

# The Department of English and Comparative Literature Newsletter

Friday, November 14th, 2008



## SJSU Author Profile: Kate Evans by Au-co Tran

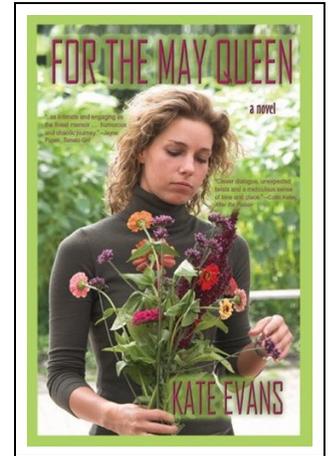
Kate Evans, a creative writing professor at SJSU, wrote her first novel in the fourth grade: an 80 page novel, held together by a binder, currently sitting in a box in her basement, complete with illustrations. In a house filled with books, Kate found her love for words at the age of four when her mother used to read to her. Around the age of nine, it made sense to try to write something of her own. However, she was pulled away from creative writing as an adult and was drawn to other things. Fortunately, when she turned 40, she had a “midlife crisis,” as she puts it, and



Kate Evans

decided to focus on creative writing and she’s been doing so ever since.

Kate’s childhood 80 page book is probably very different from her new novel, *For the May Queen*, which is a coming of age story about a 17 year old girl, Norma Rogers, who leaves home for the very first time, to go to college. The first inkling for this novel was developed in a rather unusual way. Kate had considered writing a memoir about college life, believing that most of the time the dorm life that is depicted in books and television isn’t the way most people experience college. Thus, the idea for the novel started off in the creative nonfiction genre. However, as Norma’s voice began to come alive on the page, Kate decided to write a novel “somewhat based on my experience” but found that it was “so much more fun to write as fiction.”



She chose this particular topic because she thought that “leaving home is such an important part of most people’s lives. It’s when you actually leave the family nest and then you move into a world where you have to create your own boundaries and come in contact with a lot of new ideas and people and have to figure out who you are. I think that’s a really meaty thing to write about.” Kate also explores this idea of identity and finding a sense of self in her second novel, *Complementary Colors*, which is a story about a straight woman who falls in love with a lesbian. Again, her writing questions what happens when someone changes, what happens when we change. And “how we grapple with the way people perceive us and how we perceive ourselves.”

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| SJSU Author Profile: Kate Evans.....   | 1  |
| The Department of English and Comparative Literature Newsletter and The Writing Life – Now Available Online! . | 2  |
| Upcoming Literary Events at SJSU .....   | 2  |
| What you can do with an English degree (besides teach English).....  | 3  |
| A New Face in the Department of English and Comparative Literature.....  | 5  |
| New Modes of Communication: Career Writing and Service-Learning .....  | 6  |
| Information on the Writing Center.....   | 7  |
| PWC? Is that the Pregnant Walkers Club?.....   | 7  |
| Reed Magazine: A Literary Voice for Everyone.....  | 8  |
| Chair’s Message from John Engell for Fall 2008.....  | 9  |
| Information on the .....   | 11 |
| Information on the Department of English and Comparative Literature .....                                      | 11 |

Apart from debuting a novel and finishing a second one, Kate has published a collection of poems called *Like All We Love*. She has also been working on a historical novel and a memoir about care-giving. She started on the historical novel after her father died. And in addition to coping with his death, Kate had to care for her mother, who had Alzheimer's disease. So, Kate put aside the novel and started to write about a topic that she had a lot to say about: care-giving. Her thoughts about care-giving weren't originally intended to be something public. But, like the development of *For the May Queen*, after writing for a while, it became clear that a memoir was developing. The memoir is now finished and is starting on its journey to try and get published. An excerpt of the memoir will appear in the next issue of the literary magazine ZYZZYVA.

For someone who has written so many different things and dabbled in so many different genres, it is almost impossible not to wonder what her favorite book was. The answer, given almost unhesitatingly, was surprisingly simple: *Harriet the Spy*, the children's book by Louise Fitzhugh. Kate believes that the literature we read as children is very important in shaping who we are as people. But more than that, she found a lot of herself in Harriet. The character made her feel "affirmed in my love for looking around the world, scribbling notes in journals, and wanting to write." Harriet also appealed to Kate's artistic and sensitive nature because Harriet was a misfit, a gender bender, who wore her dad's glasses and was just plain eccentric. Kate felt that all of these traits fueled Harriet's (as well as her own) creativity.

And to leave with something valuable for all aspiring writers, a very experienced writer gives golden advice: "Read a lot, and write a lot. Go to the library, grab books off the shelves. When you find an author you really like, read as much of them as you can. If this is what you really want to do, if this is what you really love, don't have excuses like 'I'm too busy to read.' Most people aren't too busy to be on their Facebooks or Myspace. The more you read, the more you'll see that you have a lot of freedom as a writer, and then just write."

**Note:** Kate Evans will be doing a reading and book-signing on the following date:

- February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009, at 7:30 pm in the MLK Library, 5<sup>th</sup> floor in the Shiro Program Room. ✍



### The Department of English and Comparative Literature Newsletter and *The Writing Life* – Now Available Online!

The Department of English and Comparative Literature Newsletter and *The Writing Life* will be available online this semester. They will be available as a PDF on the Department of English and Comparative Literature website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/english>).

This newsletter was written and compiled by the following members of Prof. Cathy Gabor's English 129 class, Fall 2008:

Mary Boettcher ♦ Celeste Perryman ♦ Jessica Purcell ♦ Kyle Schisler ♦ Au-Co Tran ✍



### Upcoming Literary Events at SJSU Terrance McNally

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Wednesday, Nov. 19 <sup>th</sup> – 1:30 pm<br>SJSU University Theatre | Conversation, Q&A, and book-signing |
| 3:00 pm<br>Mt. Pleasant High School                                   | Lecture                             |
| 7:30 pm<br>SJSU University Theatre                                    | Lecture, Q&A, and book-signing      |

The award-winning American playwright will be in San Jose November 19<sup>th</sup>, at the SJSU University Theatre and Mt. Pleasant High School. McNally has written or co-written numerous plays, including: *Love! Valour! Compassion!*; *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*; and his latest, *Deuce*, starring the inimitable Angela Lansbury as a former tennis player who is honored at a recent US Open. Mr. McNally also wrote the controversial play *Corpus Christi*, which portrays Jesus being seduced by Judas, and officiating at a same-sex marriage between his apostles; McNally said his play exuded a "message of tolerance." Before the play opened in Great Britain in 2000, a British Muslim group issued a fatwa, condemning the play. Mr. McNally is the second speaker with a fatwa to visit SJSU, after Salman Rushdie, who spoke last winter. Mr. McNally has also written

such musicals as *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Ragtime*, and *The Full Monty*.

### Mark Doty

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Tuesday, Feb. 24th – 7 pm<br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Library<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Rooms 225-229      | Reading and book-signing   |
| Wednesday, Feb. 25th – 1:30 pm<br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Library<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Rooms 225-229 | Conversation with Doty's partner and author of <i>Lawnboy</i> , Paul Lisicky |

Poet Mark Doty will be visiting San Jose State University in February. With a dozen books of poetry to his name, and the honor of being the first American to earn the T.S. Eliot prize in poetry, Doty is an accomplished poet in his own right, but he has written three critically-acclaimed memoirs as well. *Firebird: A Memoir*, published in 1995, chronicles his youth and his upbringing in the American Southwest. *Heaven's Coast: A Memoir*, his earliest such work, deals with the tragic loss of his former partner to AIDS. *Dog Years*, printed last year, shows the author's attempts to deal with the aftermath of both his lover's death and the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> from the viewpoint of his two dogs. Also speaking will be his partner, author Paul Lisicky, whose works include *Lawnboy*, a novel about a young boy's explorations of his sexuality, and *Famous Builder*, a memoir that reflects, in part, on the author's childhood idolization of Bill Levitt, the originator of modern suburbia.

### Sandra Gilbert

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Wednesday, April 15 <sup>th</sup> 1:30 pm<br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Library<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Rooms 225-229 | Conversation, Q&A, and book-signing |
| Wednesday, April 15 <sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm<br>Martin Luther King, Jr. Library<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Rooms 225-229 | Reading and book-signing            |

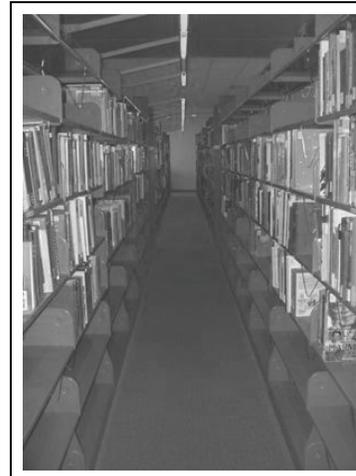
Renowned feminist literary critic and poet Sandra Gilbert will be speaking in the spring. Gilbert has written several poetry collections, including *Blood Pressure* and *Ghost Volcano*, and two works of creative nonfiction that address the topic of death. She is perhaps most well-known for her contribution to one of the most cited works in the canon of feminist theory, *The Madwoman in the Attic*. When she co-wrote the book in 1979 with Susan Gubar, it is doubtful

that either of them knew the dramatic effect that it would have on literary theory as a whole. Their theory of "Anxiety of Authorship" paved the way for an exploration of female characters in literature and the woman writer's search for authentic voice. ✍



## What you can do with an English degree (besides teach English)

by Jessica Purcell



In seventh grade, my English teacher asked me what I wanted to do when I finished school, what I hoped to study in college. I knew I wanted to go to college, which she encouraged, but I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do. She suggested

since I'd been doing so well in her class, I consider majoring in English. With all the limited foresight and swaggering arrogance of a typical junior highschooler, I rebuffed her. "English? But I'm not very good at coming up with stories...and I don't think I want to teach, no offense." As I approach graduation, I sometimes reflect on my statement and smile.

I wanted to write this article to serve as the guide that I wish I had had back in seventh grade, to explore the possibilities of an English degree beyond the altruistic route, teaching. I was surprised at the possibilities open to me. The following is a rough map of some of the career choices available to bearers of a degree in English, but should in no way serve as a substitute for actual advising. (Projected outlook and salary ranges from Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos089.htm>)

### Editor

Salary range: \$27,340 to \$87,400  
Recommended SJSU classes: ENGL 106  
Editing for Writers, ENGL 103 Modern English,  
ENGL 133 Reed Magazine

Projected outlook: 124,000 projected jobs by 2016

Editing is an excellent profession for those who are overly critical of their own work, but too self-conscious for authorship. Thousands of writers, many of whom are much worse than you may think you are, are willing to pay to have their writing proofread. All those obsessive corrections, every glaring flaw in your own work will pale in comparison to the horrendous sentence structures you will see and attempt to make coherent. It's a little like clipping the loose threads on a store-display sweater: by pointing out the weaknesses and flaws, the product can be vastly improved, and be much more attractive to the viewer (i.e., reader). Recommended skills are a thick skin, a sharp eye, and the ability to avoid offending the delicate sensibilities of a writer.

### **Technical writer**

Salary range: \$36,490 to \$94,550

Recommended SJSU class: ENGL 107

Professional Technical Writing

Projected outlook: 1.3% rise in demand

The question I am most often asked about technical writing is, "What is it?" The easiest explanation I have come up with is, "Whenever you buy anything new, like an iPod or a toaster or a car, the instruction manual that comes with it is an example of technical writing." Although not everyone reads the directions before they attempt to use their new item (although in most cases, they probably should), companies still need writers to explain in a simple and coherent way how to use their product. All of those English classes where the teachers told you, "Vary your writing! Don't use the same word twice, find a synonym!", or "Don't use the passive voice *-ever*"- forget them. In technical writing, your job is to find the simplest and most accurate way to describe how to perform a task. Recommended skills: A knack for explaining how to use things in a way that a novice can understand; the ability to understand the product you are writing about (may require technical skill, depending on the complexity of the product); knowledge of desktop publishing software or help authoring software.

### **Career Writer**

Salary range: Dependent on the type of writing involved – for example, median income for a writer in advertising is around \$56,650.

Recommended SJSU classes: Also dependent on the type of writing you wish to pursue, but some suggestions include ENGL 105

Advanced Composition; ENGL 129

Introduction to Career Writing; ENGL 130

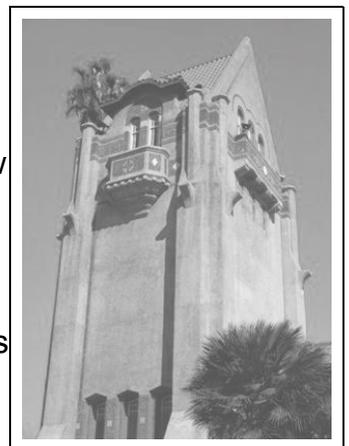
Writing Fiction; ENGL 135 Writing Nonfiction

Projected outlook: Again, dependent on writing style, but overall demand for writers is expected to rise about 10%

This is probably the broadest specialization in the English major. Political writing, copywriting, scriptwriting, and even more traditional genres like fiction or non-fiction are included in career writing. If you enjoy crafting a story, writing an advocacy piece, or coming up with catchy slogans, then you may want to consider specializing in career writing. Additionally, if you are considering a career in business, the career writing path may be useful to you. The world of business provides many opportunities for writers, including letters, speeches, and presentations.

Recommended skills: The ability to produce writing for deadlines; the ability to convince your superiors why your work should be published; the ability to draw a reader's (or listeners) attention and hold it.

To prove that yes, one can actually be paid well for this sort of work, I conducted an interview with a SJSU alumni. Nick Dinicola, a graduate of the SJSU technical writing program, now works as a technical writer at Lam Research in Fremont. Lam Research is well-known and respected in the field of semiconductor research, and offers many benefits to interns, such as catered lunches, scholarships, and discounts on many local events and performances. According to



Nick, many SJSU classes provided invaluable professional knowledge: “ENGL 106, and 107 for sure. But I think 129 also helped me learn to write more concisely.” Nick says that for him, technical writing combined the best of both worlds: “I’ve always enjoyed writing, whether it be creative writing or technical writing... I’m also a bit of a techie, so technical writing combines those two interests.” A major part of the appeal of technical writing for Nick was its linguistic aspects, but he says, “It’s also a relatively stable, well-paying job.” So what advice does Nick have for English majors, or potential English majors?

“Get an internship. They give practical experience in any field...The Career Center is a good place to start. I think it’s also good not to limit yourself to one field. Internships are an opportunity to explore a particular field, so it can be good to try different things to see what you would enjoy the most.” Some further advice from Nick to students hoping to become an intern: “Some semesters there’s an internship class offered at SJSU [English 199]...I had the instructor for another class. There were some internships still available, and she offered them to my class. One of them was a paid internship for technical writing...It was too good of an opportunity to pass up, so I applied for it.”

For any of these careers, it is beneficial to have a writing portfolio, which could consist of projects from your classes or work that you have produced on your own. If you need help assessing your work for inclusion in your portfolio, the Writing Center can assist you. ✍



## A New Face in the Department of English and Comparative Literature

by Kyle Schisler

The Department of English and Comparative Literature at San Jose State has added another talented educator to its already gifted staff. This semester is the first for Dr. Cathy Gabor who has joined us after four years as a professor at Sacramento State University. When asked what she likes about her new position at SJSU Dr. Gabor said, “I am very impressed with the students here, especially the level of engagement in class discussions.”



*Dr. Cathy Gabor*

Dr. Gabor attended Bethany College in West Virginia for her undergraduate course work. Bethany College is a small school, 800 students and virtually all of them lived on campus, it was kind of like an “intellectual summer camp.” Larry Grimes, the head of the Department of English and Comparative

Literature, became her mentor and as an ordained minister, performed Dr. Gabor’s wedding. Dr. Gabor then went on to receive her Master’s degree from Indiana University. During her Master’s program, she realized that rhetoric was the specific area of the language arts in which she wanted to specialize. After receiving her Master’s degree, she spent seven years in Chicago. During this time she had her first child and worked several different jobs. Dr. Gabor worked as both an administrator and adjunct professor at De Paul University. While in Chicago, she realized that she wanted to fulfill her dream of earning a PhD. Texas Christian University had a small but highly ranked PhD program in rhetoric and composition so that is where Dr. Gabor decided to go. TCU had a program that was collaborative and had a positive atmosphere. These qualities meshed well with the concept of being a “public intellectual,” which is something that she values. She credits persistence and maintaining a balance with her personal life as helping her get through the Ph.D. program.

When Dr. Gabor had received her Ph.D. after five years of hard work, Sacramento State University hired her as a tenure track professor. After four years in Sacramento, SJSU offered her a position. She will eventually be taking on the role of University Writing Program Administrator. In the mean time, she is teaching two composition classes this semester as well as a career writing class that focuses on service learning. Next

### English 100W - Writing Workshop

|     |             |         |        |  |
|-----|-------------|---------|--------|--|
| M W | 1200 - 1315 | BBC 121 | Chow   | Advanced workshops in Reading and Composition. |
| T R | 1330 - 1445 | BBC 221 | Rice   |  |
| W   | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 121 | Wilson |  |
| T R | 0900 - 1015 | BBC 221 | TBA    |  |

### English 100WB - Written Communication: Business

|     |             |         |            |   |
|-----|-------------|---------|------------|---|
| M   | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 128 | Hessler    | Required upper division writing seminar for business majors. Explores effective communication strategies across the gamut of business contexts. |
| T   | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 128 | Hessler    |   |
| W   | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 128 | Hessler    |   |
| R   | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 128 | Hessler    |   |
| TR  | 0900 - 1015 | SH 241  | Lindelof   | Written communications for business majors; includes minimum of 8,000 words of writing spaced throughout the semester.                          |
| TR  | 1200 - 1315 | CL 316  | Lindelof   |   |
| T   | 1630 - 1918 | BBC 124 | Mujal      |   |
| T R | 1500 - 1615 | BBC 221 | Poindexter |   |
| M W | 1500 - 1615 | BBC 123 | Poindexter |   |
| M W | 1200 - 1330 | CL 316  | Sparks     |   |
| M W | 1030 - 1145 | CL316   | Lindelof   |   |

### English 101 - Introduction to Literary Criticism

|     |             |        |              |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------------|--|
| M W | 0900 - 1015 | CL 316 | Krishnaswamy | Study and application of various historical and contemporary approaches to literature, such as formalism, structuralism, new criticism, cultural studies, new historicism, post-structuralism, Marxism, post-colonialism, feminism, etc. Application of these approaches to works of literature.   |
| M W | 1330 - 1445 | CL 316 | Krishnaswamy |  |
| T R | 1030 - 1145 | SH 411 | Harris       | Do you see hidden meanings in literary texts? Billboards? Movies? Advertisements? Can you come up with 3 variant meanings for Ezra Pound's poem, "In a Station of the Metro"? There are many possible readings of all literary and visual texts. Even your own identity governs your interpretation of the material. What kind of critic are you? For this course, we will discover and apply critical models to various literary, visual and digital texts. Critical models will include foundational twentieth-century theory as well as contemporary approaches to literature (feminism, Queer theory, Marxism, post-colonialism and more). Though we will apply these critical models to texts across several historical periods and literary genres, Joseph Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i> will be our ur-text. Prerequisite: English 100W |

### English 103 - Modern English

|     |             |        |      |   |
|-----|-------------|--------|------|---|
| M W | 0900 - 1015 | SH 229 | Baer | The growth and structure of modern English, including its phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. Attention to social and regional varieties, with implications for language development and literacy among native and nonnative speakers. |
| T R | 1500 - 1615 | SH 229 | Rice |   |

### English 106 - Editing for Writers

|     |             |         |      |  |
|-----|-------------|---------|------|--|
| M W | 1500 - 1615 | BBC 121 | Lore | Copy editing, substantive editing and reorganization of technical documents. Review of grammar and punctuation to ensure technical mastery and ability to justify editing decisions. Graphics editing, access aids and professional skills of an editor. |
|-----|-------------|---------|------|--|

### English 107 - Professional Technical Writing

|   |             |        |          |  |
|---|-------------|--------|----------|--|
| F | 1000 - 1245 | CL 316 | Harrison | Research methods, audience analysis and development of reader-based writing techniques. Writing based on models from scientific and technical discourse. |
|---|-------------|--------|----------|--|

### English 112A - Children's Literature

|     |             |         |              |   |
|-----|-------------|---------|--------------|---|
| M W | 1200 - 1315 | SH 229  | Krishnaswamy | Study of literature for elementary and intermediate grades, representing a variety of cultures. Evaluation and selection of texts.  |
| R   | 1630 - 1915 | BBC 120 | Hager        | Do you fondly recall books that you read, loved, and reread as a child? Do you want to revisit the great works of literature from your childhood and examine them on a deeper, analytical level? Do you want to discuss controversial topics like book banning and censorship? This course will provide intensive analysis and discussion of major works within the realm of children's literature. Our primary texts will cover three major genres: fantasy/science fiction, historical fiction, and realistic fiction. In addition, we will study original fairy tale texts (and look at the changes made in their modernized, Disney film counterparts), and we will examine picture books for young readers. We will read the following novels: <i>Charlotte's Web</i> , <i>Tuck Everlasting</i> , <i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</i> , <i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> , <i>Number the Stars</i> , <i>Dragonwings</i> , <i>Holes</i> , <i>Maniac Magee</i> , and <i>The Great Gilly Hopkins</i> . |

|     |             |        |  |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|--|--|
| T R | 0730 - 0845 | SH 229 |  |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|--|--|

### English 112B - Literature for Young Adults

W 1630 - 1915 SH 229 Browne

The goal of this course is to acquaint students with a wide range of YA books and authors. We will read six novels as a class, including *Whale Talk, Speak*, and *The White Darkness*. Our text will be *Literature for Today's Young Adults*, which introduces YA literature from several genres. Students will prepare a Book Talk and a Unit Plan which will further their knowledge of the expansive range of YA Literature.

### English 117 - Film, Literature, and Cultures

F 900 - 1145 DMH 357 TBA

Using films and literary works, students will appreciate and understand the narratives (myths and other stories) that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time.

M 1630 - 1915 CL 227 Shillinglaw

TBA TBA TBA Fleck

### English 123A - Literature for Global Understanding

T R 1330 - 1445 BBC 121 Karim

The Americas Course promotes global understanding by examining the cultures and literary arts of a selected region of the world, the Americas, and covers representative texts and authors from Latin America and the Caribbean/West Indies.

### English 125A - European Literature: From Homer to Dante

T R 1030 - 1145 BBC 121 Mesher

Classical and medieval literature in translation: Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil and Dante.

### English 126 - Holocaust Literature

R 1630 - 1915 BBC 124 Mesher

Survey of literature written by survivors or witnesses of the Holocaust, the destruction of European Jewry during World War II, focusing upon diaries, memoirs, fiction, and occasionally poetry and drama. Writers may include Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi, Anne Frank, Charlotte Delbo.

### English 129 - Introduction to Career Writing

|   |             |         |        |   |
|---|-------------|---------|--------|---|
| R | 1800 - 2045 | BBC 221 | Miller | Practice in various professional writing tasks: instructions, descriptions, reviews, interviews, articles, creative nonfiction, short stories, poetry. Publication of a newsletter. Study of models and application of techniques to achieve given stylistic effects. |
|---|-------------|---------|--------|---|

### English 130 - Writing Fiction

|     |             |         |        |  |
|-----|-------------|---------|--------|--|
| M W | 1200 - 1315 | BBC 001 | Taylor |  |
| W   | 1630 - 1915 | CL 227  | Evans  | The focus of this course is inventing and crafting fiction. Our primary focus will be the short story, but we will also address the novel and flash fiction. Through work-shopping student pieces, as well as discussing the pieces of published writers, we will speak to the observable and the subtle aspects of fiction—for good writing entails both skill and mystery. |

### English 131 - Writing Poetry

|     |             |        |      |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|------|--|
| T R | 1200 - 1315 | HB 405 | Maio | The goal of the course is to help students improve the quality of their poetry by learning more about the craft of poetry writing and techniques of revision. Poetry is largely the art of making original images and metaphors, paying concentrated attention to language, down to the level of the syllable. Class members will learn how to make better metaphors, as well as learn to construct other types of figures of speech. Class members will also learn how to improve the sound of their poems. By the end of the course, students will have finished a short manuscript of poetry. Students who are not sufficiently experienced reading and writing poetry are not encouraged to enroll in this class. To enroll in the course, undergraduates must have successfully completed English 71 or receive permission of the instructor. |
|-----|-------------|--------|------|--|

### English 133 - Reed Magazine

|   |             |        |        |   |
|---|-------------|--------|--------|---|
| M | 1630 - 1915 | CL 111 | Taylor | Student-edited and managed literary magazine. Contents selected from local, national and international submissions. Students urged to work on the magazine for the two semesters required for publication. Open to all majors. May be repeated once for credit. |
|---|-------------|--------|--------|---|

### English 135 - Writing Nonfiction

|   |             |        |        |   |
|---|-------------|--------|--------|---|
| T | 1800 - 2045 | HB 405 | Miller | Advanced creative writing workshop in literary nonfiction. Study of traditional and contemporary models. May be repeated once for credit. |
|---|-------------|--------|--------|---|

### English 141 – Medieval Literature

|     |             |         |     |  |
|-----|-------------|---------|-----|--|
| M W | 1030 - 1145 | BBC 123 | Cox | This course will study some of the greatest dramatic and poetic texts of Western Europe (in translation and in Middle English), texts whose combined wit, urbanity, sophistication, skepticism, and ambiguity articulate the concerns, conditions, and contradictions of a time aptly characterized by G.L. Kittredge as "scrambling and unquiet [...], when nobody was at rest but the dead." Requirements: daily reader responses, a midterm essay exam, a research-informed critical paper, and a final essay exam. |
|-----|-------------|---------|-----|--|

### English 144 – Shakespeare 1

|     |            |         |        |  |
|-----|------------|---------|--------|--|
| M W | 1030- 1145 | BBC 121 | Heisch | This course will provide an introduction to Shakespeare, and—along the way—an overview of the political and historical context of his work, an introduction to the language/s of Early Modern England, useful information about making, performing and printing of plays in this period, background information about life in Renaissance England, and—with luck—some insight into the way that literature can help us understand ourselves and the interesting world we have made Students will perform key scenes from major plays and write a substantial original paper. |
|-----|------------|---------|--------|--|

|     |             |        |          |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|----------|--|
| T R | 0900 - 1145 | SH 411 | Eastwood | This course will introduce you to some of the major plays of William Shakespeare. We will discuss the construction of the family as a mini-commonwealth, and the political impact that added to Shakespeare's dramatic productions. Similarly, we will consider the relationship between patriarchal and monarchical authority, and the ways in which related ideologies circulated among Elizabethans. In addition, we will be discussing Shakespeare's work from a performance |
|-----|-------------|--------|----------|--|

perspective. Performance tends to reinterpret and update the words on the page and, I argue, keep Shakespeare's vision relevant and alive. Performance in this sense includes not only performance on a stage, or the performance of a particular character, but the way in which the play is interpreted-how the variety of choices made about the play in its production (either on stage or on screen) shape its meaning.

TBA TBA TBA Fleck

### English 145 - Shakespeare and Performance

|     |             |        |          |   |
|-----|-------------|--------|----------|---|
| T R | 1200 - 1315 | SH 347 | Eastwood | 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. Placing these plays within this context of performance will raise larger issues about the complex relationships between the Shakespearean canon and its ever changing audiences. Students will respond to each Shakespearean play text through both writing and oral interpretation, integrating speech and dramatic performance with an understanding of the complexities of plot, characterization, and dramatic form. |
|-----|-------------|--------|----------|---|

### English 148 - British Literature: 1660-1800

|     |             |         |       |   |
|-----|-------------|---------|-------|---|
| T R | 1030 - 1145 | BBC 221 | Brada | The Neoclassical or Neo-Augustan era saw the rise of the novel in English, developed the modern concept of authorship, and witnessed the peak of English comedy and satire. This period in history is also when English culture had the greatest impact in shaping the character and ideals of the future United States. We will begin around 1660 and end with Frances Burney's 1778 novel, <i>Evelina</i> . |
|-----|-------------|---------|-------|---|

### English 151 - Twentieth Century Poetry

|     |             |     |           |  |
|-----|-------------|-----|-----------|--|
| M W | 1200 - 1315 | TBA | Soldofsky | In this course students will study selected works by a diverse group of Modern and Post-modern (mostly American) poets. Given the great number of Twentieth Century poets whose work is of significance and worth knowing, I have chosen to examine these several poets important to the development of Modernism in depth rather than present a broad survey of the field. We will read poets whose work has influenced all that has been produced since, or whose work has been so innovative that it introduced something new into the canon of modern poetry. Included on the reading list are: W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Robinson Jeffers, Hart Crane, Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell, Frank O'Hara, James Wright, and Mark Doty. The course will take students on a guided tour of some the most significant poetry written in the last century. There are two papers required during the semester, as well as a mid-term and a final exam. |
|-----|-------------|-----|-----------|--|

### English 153B - Nineteenth Century British Novel

|     |             |        |        |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|--|
| T R | 1200 - 1315 | SH 411 | Harris | With the Industrial Revolution in full swing, the nineteenth century saw many technological improvements and even more class disparity. With the mechanization of paper-making and the distribution of various reading materials, many British citizens became literate, some even clawed their way into the middle class, as was recorded by Dickens and George Eliot. However, the nineteenth century isn't all about great expectations and marches through the middle. We'll visit with Mary Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> and Dickens' lesser known <i>Old Curiosity Shop</i> to discover the impact of technology. By this time, it was agreed that women had a soul, thanks to Mary Wollstonecraft. But the problem of "uppity" women who wanted to be authors was inexhaustible. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's <i>Aurora Leigh</i> will introduce the "woman question" that so plagued their minds. By its conclusion, the nineteenth century had novelists declaring that "art is for art's sake" in |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|--|

a decadent flourish of bloodsucking (Stoker's *Dracula*). Other novelists were inviting readers to solve mysteries (Wilkie Collins' *Woman in White*) and go on adventures for the first time -- and many went because they couldn't afford the actual travel vacation. H. Rider Haggard hosts such an adventure in his novel, *She*, and invites readers to unmapped regions of Africa where the main character, "She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed," dominates two of Britannia's most masculine citizens. Prerequisite: Upper-division standing.

### English 154 - British and Irish Fiction Since 1900

T 1800 - 2045 BBC 221 Wilson

Study of British and Irish fiction since 1900. Authors may include Conrad, Forster, Ford, Lawrence, Joyce, Woolf, Lessing, Greene, Fowles, Ishiguro, Byatt, Doyle, O'Brien.

### English 162 - American Literature: 1830-1865

M W 0900 - 1015 BBC 121 English

This class is a study of six great Romantic writers and is based on close readings and discussions of Emerson's essays, *Walden*, *The Scarlet Letter*, Melville's short novels as well as poetry by Whitman and Dickinson. Oral presentations, journal assignments, critical analysis paper (8-10 pages), midterm, and final.

### English 165 - Topics in Ethnic American Literature

T R 0900-1015 BBC 121 Brada

This course examines major texts in Asian American literature, including authors such as Carlos Bulosan, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Jhumpa Lahiri. During the course of the semester, we will explore a variety of literary genres or forms including poetry, prose, drama, and screenplay from a variety of Asian American communities.

### English 169 - Ethnicity in American Literature

M W 0900 - 1045 SH 239 Chow

Study of race and ethnicity in the literary arts of North America. Selected works of authors from such groups as African Americans, European Americans, Asian Americans, Chicanos, Latinos and American Indians.

### English 174 - Literature, Self, and Society

|     |             |        |        |   |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|---|
| T R | 1330 - 1445 | SH 229 | Cullen | Study of literary works written throughout our national history in order to explore depictions of self, society, equality, and structured inequality. Writers and subject of the texts studied will represent a diversity of ethnic, class, gender, historical, and regional backgrounds. |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|---|

|     |     |     |       |
|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| TBA | TBA | TBA | Fleck |
|-----|-----|-----|-------|

### English 176 - The Short Story

|   |             |         |      |  |
|---|-------------|---------|------|--|
| T | 1630 - 1915 | BBC 121 | Maio | Analysis and interpretation of selected short stories. |
|---|-------------|---------|------|--|

### English 177 - Twentieth Century Fiction

|     |             |         |      |   |
|-----|-------------|---------|------|---|
| M W | 1330 - 1445 | BBC 121 | Chow | Novels and short stories as works of art and as expressions of intellectual and social movements. |
|-----|-------------|---------|------|---|

### English 181 - Special Topics in Literature

|   |             |        |         |  |
|---|-------------|--------|---------|--|
| W | 1330 - 1615 | SH 229 | Gilbert | Significant topics or themes in literature. Focus will vary each semester. |
|---|-------------|--------|---------|--|

### English 193 - Capstone Seminar in Literature and Self Reflection

|     |             |         |             |  |
|-----|-------------|---------|-------------|--|
| M W | 1030 - 1145 | BBC 001 | Shillinglaw | The capstone course focuses on reflection—reflection on your major, on your writing, and on reflective texts. The topic for this course is shifting definitions and delineations of family, from Plato's <i>Republic</i> to California's Proposition 8. Texts for this seminar may include F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>Tender is the Night</i> ; Jane Smiley, <i>Ordinary Love and Good Will</i> ; Tim O'Brien, <i>The Things They Carried</i> ; Anne Tyler, <i>Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant</i> ; Alison Bechdel, <i>Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic</i> ; Wallace Stegner, <i>Wolf Willow</i> (memoir); selected poetry; August Wilson, <i>Joe Turner's Come and Gone</i> . |
|-----|-------------|---------|-------------|--|

|   |             |         |        |
|---|-------------|---------|--------|
| M | 1900 - 2145 | BBC 001 | Wilson |
|---|-------------|---------|--------|

|     |             |        |        |  |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|--|
| T R | 0900 - 1015 | CL 316 | Heisch | <p>This culminating course allows students to review their work in the English major, to collect, edit and improve work they have completed, to read, discuss and write about a broad collection of literary works, to write something absolutely new, to participate in a class video anthology of "Favorite Poems," to assess their academic progress in the context of the department learning goals and to put their English studies to practical use. Each student will: Compile a portfolio of writing from previous courses in the major, Significantly revise a paper, Write a personal assessment of the major and the department learning goals, Read and respond orally and in writing to assigned texts for the course, Write a substantial essay on a topic related to the course, and Attend or participate in at least two literary events.</p> |
|-----|-------------|--------|--------|--|

compiled by Kyle Schisler

semester Dr. Gabor will be teaching another two sections of composition in addition to a graduate level seminar in the history of rhetoric.

When reading fiction Dr. Gabor enjoys magical realism and satirical novels, her favorite work of fiction is *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. She mostly likes reading nonfiction that falls within her field but she recently enjoyed *The Ghost Map* by Steven Johnson, a book about the cholera outbreak in London circa 1854. Her favorite scholar is John Dewey, he has shaped her view of rhetoric as well as the way she's raised her children. In her free time, Dr. Gabor enjoys traveling and spending time with her kids. She also does Pilates and is in the process of learning kickboxing.

Dr. Gabor's favorite part of teaching is being able to witness the development of a piece of writing. Seeing a first draft evolve and change is a rewarding process for her. When asked to give any advice to students, one of the things she said was "take advantage of the writing center. It is not for dumb people, it is for smart people who want to improve their writing." Dr. Gabor is excited about her new home here at SJSU. Welcome Aboard! ✍



## New Modes of Communication: Career Writing and Service-Learning by Celeste Perryman

This semester, both the newsletter and the Writing Life are part of a service-learning project for English 129, Career Writing. Service-learning is a way for students to gain skills for their class while simultaneously providing a service to their community, whether to our San Jose State community or our county as a whole. The Department of English and Comparative Literature's publications are just one task of five the Career Writing class is taking on in groups.

One of our sister groups (Katie Holmes, Zae Miller, Trevor Nomi, Katie Smith, and Jake Wooten) is working on part of a proposal for the organization Veggielution to try to acquire land for a community farm at Emma Prusch Farm Park. The organization already has a small plot

of land to use there. The organization is demonstrating in small scale how they could feed people and bring people in the community together on a much larger scale if they gained the use of extra acreage from the park. Their section of the proposal focuses on research into similar farms and explains why Veggielution is a good candidate to parcel land to above other farming groups.

A second group (Doug Pearl, Anahi Torres, Jean Walker, and Domonique White) is working with the 3rd Street Community Center a few blocks from campus. They have already done a caption project for 3rd Street's fundraiser and are working on narratives to include in the organization's annual report. The community center provides a range of activities for children of various ages and backgrounds and helps foster their academic progress through parental involvement and community outreach. The executive director of the 3rd Street Community Center, Rosemary Baez, also serves on a Santa Clara County advisory committee for social services.

As part of her work with the advisory committee, Rosemary Baez is also working with another cluster of students (Margie Brasil, Christian Wellisch, and Justin Yip) who are making a set of surveys and a PowerPoint presentation with a formal report for the county. The surveys they produce will be translated into different languages. Social organizations then will hopefully use the surveys to determine whether more of their documents should be in other languages so that the people who need to use them will be able to use the documents.

The last of the groups (Sean Corpus, Steven Cossey, Hazel Laguardia, Miesha Roberts, and Tim Shannon) is working on various documents for the Coalition to Save the Fairgrounds, recently formed from a blocked effort to preserve the Berryessa flea market from South Bay BART development. Santa Clara County is considering selling the fairgrounds for commercial use in order to offset its budget deficit. The coalition seeks to convince the county to develop on a smaller scale. This fourth group's research into other fairgrounds around the country will help the

coalition plans.

Although the setup is different from semesters past, the efforts of the groups together are potentially helping a broader set of people, and we hope to do this with our documents as well. The second piece of our project, The Writing Life, will come out towards the end of the semester. The goal is to provide a creative voice to the students of the Department of English and Comparative Literature by taking submissions from our fellow English majors and letting their submissions shape the focus of the writing. We think a document inspired by our audience will be the most interesting to our audience.

Contacts for further information:

Rosemary Baez – Executive Director, 3rd Street Community Center

(408) 295-8722

Amie Frisch - Project Director, Veggielution

(408) 887-2562

amie@veggielution.org

Mark Anthony Medeiros - Project Manager, Veggielution

(408) 607-1709

mark@veggielution.org



### Information on the Writing Center by Au-co Tran

As English majors, we run into the

risk of becoming so absorbed in our reputations as English majors that the idea of asking for help on our writing is absolutely out of the question. But, that shouldn't be a concern because the Writing Center (WC) provides tutoring, writing resources and

workshops that can help to perfect any type of writing, regardless of major. The Writing



Center can also provide assistance with cover letters for resumes or job applications and personal statements for school applications

Here is some of the basic information about the WC.

- **What:** A place where SJSU students can find help perfecting their writing, no matter in what form the assignment is in. It can be the traditional English composition paper, a sociology research paper, or an art history paper. As long as it's writing, the WC can be of help.
- **Where:** It is located on the first floor of Clark Hall in Suite 126.
- **Who:** The WC is opened to any SJSU student that is currently enrolled at the university.
- **When:** Office hours are Monday through Thursdays, from 9:00AM to 5:30PM, and Fridays from 9:00AM to 12:00PM. Specific office hours can be found on the WC's website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>. Appointments can be made online. ✍



### PWC? Is that the Pregnant Walkers Club?

by Kyle Schisler

Actually, PWC is an acronym; it stands for Poets and Writers Coalition. The PWC is a group of SJSU students who share a common bond, the love of words and their creative power. The club is open to all students regardless of major, age, or ice cream flavor preference. The group holds regular meetings, sponsors workshops, and puts on various events throughout the year.

Five students and a faculty advisor founded the PWC in the fall semester of 2006. Shannon Bowman, Darrell De La Cruz, Rachael Escamilla, TJ Flores, and Hai Nguyen were the founding members. Alan Soldofsky has been the faculty advisor from the beginning and he still is to this day. This original group saw the need for a creative writing club on campus and decided to solve the problem. These students wanted a place



where they could share their work with a small community of other poets and writers at SJSU. The original purpose of the PWC has held fast over the last two years and the group continues to gain momentum.

TJ Flores currently serves as the President,

Danielle Roberts is the Vice president, and Ivy Parker is the treasurer. The members of the PWC elect the PWC government every winter. Alan Soldofsky continues to be the faculty advisor, last year his efforts were recognized at the Associated Student Awards, he won the title of Best Faculty Advisor. The PWC averages around 15 – 20 active members with many more attending and participating in PWC events. Joining the group is as easy as showing up to one of the regular meetings. Meeting locations and times are listed on the PWC's website, [www.poetsandwriterscoalition.org](http://www.poetsandwriterscoalition.org)

Events, workshops, and other PWC happenings are listed on the website and anybody is able to join the mailing list to receive PWC news hot off the presses. The PWC regularly holds Fiction and Poetry workshops to help its members hone their craft. Poetry readings and open mic nights have also played a central role within the PWC.

During the spring semester of 2008, the PWC was solely responsible for producing the SDepartment of English and Comparative Literature's bi-annual newsletter and mini literary magazine. The PWC tried a different tactic than previous newsletters and mixed news with creative writing. Between the course listings and other important information, there were some amazing pieces of prose and poetry.

Last fall PWC members organized a public reading of Allen Ginsberg's poem "Howl," this event is still considered one of the triumphant PWC sponsored events so far. The reading of "Howl" was the first time he campus hosted an outdoor amplified poetry reading. Last April the

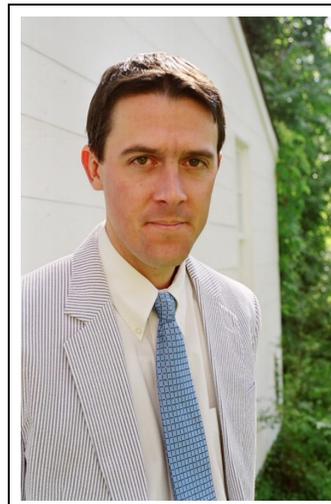
PWC sponsored a Walt Whitman poetry reading that was also successful. One of the major events this semester has been a series of poetry readings entitled "Four Minutes of Mayhem." Each reader is given four minutes to "entice the senses and wreak their havoc." After the scheduled readers pour out their four minutes of mayhem, the mic will be open for all who wish to share.

There are many reasons to join the PWC but the end of the mission statement sums it up best, "In the end, the Poets and Writers Coalition is a place where students can interact with other students. A community where your writing, thoughts, or just your personality have a place to convene with students that possess parallel attributes." ✍



## *Reed Magazine: A Literary Voice for Everyone*

by Mary Boettcher



*Reed Magazine* is a literary journal that contains short stories, essays, artwork, and poetry. When I interviewed Professor Nicholas Taylor, he told me more about the magazine: "It was named *Reed* after a line in a quote by Blaise Pascal: "Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in

nature. But he is a thinking reed..." *Reed Magazine* has been around San Jose State University campus since 1948. Readers all over the country are familiar with the magazine. In San Jose State's history, the magazine was also called *The Quill* and *The Normal Pennant*. It is published once a year, and it comes out in the month of April.

Students receive a copy of the magazine to use in English 133, the *Reed Magazine* class, which is worth three units. They use the older copy to get ideas from the

previous class on how to produce the newer edition of the magazine. Students can take this class for two semesters, and the best part of this class is that students do not need any special requirements, classes, or experience before taking it. Students get to do lots of fun and interesting things in the *Reed Magazine* classroom.

When I interviewed Dr. Taylor, who often goes by Nick, it was a great experience for me. He is in charge of putting the *Reed Magazine* together and has been teaching the *Reed Magazine* class for two years. He told me many interesting things that students get to do when they are in the class, like how he and Anthony Wai, a graduate student in creative writing, got to meet the amazing author R.L. Stine during a summer interview. Taylor also gave me some good information about where I could find older issues of the *Reed Magazine*: If students want to read more of the older versions of the magazine, they can go to the 5th floor Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.

One way students can submit their writing to the magazine is by going to the *Reed Magazine* website. They can send poems, short stories, essays, or artwork to [www.reedmag.org](http://www.reedmag.org). The submission dates are the same every year: June 1<sup>st</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup>. The submission date for the 2009 magazine deadline is already over, but you can submit work starting June 1<sup>st</sup> for the 2010 issue.

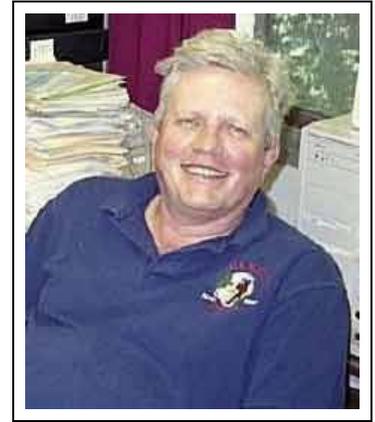
Students don't be shy! Submit your creative writings for the 2010 issue of the *Reed Magazine*! The April 2008 issue of *Reed Magazine* is already out and you can pick up a copy at Spartan Bookstore, Robert's Bookstore, or Willow Glen Books for \$5. Make sure that next year you pick up the 2009 issue of the magazine, which will mention R.L. Stine, the author of the *Goosebumps* series. Don't miss this great opportunity! ✍



### Chair's Message from John Engell for Fall 2008

The Department is experiencing another semester of record enrollments.

We are teaching approximately 5,600 students; department classes have few empty seats. English 1A and 1B sections are full, as are graduate seminars and most lower-division General Education classes. Enrollments in upper-division courses are strong.



However, there will be a budget cut in spring 2009. At present, I cannot forecast how many fewer sections we will teach, but I'm certain we won't meet demand, especially in composition, given this year's huge freshman class.

Undergraduate majors now have four "tracks" from which to choose: the Literature major (B.A: English), the Single-subject Credential track (B.A.: Preparation for Teaching), the Career Writing track (B.A: Concentration in Career Writing), and the newly approved Creative Writing track (B.A.: Concentration in Creative Writing). Majors and prospective majors interested in the Creative Writing Concentration should consult the Department Website--thanks to Professor Katherine Harris and Hai Nguyen it's one of the best at the university--and speak with either Professor Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing, or anyone else on the Creative Writing faculty. The Creative Writing Concentration also appears in the university's on-line catalog. Many students and faculty are excited about this new concentration; I am, too.

In November, Professor Kelly Harrison is stepping down as Director of the Center for Literary Arts. I thank Kelly for the exceptional job she has done. Thanks, also, to Professor Catherine Gabor and the students of English 129 for producing this Newsletter. Indeed, thanks to all faculty and staff for their hard work

and good will. (transcribed by Mary Boettcher)✍



## Information on the Department of English and Comparative Literature

compiled by Au-co Tran

### What is offered:

English Major  
English Major with a Creative Writing  
Concentration  
English Major with a Career Writing  
Concentration  
English Teacher Credential programs

### Minors:

Literature  
Creative writing  
Comparative Literature  
Professional and Technical Writing Career

### Masters:

Masters of Arts in Literature  
Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing

### Contact Info.

John Engell, **Chair**  
Phone: (408) 924-4499  
john.engell@sjsu.edu  
Faculty Offices 102

### Department of English and Comparative Literature

Phone: (408) 924-4425  
Fax: (408) 924-4580  
english@sjsu.edu  
Faculty Offices 102  
One Washington Square  
San José, California, USA, 95192-0090



Susan Shillinglaw, **Major Advisor**  
Faculty Offices 118  
408-924-4487  
Susan.Shillinglaw@sjsu.edu

Persis Karim, **Major Advisor**  
Faculty Offices 216  
408-924-4476  
pkarim@email.sjsu.edu

### Mary Warner, **Director of the English Credential Program**

Faculty Offices 127  
(408) 924-4417  
mwarner@email.sjsu.edu

### Jonathan Lovell, **Associate Director of the English Credential Program**

Faculty Offices 127  
(408) 924-4437  
jlovell@email.sjsu.edu

### Andrew Fleck, **Honors Coordinator**

Faculty Offices 111  
408-924-4457  
afleck@email.sjsu.edu

### A. Noelle Brada-Williams, **MA Graduate Coordinator**

(408) 924-4439  
Faculty Offices 110  
awilli@email.sjsu.edu

### Alan Soldofsky, **Director of Creative Writing & MFA**

(408) 924-4432  
Faculty Offices 106  
soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu

### Locations

The Writing Center is  
on the first floor, Suite  
126.

The Department of  
English and  
Comparative  
Literature Lounge is  
in the Faculty Building.  
The Lounge is Room  
113, open to all  
English majors for  
relaxation and reading. ✍

