New School for Social Research “have proved that reading literary fiction enhances the ability to detect and understand other people’s emotions, a crucial skill in navigating complex social relationships” (*The Guardian*, Oct. 8, 2013). Many newspapers covered this story with headlines like “For Better Social Skills, Scientists Recommend Reading Chekhov” (*NYT*, Oct. 13, 2013), and “Inequality, the empathy gap, and why you should read Chekhov” (*Washington Monthly*, Oct. 6, 2013),

Yet this study only confirms what many of us already know. Great literary texts present us with, and force us to engage with, the complexity of human relationships. And they frequently expose to us the problematic ways groups of people treat those they see as different from them, and, because of that difference, as less valuable people. Many of William Shakespeare’s plays expose these issues and ask us

to grapple with the uncomfortable consequences of such actions. In *The Merchant of Venice*, the character of Shylock may undertake the villainous act of insisting on taking a pound of flesh from the merchant Antonio. But we simultaneously learn how horribly Venetian society has treated Shylock, how he has been called a “dog,” and been spit on in public, by Antonio. While characters in the play derive pleasure from his losses, of his “daughter,” his “ducats,” and ultimately of his identity as a member of the Jewish community, we become more and more dis comforted to see his fate. We are reminded of the destructive nature of prejudiced thoughts and actions through his story. And when Portia asks “What is the merchant here, and which the Jew?,” the play prods us to question the differences between these two men, and differences between their two cultures. Shakespeare’s portrait of Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* records certain characters’ insults of her “tawny front,” her behavior, and her Egyptian identity. Though described by many in the play as an exotic other, one whose values will destroy those of Rome, the play makes her a tragic figure, one who creates a “new heaven, new earth” in her love for Antony. No longer a model of foreign and lesser values, we ultimately stand with Cleopatra. And our perspectives are consequently broadened by her portrayal.

Current political figures muse about closing mosques or treating people differently because of their faith. But 400 years ago, Torquato Tasso portrayed sympathetic Muslim female warriors in *Jerusalem Liberated* and Miguel Cervantes created a portrait of an engaging Muslim scholar in *Don Quixote*. These literary representations teach us empathy and respect. Let’s try to make sure, as we move toward the holiday season this year, that such empathy and respect are part of all of our interactions with our family, our friends, and all of those with whom we share our planet.

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