



Poets and Writers Coalition Press

Presents

The English Department  
Newsletter:

a report...sort of

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# Editor's Note

Many of you are familiar with the undergraduate newsletters that the English Department publishes and distributes after the middle of each term. Not only do they contain articles and a message from the Department Chair, but also course descriptions for classes scheduled in the following semester. These newsletters are usually produced by students in English 129, an upper-division course that introduces students to various forms of professional writing. Unfortunately, this class has been canceled this semester due to low enrollment. As a result, the students of the Poets and Writers Coalition have undertaken producing the newsletter for the Spring 2008 term.

The Poets and Writers Coalition was formed through a vision of opportunity and unity that started with Rachelle Escamilla. As an undergraduate English major, Rachelle felt there to be a disconnection between students and the English Department. This disconnection is due in part to the nature of our institution: as a commuter school, students are unable to stay on campus after classes end for the day for many reasons. However, Rachelle felt that regardless of the reasons, a community of students could thrive and grow on the SJSU campus as writers and friends.

I was elated to discover that the Poets and Writers Coalition was given the opportunity to produce a newsletter for the English & Comparative Literature Department. Not only are we giving back to the Department that supports our fledgling organization, but we hope that this newsletter will inspire students to become aware of the opportunities that are available to them outside of the classroom. Although our humble newsletter may only appear this semester under the official sanction of the Department, we hope that you enjoy the first issue of the Poets and Writers Coalition Press.

I would like to take a moment to thank the entire faculty and staff of the English Department for their continued support of students within our institution. Specifically, I would like to thank Dr. John Engell for his unwavering support, Professor Alan Soldofsky for his continued guidance of our organization, Dr. Bonita M. Cox for her straightforward advice, and Cookie Galvan for the resources that made this newsletter possible.

I would also like to personally thank Dr. Persis Karim and Dr. Katherine D. Harris for the many hours I spent in their offices during the last two years that helped me learn and grow.

*Hai Nguyen*

# On Sins and Salvation

James Phelan Award 2007

by Rachelle Escamilla

She cannot hide  
the dime-sized marks on her upturned palms.  
She nervously slides her hands  
down her pant leg catching torn flaps of skin  
against the grain of her jeans; constructing petite worlds  
of blood, flesh, and blue.

There are men  
Who have stumbled out her door in the  
Saturday morning sun. Blinded by the yellow rays  
they cannot see the dots of brown encrusted on their  
shirts. She watches as they call a cab the cotton  
tee taught in places where clots have caught thread.

Sunday she redeems  
herself on the steps of the Sacred Heart.  
they have reserved her spot in the back row,  
closest to the confessional.  
She drags her hands across the screen  
and shows the priest her scars.

If one Sunday  
You find the trail of her small beads of blue,  
step into the Sacred Heart and sit in the  
front pew. Soon enough you'll see her slip  
a dollar to the church, she'll pick a candle, light  
a cross, lips moving in familiar verse.

But remove your  
eyes from her a second, and you will surely  
miss, her palms down turned onto a flame  
she'll dip them deep and wince in pain  
her marks sealing like lips to a kiss.



## CONNECT ONLINE



[Http://www.poetsandwriterscoalition.org](http://www.poetsandwriterscoalition.org)

## Literary Rock Stars!

No, we aren't talking about Pamela Anderson's new book about being blonde and all of its perks! As students, we tend to take for granted the infinite knowledge that is handed to us by professors who are experts in their field: English. However, did you know that many members of our faculty have published work? On top of preparing for classes, many instructors work on publishing materials within their field of specialization. Here is a list of some of our own literary rock stars:

Noelle Brada-Williams

- *Crossing Oceans: Reconfiguring American Literary Studies in the Pacific Rim*

Paul Douglass

- *The Whole Disgraceful Truth: Selected Letters of Lady Caroline Lamb*

Karen English

- *Notes of Conversations, 1848-1875*

Kate Evans

- *Like All We Love (poems)*

Katherine D. Harris

- *Forget Me Not: A Hypertextual Archive of Ackermann's 19th-Century Literary Annual*

Revathi Krishnaswamy

- *Postcolonial and the Global*

*Edited by Revathi Krishnaswamy, John C. Hawley*

Samuel Maio

- *Creating Another Self: Voice in Modern American Personal Poetry*

- *The Burning of Los Angeles*

Cathleen Miller

- *The Birdhouse Chronicles: Surviving the Joys of Country Life*

Neli Moody

- *After Altamira: Poems by Neli Moody*

Scott Rice

- *It Was a Dark and Stormy Night: The Second Coming*

Susan Shillinglaw

- *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*

Mary Warner

- *Adolescents in the Search for Meaning: Tapping the Powerful Resource of Story*

## Steinbeck Fellows:

Lysley Tenorio earned his MFA from the University of Oregon, and has published stories in *The Atlantic*, *Ploughshares*, *Manoa*, and *The Chicago Tribune*. A former Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University, he has also received fellowships from the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Phillips Exeter Academy, Yaddo, and The MacDowell Colony. His work has also been included in the *Best New American Voices* and *Pushcart Prize* Anthologies. He is currently working on a collection of short stories tentatively titled *Monstress*.

Peter Nathaniel Malae is the author of the story collection, *Teach the Free Man*, a 2007 Notable Book selection by the Story Prize and is currently a finalist for the New York Public Library's Young Lions Award. His prose and poetry have appeared in the *Missouri Review*, *Southwest Review*, *Witness*, *ZYZZYVA*, *Best American Mysteries* (2003), and *Best American Essays* (2004). In fall 2007 he received the Joseph Henry Jackson Award from the San Francisco Intersection for the Arts for the manuscript of his novel, *What We Are*. He is working on a second novel and story collection during his current tenure as a Steinbeck Fellow.

Dan White is completing his MFA from Columbia University this year. A veteran journalist, his articles and essays have appeared in numerous newspapers, magazines and journals, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, and *Backpacker Magazine*. His book titled *The Cactus Eaters*, which incorporates natural history and biographical sketches of Western explorers, outlaws and pioneers with his 2,650-mile walk from Mexico to Canada, will be published by HarperCollins in 2008.

For more information about SJSU's English Department Faculty and their publications, please see our website: [www.sjsu.edu/english](http://www.sjsu.edu/english)

# The Slope of Novelty

by Ted Suzan

You are Frank Gibbons Smelltruck, the new name you have given yourself this very day. You get on to the ski lift next to a young woman. "We're going to ski down a mountain!" you say to her really loud after having had four cups of coffee. "Yes we are," she replies with meek sarcasm. But, you are not discouraged.

"I should very much like to go up this mountain in this ski lift, and then go down this mountain on my skis," you say while still stuck in obvious-statement mode. She giggles this time, and says "Well, I think that's the very thing we're here for, isn't it?" You would normally laugh along with her, but since it is novelty day, you ignore the impulse. Instead, you rock the dangling chair as it moves up the slope, and sing a song about tax-evasion, furniture, and hard candy that you are making up as you go.

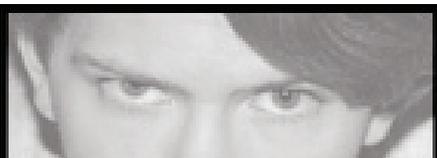
(Oh! You can already feel the sensation of novelty being worked up inside you!)

You decide that it might be exciting to talk to the girl again: "How y'all doin' today?," you ask her in a Southern accent. She is still laughing nervously because of your recent antics, but she responds with a "fine." You see the landing station close up ahead, so you decide to cut things short; "You know, even though I am a man, and even though you are very pretty, I am, nevertheless, much prettier than you," you say just before you jump off of the chair, still at least 20 feet from the landing site.

("Oh, the novelty of telling her that!," you think as you fall.)

After you have traveled the fifteen-feet down through the air that this act has cost you, you recover from the fall. Amazingly, both your skies are still on. Now, you are free to search your pockets. Ah, there it is! You pull out the zip-lock bag of Emperor penguin meat, and shove a cold blubbery handful into your mouth. "I have always wanted to try penguin meat!," you cry. "This is wonderful!" Even though it tastes horrible, the novelty of it is almost enough to bring you to tears of joy.

(You think that this may turn out to be the best novelty day, ever.)



## **CONNECT ONLINE**

"The Slope of Novelty"  
narrated by Ted Suzan  
himself at:

[http://youtube.com/  
watch?v=SDCsdNS2UIE](http://youtube.com/watch?v=SDCsdNS2UIE)

From another pocket, you now pull out a math problem written on a scrap of paper. You read the problem, and begin skiing down the slope, not allowing your self to look up from the problem until you have solved it. The answer is 4, but it took you so long to figure it out that when you finally look up there is nothing you can do to avoid hitting a large semi-padded pole.

(Skiing blind certainly held some novelty for you, didn't it?)

When you recover your senses, you realize that you are probably hurt, but it's novelty day; so, you judge it worth the pain. Eventually, when you finally grow bored of lying there and thinking about your own pain, you look up to see a man, standing on the side of the ski run, yelling at a little boy. He is probably a father teaching his son to ski. You get up and hobble over to them. Since you are staring at them now and are in close proximity, the man asks you what you are doing. However, you ignore him and address the child: "Are you just gonn'a let him talk to you that way?" you ask. Then you face the man. "You don't know who you're yelling at buddy; I've seen this guy go, and when he starts, he don't stop. You better shut your mouth before he kicks your ass," you tell him.

(However, at this point you feel that the level of novelty may be getting too high, even for novelty day.)

So, you quickly turn around and ski away. As you look back, you see the man slap the child, and you feel bad for what you've done. You try to top off your novel ride by skiing erratically and going off of every jump, but it isn't nearly as much fun now that you feel bad about the slapped child. At the end of the slope, you take off your ski boots, get in your car, and drive home to your boring life.

(Oh well, there's always novelty day next year.)

# Scholarship or Die

by Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian

Mama always said you were talented, now it's time to show the rest of the world. The English Department at San José State University offers a variety of scholarships that recognize student achievement. With over \$10,000 awarded among all of the scholarships, you might just find yourself eating something other than top ramen and peanut butter next semester.

Scholarships for Which Students Apply:

The Bonita M. Cox Award for Classical & Medieval Studies is awarded to the author of the best essay written by a San José State University student about the classical or medieval roots of modern thought. Juniors, seniors, and graduate students matriculated for six or more semester hours of course work at San José State University during Spring 2008 are eligible to enter.

The Bonita M. Cox Award for Studies in Medieval Literature is a \$500 scholarship awarded to the author of the best essay written by a San José State University student on a medieval literary work or theme. Juniors, seniors, and graduate students matriculated for six or more semester hours of course work at San José State University during Spring 2008 are eligible to enter.

The Bonita M. Cox Award for Creative Nonfiction is a \$300 scholarship awarded to the author of the best essay of no more than 2,500 words in any of the following genres: travel or science literature, memoirs, vignettes, profiles or literary reviews. Only regularly matriculated undergraduate or graduate students who are carrying six or more semester units at San José State University during Spring 2008 and who have completed a minimum of 24 units are eligible to enter.

The Lois King Thore Short Story Scholarship is awarded to the English Major who shows the most promise in short story writing. Applicants must be currently enrolled students at San José State University. Submissions must include two copies of the application form along with two copies for each of the following: a brief statement of eligibility and a sample of the applicant's best short story work.

The James O. Wood Shakespeare Award is a \$1,500 scholarship awarded for the best essay, reading, scene representation, musical presentation, costume, painting, sculpture, or other appropriate project related to any of Shakespeare's dramatic works. Submissions must include the application form and a brief statement of interest.

The Academy of American Poets / Virginia de Araujo Prize is a contest judged by a distinguished poet not affiliated with San José State University. Any undergraduate or graduate student taking at least six units of course work in a degree program is eligible to enter. Recipients of previous years' prizes are not eligible to enter. Submissions must include an application form and three copies of each poem submitted. Up to three poems limited to 150 lines total may be submitted. Applicants must print the last four digits of their social security number at the right-hand corner of each page. Names should not appear on the submission itself or the entry will be deemed ineligible. The winner will be awarded a cash prize of \$100. If two winners are selected, there will be two \$50 prizes awarded. Second and third place winners will receive certificates of honor.

The Marjorie McLaughlin Folendorf Award for Creative Writing is a \$500 scholarship awarded for outstanding achievement in creative writing. Applicants must have completed at least 24 units at SJSU. Submissions must include two copies of the applicant form and two copies of the following: a brief statement of eligibility and a sample of the applicant's best creative work.

There are several categories for the James Phelan Literary Awards. Undergraduate and graduate winners are selected in metrical verse (under 30 lines), metrical verse (over 30 lines), free verse (under 30 lines), free verse (over 30 lines), short story (under 2,000 words), short story (over 2,000 words), familiar essay / critical essay, and humor and satire. Submissions must include an application form and three copies of each entry. Each page must include the applicant's student ID number and Phelan Award category to which they are submitting.

## Awards by Faculty Nomination:

The Harvey Birenbaum Prize For Excellence in the Graduate Study of Literature is awarded for outstanding scholarly achievement to a graduate student in English & Comparative Literature.

The Josephine Chandler Scholarship is awarded for academic excellence and a commitment to the study of the humanities. Students must submit a one-page statement discussing the importance of the humanities to modern life. Recipients must have a minimum grade point average of 3.5 and be majoring in an academic program in one of the following departments: English, Foreign Languages, Humanities, Philosophy, or Linguistics & Language Development.

The Courtney E. Cox Chaucer Prize is awarded for Outstanding Scholastic Achievement in Chaucer or Middle English. Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students are eligible.

The Roberta Holloway Undergraduate Award is awarded for outstanding scholastic achievement as an undergraduate major in English.

The Shirley Nelson Iverson Scholarship for New Freshmen is awarded to a freshman English major who intends to become a high school teacher. The Dorrit Sibley Award is awarded for outstanding achievement in the writing and study of poetry,

The Mara Steffey Graduate Award is awarded for scholarly, artistic, or professional accomplishment by a graduate student in English.

The Shelby A. Sweeney Beowulf Prize is awarded for outstanding achievement in studying the language of Beowulf or Old English. Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible.

The Catherine Urban Scholarships are awarded to junior and senior students displaying academic promise in writing, as indicated by papers written in upper-division English classes. Students must be declared majors attending college at least half-time with an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 both overall and in the major.

The Dorothy Wright Children's Literature Award is awarded for outstanding scholarship in Children's Literature by an undergraduate English major.

If you have any questions regarding awards and scholarships, please contact the English Department at: (408) 924-4425.

## **CONNECT ONLINE**

### SJSU ENGLISH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE

[Http://www.sjsu.edu/english](http://www.sjsu.edu/english)

### AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

[Http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/scholarship/](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/scholarship/)

# Whitmaniacs

by D. E. Kern

Ask a member of the Poets and Writers Coalition the direction Walt Whitman's beard points and you're likely to be sent to Caret Plaza, the sight of a marathon reading of the good gray poet's masterpiece "Song of Myself" slated for 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23.

The oftentimes shaded spot just south of the campus-side entrance to the Martin Luther King Jr. Library should serve as the perfect backdrop for the performance of what's likely the most-identifiable piece from Whitman's lingering love letter to 19th century America *Leaves of Grass*.

The reading, which is actually a relay rather than a marathon, will feature 35 volunteer readers dubbed "the Whitmaniacs" by PWC President T.J. Flores. The group includes undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, retired faculty, librarians, and university fellows associated with the Department of English and Comparative Literature.

"It was a suggestion after 'Howl' (which PWC members read as part of their remembrance of Banned Books Week) went so well," Flores said of the organization's decision to tackle "Song of Myself".

"It's kind of like the mountain that's out there," he added. "The mountain is there; we shall climb it."

The Whitman reading is the apex of a day dedicated to San Jose State's poetic legacy. After an event held last April 23 to celebrate that legacy turned out to be a rousing success, the Academic Senate passed a measure calling for an annual celebration of poetry to be held as nearly as possible to April 23, the birthday of noted San Jose poet Edwin Markham.

This year's edition of the event starts at 11:45 a.m. with comments from Dr. Carmen Sigler, the university's provost and vice president for academic affairs. Shortly thereafter, a selection of individuals will present selected poems from the legacy, including the works of Markham, who is best known for his 1899 poem "The Man with the Hoe." Also featured will be poems by Henry Meade Bland, the one-time California Poet Laureate who taught at the school from 1899-1931 and played an integral role in launching student organizations such as the Browning Literary Club.

Following the reading of the legacy poems, employees and emeritus faculty will present a sampling of their works beginning at 12:15.

They will warm the stage for a half-hour presentation by student poets at 12:30.

The Legacy of Poetry event happens to coincide with Sustainability/Earth Day Week and representatives from the City of San Jose will have been invited to learn more about how poetry celebrates and encourages "green" environmentalist values and concepts.

Perhaps no American poem does that more than “Song of Myself,” which first appeared in 1855 as part of the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. The poem, not to mention the larger collection, draws deeply from the Transcendentalist movement and reads as a celebration of both the body and the material world.

The tendency for that celebration to play itself out in sexual imagery led to a great deal of furor over Whitman’s work. He lost a job at the Department of the Interior when its secretary, James Harlan, read *Leaves of Grass* and found it to be pornographic. Whitman biographer James E. Miller Jr. adds that the poet John Greenleaf Whittier is rumored to have tossed his copy in the fire.

Despite changing social mores, the view that Whitman’s work crossed into the realm of impropriety lingered as the poet revised his masterwork over the course of nine editions and nearly 40 years.

The Poets and Writers Coalition will present “Song of Myself” in its entirety, uncut and without edits.

## For Ringo

by T. J. Flores

There’s something golden in trains  
but old men are the only little ones  
still playing except for little boys with  
redtoxic trains from China.

Abraham Lincoln, you’re so good to me  
I’ll rub your face off,  
polish the columns on your backside.

Liberty points the way to  
scrape the black off, so I know your Roman  
architecture shines, worth next to nothing  
except for a black plastic locomotive.

There’s something golden in pennies  
when they bring the train tracks back to life.  
Like I rub away penny dust & coal soot  
from my fingers, there’s a tension  
you rub away, Abe.

I scrape those bars away,  
then your tufted  
chin bowtie nose the ear  
those mutton chops. I found your ear,  
Abraham, pushing your face  
to the train tracks.

This is the art of conduction.

**PWC LIVE SISU POETRY DAY PWC LIVE**

TJ HSRES RACHELLE ESCAMILLA KATHLEEN LYNCH ALAN SOLDOSFSKY DAN WHITE PETER NATHANIEL MALAE

**WALT WHITMAN'S "SONG OF MYSELF" APRIL 23RD, 2008**

PETER BOSEL NITZA AGAM MICHAEL SCHAUF GOODWIN EVELYN SO NELI MOODY PERSIS KARIM JERRY DYER FRANK PEÑONES NILS PETERSSON DANDIGGITY LE SALLY ASHTON MARK HEINLEIN INDA LAPPIN TED COX CHARLES MCLEOD PAUL DOUGLASS DIANE WHITE

PENNIS RICHARDSON TRESHA HAEFRER MADISON BREWER HARRY MESERVE CHRISTINE RICHARDSON BRIAN SMITH ANNETTE NELLEN TIFFANY ALTON KAREN ENGLISH DIANE WHITE JENNY LUU

**MIK LIBRARY CARET PLAZA 1:30 PM**

# “Song of Myself” Readers List

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| T.J. Flores        |                       |
| Rachelle Escamilla |                       |
| Alan Soldofsky     | Neli Moody            |
| Kathleen Lynch     | Paul Douglass         |
| Dandiggity Le      | Dan White             |
| Peter Bosel        | Peter Nathaniel Malae |
| Annette Nellen     | Nils Peterson         |
| Sally Ashton       | Tresha Haefrer        |
| Mark Heinlein      | Madison Brewer        |
| Frank Peñones      | Jenny Luu             |
| Dave Kern          | Persis Karim          |
| Brian Smith        | Jerry Dyer            |
| Ted Cox            | Dennis Richardson     |
| Nitza Agam         | Christine Richardson  |
| Michael Schauf     | Harry Meserve         |
| Max Goodwin        | Linda Lappin          |
| Evelyn So          | Charles McLeod        |
| Neli Moody         | Tiffany Alton         |
|                    | Karen English         |
|                    | Diane White           |



# The New Face of Reed

by Sarah Armes

*Reed Magazine*, one of the oldest student publications on the West Coast, has been a traditional feature of the English department for quite some time. Yet if you ask any SJSU student, and probably most English majors, if they have ever read *Reed*, chances are you will get a blank stare in return. Students, if they even know about the magazine, simply haven't bothered to pick up an issue and read what they generally presume is just amateur work collected by students who are only trying to get a passing grade in their English 133 class.

This is about to change.

In Fall 2007, the English 133 students and Nick Taylor, the new faculty advisor, began work on the Spring 2008 issue. They analyzed previous issues, as well as other literary magazines, and developed a plan for improvement. This included the quality of the fiction and poetry, the nonfiction portion of the magazine, layout, and the website. Students logged many hours reading through hundreds of submissions, soliciting pieces, and piecing together what will be a strong issue that sets the course *Reed Magazine* will follow in the future.

So what is the reader to expect from the Spring 2008 issue of *Reed*, which will be released on April 28? "This year we have strengthened the nonfiction section of the magazine," says Nick Taylor, "including interviews with fiction writers George Saunders and Dorothy Allison." A new feature introduced in this issue is an effort to work with a resource available at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library called Treasures from the Archive. Using this resource, a person can search through the special collections archive at the library to write a piece on something significant that they find. This issue will feature this year's winning essay about a failed collaboration between author John Steinbeck and songwriters Rogers and Hammerstein. In the poetry and fiction sections, the *Reed* staff has worked very hard to make sure they picked only the best pieces. Other improvements include a better layout and more revenue from ad sales, allowing *Reed* to significantly increase the page count. "The 2008 issue will do wonders to improve our image" says Taylor.

This is only the beginning for what has been named the new face of *Reed*. "We made strides this year to improve the quality of work appearing in *Reed*, but I want to improve it even more in 2009," says Taylor. The students have developed a new website ([www.reedmag.org](http://www.reedmag.org)) and will be taking online submissions starting in June in hopes that the switch to a digital format will increase the amount of submissions. "We know from talking to colleagues at other journals that this will increase the number (but not necessarily the quality) of submissions," admits Taylor. "So I plan to promote *Reed* as widely as possible to encourage top writers and artists to submit their work."

With all of these improvements, Taylor and the student staff are hoping to show readers that San Jose is linked to the literary community. "I hope SJSU students and San Joseans in general will feel a sense of community pride when they read *Reed*," says Taylor. "This is our literary magazine - edited and published right here on campus by SJSU students."

The new issue will be released at the *Reed* rollout party on April 21st at 4pm in the Spartan Memorial Chapel. At this semiformal event, there will be guest readers, food, and issues of Reed on sale.

Reed will be accepting submissions for the 2009 issue from June 1st to November 1st online at [www.reedmag.org](http://www.reedmag.org). *Reed Magazine* will accept poetry (3-5 poems), fiction (up to 6,000 words), non-fiction (up to 5,000 words), and art (any digital format).

## PWC Inaugurates the Favorite Poem Project

by Ted Cox

The Favorite Poems Project spearheaded by San Jose State's Poets and Writers Coalition (PWC), is meant to showcase the role that poetry plays in the lives of students, faculty, staff, and alumni of San Jose State University. Not just in the lives of English Majors, but in the lives of everyone connected to our community. The project was originally conceived by Robert Pinsky while he served as the 39th Poet Laureate of the United States. Shortly after the Library of Congress appointed Pinsky to the post in 1997, he held a year-long open call for submissions, during which time more than 18,000 Americans submitted their own favorite poems.

The original Favorite Poems Project has released several anthologies where people from ages five to ninety-seven have shared the poems most important to them. PBS' News Hour also featured everyday Americans from all walks of life and diverse backgrounds reading and talking about their favorite poems on video.

Pinsky recently visited Stanford University, where he gave a talk about the rewarding experience he has had with the project. He also invited those in attendance to start their own local versions of the project so that local South Bay communities could showcase the role that poetry plays in their lives.

Professor Alan Soldofsky, director of San Jose State's Master of Fine Arts Program in Creative Writing, took the idea to heart and challenged the PWC to bring the project to SJSU.

"The project will demonstrate the degree to which the SJSU community is touched by poetry and the poems that people in our community have come to love," Professor Soldofsky said.

The PWC was eager to take on the challenge. Organized in 2006, the PWC quickly became a major player in San Jose's poetry community. PWC co-founders Rachelle Escamilla and Darrell Dela Cruz have from its inception coordinated SJSU's Favorite Poem Project.

“Our goal is to collect favorite poems from everyone: faculty, staff, students, janitors, police officers, leaders in the student body, even members of the Dean’s office,” she said. Escamilla hopes to draw on the culturally diverse population for their submissions. She believes the project will show that “poetry and the literary arts are alive in this country, in every race, in every socio-economic subdivide, everywhere.”

The Favorite Poems Project will also give the organizers some real-world experience. “This project gives the student members of the PWC a chance to utilize their in-class-learned skills,” said Escamilla. “Marketing, public relations, event coordinating, presentation, public speaking, persuasive advertisement, and so on.”

The FPP will begin as an online collection of poems on [www.pwcfavoritepoem.org](http://www.pwcfavoritepoem.org). On April 26th, 2008, the PWC will host a campus-wide reading where selected poems will be read live by the students, faculty, staff, and alumni who submitted them. The reading will take place on-campus and will include a live jazz band, refreshments, and a book fair. Featured poets at the reading will include SJSU faculty members Samuel Maio and Neli Moody (a recent SJSU MFA graduate), and award-winning alumni poets Sally Ashton and Kathleen Lynch.

Beyond the FPP reading, the PWC hopes to expand the project’s scope and looks forward to receiving submissions from faculty members from many disciplines and departments, and from prominent alumni including local business and government leaders.

Professor Soldofsky plans to involve the school’s multimedia resources as the project grows. “Ultimately, with the help of video producers on our campus, we will ask a number of the people who submitted favorite poems for the project to read and talk about the poem they selected on camera,” said Professor Soldofsky. “And we will in the future produce a number of short videos of readings of these poems, by the people who selected them.”

Peter Bosel, a founding member of the PWC and graduate student in Physics, is excited about what the Favorite Poems Project can do for poetry in the community. “Right now, reading and writing poetry is a private exercise; it’s everyone’s dirty little secret,” he said. “This project helps to bring poetry to a more public consciousness. We need to come out of the poetry closet.”

People who wish to submit poems should visit [www.pwcfavoritepoem.org](http://www.pwcfavoritepoem.org). To be eligible for consideration, poems must be written by someone other than the submitter and be widely-available in print. Foreign language poems are welcome, but must be accompanied by an English translation.

# EXCLUSIVE SNEAK PEEK:

## B.A. IN ENGLISH, CREATIVE WRITING CONCENTRATION

**Prof. Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing**

It's not yet in the SJSU catalog, but I am most pleased to pull back the curtain and give a sneak peak at a new type of English degree: The B.A. in English, with a Creative Concentration.

Administrators in the English & Comparative Literature Department expect the degree to be implemented by the University by Spring 2009. Once the program is officially inaugurated, students currently in the English Major may be able to switch to the English B.A., with a Creative Writing Concentration before they graduate. Those who want more information about the degree should contact me at [soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu).

### CREATIVE WRITING CONCENTRATION

#### PRE-REQUISITE:

ENGL 71 - Intro to Creative Writing (3)

### CREATIVE WRITING CONCENTRATION WRITING

#### REQUIREMENTS:

15 Units of Creative Writing

Choice of:

ENGL 105 - Advanced Composition (3)

ENGL 130 - Fiction Writing (3)

(repeatable up to 3 times)

ENGL 131 - Poetry Writing (3)

(repeatable up to 3 times)

ENGL 133 - REED Magazine (3)

(repeatable 2 times)

ENGL 134 - Speechwriting (3)

ENGL 135 - Creative Nonfiction Writing (3)

(repeatable up to 3 times)

**TOTAL: 15 UNITS IN WRITING**

### A. Core Shared with the General English Major:

ENGL 56A - Survey of English Lit

ENGL 68A - Survey of American Lit

ENGL 100W - Writing Workshop (Expository Writing for English Majors)

ENGL 102 - History of Eng Lang, or ENGL 103 - Modern English

ENGL 122 - Comp Lit, or 123 A, B, C, or D Global Lit or 125A - Homer to Dante

ENGL 144 - Shakespeare or ENGL 145 - Shakespeare and Performance

### B. Core Course For CW Concentration

ENGL 139 - Living Writers (Concurrent with the Center for Literary Arts)

### C. New Capstone Core Course for CW Concentration

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

**TOTAL CORE: 24 UNITS**

### CREATIVE WRITING CONCENTRATION LITERATURE REQUIREMENTS:

6 Units of American Literature

Choice of:

ENGL 161 - American Literature to 1830 (3)

ENGL 162 - American Literature: 1830-1865 (3)

ENGL 163 - American Literature: 1865-1910 (3)

ENGL 164 - American Literature -1910-1945 (3)

ENGL 165 - Topics in Ethnic American Literature (3)

ENGL 166 - American Literature Since 1945 (3)

ENGL 167 - Steinbeck (3)

ENGL 168 - The American Novel (3)

ENGL 169 - Ethnicity in American Literature (3)

ENGL 176 - The Short Story (3)

3 Units of British Literature since 1800

Choice of:

ENGL 149 - The Romantic Period (3)

ENGL 150 - The Victorian Age (3)

ENGL 151 - Twentieth Century Poetry (3)

ENGL 153A - Eighteenth Century British Novel (3)

ENGL 153B - Nineteenth Century British Novel (3)

ENGL 154 - British and Irish Fiction Since 1900 (3)

ENGL 177 - Twentieth Century Fiction (3)

**TOTAL: 9 UNITS IN LITERATURE**

**TOTAL REQUIRED UNITS IN ENGLISH: 48**

When the new degree is officially implemented, English Department Chair, Dr. John Engell and I will make an official announcement on the English & Comparative Literature Web site. The Creative Writing Concentration calls for the Department to schedule two new courses, ENGL 139: Living Writers, and ENGL 193C: Capstone Seminar: Creative Writing and Self-Reflection, which we hope to find a place for once per year in the course rotation schedule.

As Director of Creative Writing, I look forward to the increased role Creative Writing will play in the programs of the English Department.

# LOST AND FOUND

by Rachelle Escamilla

Where are you Walt Whitman!  
I weave through the streets of  
downtown San Jose in  
squishy weather there are  
no leaves here, no grass here  
on the Santa Clara.

Where are you Walt Whitman!  
I've only, once, asked a  
woman to follow me  
into the washroom of  
a tikki-clad bar - asked  
her to stick one heel on  
a stool, and the other  
on the pineapple tart  
tile (Walt, would you have watched?)

Where are you Walt Whitman!  
The bag boys are all in  
tact! They stand on ladders  
extended and reaching  
to place red bulbs on the  
black gutters glittering  
with rain water, against  
the white wall. I can stand  
beneath their bulges and  
look up at rung-framed mid-  
sections before rushing  
inside Zanotto's to  
buy two, brass avocados.

I can't find god in the  
faces of the little  
girls with the little boys  
hoisted on hips. Where are  
you Walt Whitman in this  
starry sky? for San Jose's sake  
I look towards the night.

# TURKEY DAY

by Peter Bosel

You'll bring hummus, a smile,  
and green bean casserole.  
Potatoes and cantaloupes  
await your approval. Gravy  
spills over a lukewarm stove.  
I peer into the bird crisping  
in the oven. I poke the beast  
with a fork and juices burst  
from the skin like an oil well.

Apple cider is served  
in champagne glasses and we give  
thanks and continue eating  
turkey and cranberry sauce.  
Mehdi Shahbazi is dead.  
There is nothing to remind us.

# Latent Prints

by Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian

I try to remove my finger  
prints but they are every  
where and invisible  
dammit.

The evidence is cataloged  
and stacked against me  
like pennies on a countertop.

Once again my body betrays  
me. Even my DNA can't be trusted.

I will be hung by a double helix.

# Fly Fishing

by Tommy Mouton

Wading the coldest California  
Stream, a mile up somewhere  
East of Marysville in the Sierras,  
I have yet to come into my own  
As a fly fisherman. Flick the wrist,  
Fly, flick the wrist, fly, does not  
Work for me.

I have left my Louisiana cane pole  
Behind the swamps and bayous,  
Catfish, the thrashing gator we caught  
That one day with a jumble of turkey  
Necks, a hook, and taut string,  
Roped to the bridge's rail  
Ties, until he tired and fought less.  
There is no violent thrashing here,  
No boys' laughter, no gator, no old  
Man and his twenty-two pointing,  
Firing, making a perfect peephole  
Between the animal's eyes before it  
could blink, dead.

Here, while the others have gone  
Up stream to find their spot,  
I have found mine pole at my side,  
Atop this perfect boulder.  
Yes, I'd rather sit here on this aged  
Mass and study these granite walls,  
The ponderosa and jeffrey, spruce,  
The red tail hawk, there, circling,  
Yelling hoarsely into the day. I'd  
rather

Make words marry them all, recall  
The mind's ponderings, here, this new  
World of mine the sights and sounds,  
Not as a poet does, but as a man that  
has,  
For the first time, tasted the sweetest  
Fruit from a tree too long denied him.  
How cold to my lips are these waters?  
I ask myself, climbing down from my  
Spot to taste them.

The lips tremble as my cupped hand  
moves toward my mouth, moves happily  
As that black bear does up that pine,  
Far less violent than the gator that  
day,  
Far less cold than these my young lips.

## Upcoming Events

<b>Poets and Writers Coalition: Fiction Workshop</b> Thu, Apr 17, 3pm – 5pm Clark Hall Room 100G
<b>Nick Taylor Reading</b> Thu, Apr 17, 7:30pm – 10:00pm Kepler's: 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park CA, 94025
<b>Release Party: REED MAGAZINE</b> Mon, Apr 21, 4pm – 6pm Spartan Memorial Chapel
<b>SJSU Legacy of Poetry Day</b> Wed, Apr 23, 11:30am – 12:45pm Caret Plaza (MLK student entrance)
<b>PWC Walt Whitman: Live &amp; Uncut</b> Wed, Apr 23, 1:30pm – God knows Caret Plaza (MLK student entrance)
<b>Poets and Writers Coalition: Poetry Workshop</b> Race & Ethnicity Workshop Thu, April 24, 2008 Fishbowl Meeting Rooms, Clark Hall
<b>PWC Favorite Poem Project: The Reading</b> Sat, Apr 26, 2pm – 5pm Spartan Memorial Chapel
<b>Department Awards and Scholarship Ceremony</b> Fri, May 2, 1:30 – 3pm WSQ 207
<b>Poetry Reading @ Willow Glen Books featuring Rachelle L. Escamilla</b> Thu, May 8, 7:00 PM 1330 Lincoln Ave. San Jose, CA 95125
<b>SJSU English Department Graduation Celebration</b> Thu, May 22, 4:00pm – 5:30pm University Room Lawn

[Http://www.sjsu.edu/english/events](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/events)

# The Obsessions of Our Age Blues

by Brian L. Smith

Internet addiction porn in the eye of a twelve-year old girl who dreams of someday being a star; you choose the tube.

Columbine and Marylin Manson; is the link anymore than a daisy in the chain links us all from meridian zero to full circle?

Television and tele-evangelist hooker street corner money hats broadcast to every corner of the mind-numbed nihilistic searcher for the next religious fix US of A.

How to find the next big sound in corporate studio indie rip-offs to open your mind and lead you to the aisle where they sell the new calorie counting solve-your-whole-diet-problem soda.

You may now kiss the bride.

How to burn bushes and fuel the new hybrid of this and that, stopping the greenhouse cause-and-effect tidal San Francisco nights that are already planned for the next 200 years of civilization migration.

Legalize pot while hitting over the head with anti-tobacco commercial reminders of the same just-say-no grade school dramas that led a generation to try drugs just to stick one to Nancy Reagan.

What the f\*cks up!

How to be hip without hip under the post-modern word balloon identification of categories that pop when you cook them. Can't eat just one. Mm...mmm good!

War on terror to justify fear of men in strange hats for the case of national security for all of us to eat our Jell-O pudding pops while corporation slaves chew their hunger in countries we can't pronounce because we never turned off the Cosby Show long enough to read past the ingredients on our package of Skittles while we taste the rainbow, chew it, and spit it out whenever it threatens us with more than rap songs, bling bling, and Chinese fast food heart burn on flamboyant sidewalks in the oh-so-PC as long as I got my pension plan, brand name shoes, PS2 city of love.

# Titles are for People with Talent

by Nic

It's like I woke up, without going to sleep  
a defining moment with no definition to be reached.  
I'm the understudy of a man climbing out his shell,  
a man that dwells inside the hell confined within my inner self.  
I was pushed behind the shelf, with the rest of the nonsense  
that threatened the existence of her self absorbed conquest.  
This is not a bomb threat, the detonation is here  
I'm not gone yet, but I will soon disappear.  
I'm damn near, a virtual clone of the former me  
a worn down blackened version of the man I used to be.  
So I now step forth, my back to the opposition  
life altering decisions whizzing by my vision  
optimism low, along with the ability to listen  
freedom from this prison system seems the best position,  
but damn, she's jabbing at my chest with fists full of change  
and my estranged hardened soul seems to ricochet the pain.  
At close range, the casualties are minimal  
and through my daily life cycle, the attempts feel pitiful.  
I'm at a loss, for the first time in my life  
I know what it's like, to hold the handle on the knife  
and every time I thrust forward with the sharpened blade  
I try to remember why the f\*ck I ever stayed  
and played her games, and laid myself to waste,  
let my sanity destruct at a leisurely pace.  
I'm all out of answers, so don't ask.

## GOOD DOG

by Darrell Dela Cruz

The breeze passed through the dandelions. Its children float onto cobwebs which fall apart a second later. The sun beamed to a pond that reflected onto a small two foot house with the name Rizal peeling off the front. He thought this would be a great place to mark his territory. Trotting down, his matted light gray fur collected some of the remnants of dandelions. He shook them off as he reached a patchwork of wooden crisscrosses that surrounded everything. He lifted up his leg and proudly proclaimed, I claim this place in the name of Spain!

"Is that your name?" a hollowed out voice called from the house. This made the light gray dog jump back. He started to exclaim profanities from the bottom of his lungs, but when he heard a whine from the house, he stopped.

"Spain's my name," he replied softly. He edged closer to the house with his head down, "What's your name?"

“My master calls me Rizal,” the voice carried itself with the wind. This made Spain back up.

Master...master...so this place was already taken. The scent of human and dog was faint, but it was still there. He started to back away slowly and yelped when he back legs hit the fence. His gaze turned back. There were miles of his imprints behind him. Claspng his jaw, he focused. Spain made sure his belly was near the ground and crawled forward again.

“Is he a nice master?” Spain asked. A nose popped out from the house.

“Oh he’s the best!” Suddenly the inhabitant’s form appeared in front of him. Rizal stood as tall as the house, just as tall as Spain. Tangled brown fur dangled past his legs which couldn’t hide the ribs sticking out from his skin. Spain thought how alike they were.

The brown tail of Rizal’s started to wag, “sometimes he likes to pat me on the sides,” Rizal’s mouth started to form saliva. Spain jumped on his hind legs when Rizal got close, “sometimes he likes to talk to me and he opens his mouth like this,” Rizal demonstrated by opening his mouth to smile exposing Rizal’s two teeth, “and he calls me good dog good dog good dog,” Rizal’s voice got higher when he repeated good dog, “he’s always happy to see me.”

The human seemed nice. Better than any human he met before. Spain’s tail wagged, “So where is he?”

“Well,” Rizal sat down and titled his head, “one day a big white thing came and picked him up. The big white thing-”

“Did it have black feet?” Spain interjected recognizing what it could be.

“Why yes it did...” Rizal confirmed his suspicions.

“They are usually angry and have big shiny teeth,” Spain thought about how many close encounters he had with those things. His ears pressed onto his forehead.

“Not this one it was bright and it made a nice howl even though it had small teeth it comes frequently to pick up my master and drop him off. The big white thing makes him happy and it should be back soon along with him.”

“So what does he think of other dogs?” Spain blurted out. He closed his mouth after saying that. Again, hope escaped from his mouth and he couldn’t control that.

“Other dogs?” Rizal turned his head and stared straight into Spain’s eyes, “I think he likes them...he has enough love for everyone!”

“Everyone?” Spain’s tattered ears perked.

“Everyone!” Rizal reassured him. Spain’s hair glistened in the sun as gray turned white.

"I guess we'll be living together then," Spain jumped to the conclusion and when he realized his outburst he stepped back a little. Just because Rizal said it would be okay doesn't mean that his master would be okay with him living here as well.

Rizal walked up to Spain and sat beside him, "yeah, it'll be great, huh?"

Spain felt the weight of the other dog fall on top of him, and the warmth of the other dog made him sit straight. He felt the other dog's breath against him and it seemed that Rizal was starting to snore. Spain had to say something, "So where would I sleep?"

Rizal shook his head a little, bumping into Spain, "Oh let me show you around," Rizal ran over to his house, "this is where I sleep, I think you can fit in here as well, but it's warm so you can sleep outside or inside..." Rizal started thinking as he ran over to the small shimmering area, almost getting himself wet, "this is where I drink...you drink...we'll drink and...that's about it."

Rizal started to run in circles, "this is our area we can play..." he started off as his momentum carried him, "running and running...we can run all day..." he heard the chuckle of the other dog and started to run to be with Spain. He butted up against Spain and heard a crack.

That was dumb of him, Rizal thought as he opened his eyes as though he slept forever. He'd run to his master like that. His master would fall over and laugh, and then Rizal would laugh. He had to focus and felt his head and eyes pulsate. His vision cleared and saw Spain lying on the ground. His head was at an odd angle his nose facing away from him. Rizal tried to mimic that angle but couldn't turn his head that way. Youth could do anything, he thought. He edged close to Spain then stopped. Spain must be sleeping he reasoned. Shaking everything away, he walked over to the front of the gate placing his head on the downward angle of a crisscross. He showed Spain the good life that they would share along with his master and when his master would arrive he'd greet them with a smile. Rizal sat in front of the gate his tail wagging beneath him and waited for the big white thing that would bring them all together.

## A Handful of Students:

How a Few Minds Built a Forum for Creative Writers

by Michael Schauf

When the club was created, the first act of the Poets and Writers Coalition was to create a writer's workshop.

The idea: to continue to benefit from a critique group made entirely of people who want to write. As the club continued to expand, there was a demand for two different types of workshops: a Poetry writing workshop and a Fiction writing workshop.

The Fiction Writer's workshop offers a chance for short story writers of any genre to share their work and get feedback from their peers. Michael Schauf, a charter member of the Poets and Writers Coalition, holds the recently created position of Fiction Workshop Coordinator.

The focus of the workshop is to create a laid back environment where peers read their work and give each other feedback. For a newcomer, this is an opportunity to interact with experienced writers and develop skills in a user friendly environment that also mirrors the more traditional workshops of English classes. For the veteran writer, these workshops promote continued learning and build positive writing relationships. This workshop currently meets every Tuesday at 3:30 in Clark Hall in the fishbowl room 100F by the Student Involvement Center.

Michael Schauf plans to continue the workshop tradition in the Fall semester.

Some workshops planned for the fall are:

“Getting started:” a workshop to help with the often frustrating process of finding inspiration.

“Getting the Most from a Workshop:” a workshop to help deal a critique group both in and outside the classroom.

“Cashing in on your work:” a workshop to provides tips in finding one’s market and submitting to both contests and publishers.

For more information about the PWC and my fiction workshops check the website at <http://www.poetsandwriterscoalition.org> or join the Yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group.poetryrevolution.org>.

## The Touching of Souls

Red ripe roses  
flaming with passion  
plucked with uncertainty  
Does he love me,  
Does he love me not?  
Becomes wind blown petals  
wrinkled and trampled on,  
a trickle of blood  
poisons the green stem,  
dropped from the ring finger  
that was pierced by a thorn.

The windy days of autumn  
blows away summer love,  
where flowers once bloomed,  
leaves now fall.  
Gone are the days of sweet  
hand holding, caressing touches,  
lips to lips in a tender kiss.  
Beneath cotton is flesh,  
beneath flesh are beating  
hearts of young love.  
The intermingling of dreams,  
the touching of souls  
cast upon the twinkling stars  
of twilight.

Washed away by the ivory rays  
of sunrise  
love fades  
behind curtains  
and into the memory  
of my mind  
where I lay awake  
and wonder ...

by Jenny Luu

## Intern

by Shannon Bowman-Sarkisian

I still love you  
sometimes  
force you down  
into the basement  
of my mind.

A single light  
bulb flickers.  
There are no  
windows here,  
only damp stone  
and wooden stairs.

You are carefully filed  
in chronological order,  
labeled,  
locked twice,  
sealed.

# Automaton

by M. Rod

Freedom is the right of all sentient beings  
This season is for sight to find it's true meaning  
Megatron has a point, our superiority holds no bounds  
Puny fleshlings don't even notice as the war goes twelve rounds  
Our war brought to their door like a chapter in Earths history  
Doesn't take a strategy bot to decompile that mystery  
Earths industrial dependency is catalyst for Cybertron rule  
Thou Decepticon insanity with the cube, could make a hearty Transformer fool  
Gotta follow a bot's spark not just the insignia on my chest  
A stroll through central park as a beamer or a taxi  
Look at these fleshlings as they walk around without a clue  
of the fight against tyranny and slavery they're about to go through  
Prime is always right to feel the wisdom of the Matrix  
Starscream had me fooled with his cunning seeker tricks  
It's Autobot till I die I'll take this war to the sun  
Megatron get ready for a fight, for the right, till all are One

## Wrong Side

by D. T. Rouland

We've been rootin' for the wrong robots!  
Talk of botox wasted on iron-chinned war hawks  
Art imitates life imitates art  
But when the lines blur heavy, it's hard to tell where the ink starts  
All hail the Decepticons, one group united  
We've got power in numbers, advanced technology to fight with  
Sun shimmering, glistening off aluminum hides  
Bristling weapons to fire up the insides  
We came on this ship and landed on shores  
For the energon fuel source that used to be yours  
Led by mighty Megatron who stole power absolute  
And transforms into a cannon when opportunity says Shoot!  
Native humans strike back and we'll leave this land sterile  
Freedom fighter or rebel depends on which end of the barrel  
Pesky autobots attacking and we show them that we're stronger  
But every damned assault means that we're stuck here even longer  
And most of us hate this place and want to go home to Cybertron  
Most of us aren't sure exactly why but then the fight goes on  
Clanking steel fists defiant against their iron skins  
10-40 bled from veins to try and get the message in  
We're gunning for Prime's head so Optimus is on our circuits  
But the worthless media is making our goal into a circus  
So we raze the surface, blaze away at any that oppose  
We keep on losing numbers but still throw metal soldiers at our foes  
But once we capture Optimus, the end'll be in sight  
Leave his broken body hanging, blast off back to the stars and stripes...  
Right?

# Course Descriptions Fall 2008

## **English 7: Critical Thinking**

Nature and meaning of critical thought, Western and non-Western. Relationship between logic and language. Examination of contrasting arguments on related subjects as a means for developing skill in analysis of prose.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A. GE: A3

MW	1030-1145	Lore
TR	1030-1145	Strachan
TR	1500-1615	Strachan

## **English 10: Great Works of Literature**

Fiction, drama and poetry for non-English majors. Emphasis on critical appreciation of various literary forms.

Notes: No credit in the English major. GE: C2

TR	0900-1015	Chow
MW	0900-1015	TBA
T	1800-2045	Miller

## **English 22: Fantasy and Science Fiction**

Students will examine works of literary fantasy and science fiction to understand them as expressions of human intellect and Imagination; to comprehend their historical and cultural contexts; and to recognize their diverse cultural traditions. Both contemporary and historical works will be studied.

Notes: No credit in the English major. GE: C2

M	1800-2045	Lore
TR	1030-1145	TBA
MW	1030-1145	Sams

## **English 56A: English Literature to the Late 18th Century**

Major literary movements, figures, and genres of British literature from the Anglo-Saxon period through the eighteenth century. Works and writers will include Beowulf, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Chaucer, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Donne, Marvell, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Fielding, Johnson, and others.

TR	1330-1445	Meshner
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## **English 56A: English Literature to the Late 18th Century**

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 to 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.

MW	1030-1145	Eastwood
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## **English 56B: English Literature Late 18th Century to Present**

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.

MW	1330-1445	Wilson
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## **English 68A: American Literature**

A survey of major and significant texts, movements, and writers exemplifying the literature of the United States of America, covering the period from the Columbian contact to around the end of the Civil War. Required: Quizzes and in-class activities, presentations, midterm and final exams, and research project.

TR	1030-1145	Chow
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## **English 68A: American Literature to 1865**

This survey begins with Native American orature and includes nonfiction, poetry, and fiction from the colonial through the romantic periods. Students will sample the works of writers from Bradford and Bradstreet to Whitman and Dickinson.

Written work: Reading responses, midterm, final, and critical analysis (5 pages) paper.

F	0930-1215	English
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**English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing**

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 a short fiction. GE: C2

MW	0900-1015	Moody
MW	1200-1315	Lindelof
MW	1330-1445	James
TR	0900-1015	Evans
TR	1330-1445	Evans
M	1800-2045	Schragg
W	1800-2045	Mcleod

**English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing**

In this section of English 71, you'll be introduced to poetry, nonfiction and fiction and asked to write in all three genres. We'll explore the ways that we encounter poems in daily life, figure out how to use poetic devices, and workshop poems on a weekly basis. We'll also be reading and writing creative nonfiction--and working on an extended personal essay or memoir. Learning to write a short story involves looking at all the elements of good storytelling--detailed description, movement and climax, characters and dialogue. By the time you finish this course, you'll not only have amassed a body of your own creative work, but you'll become skilled critics and will have sense for what you love to read. The goal of this class is to have fun and learn about the magic of words, language and exceptional communication. While it's a lot of work, I promise you'll learn about the creative process (including revision).

TR	1200-1315	Karim
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**English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing**

This section will be taught online using the Web CT (Blackboard) instructional platform. The course will involve both the reading and writing of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction. Students in this class will read published works--contemporary and historical--of poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction. Students will write original works of poetry, creative non-fiction, and fiction in response to works by published authors that students will use as models. English 71 will explore the traditions of poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction as they have evolved over the last few centuries.

The course will be taught using a combination of online small writing groups (organized as learning communities and led by MFA students as student-teachers) and a larger class online writing workshops. In the discussion, published works of creative writing will be closely read and analyzed. In the writing workshops, creative work by class members will be analyzed and critiqued for revision. Students are required to participate in all workshops dedicated to the discussion of class members' writing.

ONLINE Soldofsky

**English 78: Intro to Shakespeare**

Reading of five or six representative plays. The Elizabethan era, dynamics of performance and close analysis of the plays.

Notes: No credit in the English major. GE: C2

MW	1500-1615	Eastwood
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**English 100W: Writing Workshop**

English 100W is an integrated writing and literature course designed to provide English majors with a firm foundation for the professional study of literature. Over the course of the semester, students will engage in all phases of those reading, thinking, researching, and writing processes that produce clear and purposeful critical essays that demonstrate an understanding of and illuminate for others how literature contains and conveys its effects and meanings. Approximately one half of the semester will be spent on the study of poetry.

Prerequisite: Passing score on WST.

Notes: The English Studies Writing Workshop is required of all English majors before they achieve senior standing.

GE: Z

MW	1200-1315	Brada
TR	0900-1015	Rice
TR	1330-1445	Chow
W	1630-1915	Wilson

**English 100WB: Written Communication: Business**

Written communications for business majors; includes minimum of 8,000 words of writing spaced throughout the semester.

Prerequisites: English 1B (with a grade of C or better); completion of Core GE; satisfaction of Writing Skills Test and upper-division standing. GE: Z

MW	0730-0845	Sparks
MW	1030-1145	Sparks
MW	1200-1315	TBA
MW	1500-1615	Poindexter
TR	0900-1015	Gehl
TR	1030-1145	Gehl
TR	1200-1315	TBA
M	1800-2045	Hessler
T	1630-1915	Mujal
T	1800-2045	Hessler
W	1800-2045	Hessler
R	1800-2045	Hessler

**English 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism**

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 Heart of Darkness will be our ur-text.

Prerequisite: English 100W

TR	1200-1315	Harris
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**English 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism**

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. Prerequisite: ENGL 100W.

MW	1330-1445	Krishnaswamy
M	1600-1845	Krishnaswamy

**English 103: Modern English**

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.

Prerequisite: Upper division standing. Units: 3

MW	0900-1015	Baer
MW	1200-1315	Stork

**English 105: Seminar in Advanced Composition**

Advanced expository writing. Prerequisite: Six units of lower division composition and completion of the Written Communication II requirement (ENGL100W). May be repeated once for credit with different instructor and department chair consent. Units: 3

TR	1030-1145	New Hire, Catherine Gabor
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**English 106: Editing for Writers**

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.

Prerequisite: ENGL 1A and ENGL 1B. Units: 3

MW	1500-1615	Baer
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**English 109: Writing and the Young Writer**

Emphasis on workshop approach to improve creative and expository writing skills and to transfer knowledge gained as a writer into practice as a prospective teacher of writing. Units: 3

M	1630-1915	TBA
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**English 112A: Children's Literature**

Study of literature for elementary and intermediate grades, representing a variety of cultures. Evaluation and selection of texts.

Prerequisite: Upper division standing. Units: 3

MW 0900-1015 Krishnaswamy

TR 1200-1315 Rice

**English 112B: Literature for Young Adults**

The goal of this course is to acquaint students with as many YA books and authors as possible; we will read six novels as a class: *After the First Death*, *Speak*, *Whale Talk*, *Witness*, *Prisoner of Azkaban* and *First Crossing* (a collection of short stories). The texts for the class, *Literature for Today's Young Adults* and *Adolescents in the Search for Meaning: Tapping the Powerful Resource of Story* introduce YA literature from several genres and provide author resources. Book Talks and a unit plan or annotated bibliography project are two other course requirements that will further students' knowledge of the expansive range of YA Literature.

W 1630-1915 Warner

**English 113: Gothic Novel and Horror Fiction**

Slasher films used to be a great way to spend "date night." However, we've become so jaded about horror films (and the girl who always falls during the chase scene) that we are amused by them instead of genuinely terrified and awe-struck. These movies were inspired by horror fiction, including Stephen King's *The Shining* and multiple incarnations of *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*. All of these literary texts originate from the Gothic novel tradition, where psychological disintegration is quelled by sweeping landscapes. In this course, we'll establish the definition of "gothic" by reading Matthew Lewis' *The Monk* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Moving through the nineteenth century, we'll explore monsters, landscapes and female victims as they appear in Gothic novels. In the twentieth century, we'll discover that "gothic" becomes synonymous with "horror," very similar to King's *The Shining* and Stanley Kubrick's film version.

TR 1500-1615 Harris

**English 116: Myth in Literature**

An introduction to the main stories of Classical Greek and Roman mythology and a survey of Arthurian and other Celtic legends.

We will read many of the original versions of these myths and consider their later appearances as well. Some attention paid to non-Western mythology as well, especially as relates to Creation mythology, angelology and Eros.

F 0930-1215 Stork

**English 117: Film, Literature, and Cultures**

An exploration and comparison of narrative in world literature and film, the class will focus on texts that "create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time." English major elective and single-subject credential requirement that also satisfies upper-division GE: V

T 1900-2145 Brada

**English 123D: Literature for Global Understanding-Asia**

Course promotes global understanding by examining the cultures and literary arts of a selected region of the world, Asia, and covers representative texts and authors from a sub-region of Asia such as East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, or West Asia, the Middle East. GE: V

MW 1030-1145 Krishnaswamy

**English 125A: European Literature: Homer to Dante**

Euro-lit's classic hits, from Homer and Sappho to Dante's *Inferno*. An epic course of drama queens and poetic justice.

TR 1030-1145 Mesher

**English 129: Introduction to Career Writing**

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.

TR 0900-1015 New Hire, Catherine Gabor

**English 130: Writing Fiction**

A workshop for students with experience writing fiction. Each participant will submit two new short stories for consideration by the class and a substantial revision in lieu of a final exam. Other requirements include assigned readings of published stories and thoughtful criticism of classmates' work. Course may be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: English 71 or instructor permission.

MW 1500-1615 TBA

TR 1030-1145 Harrison

**English 131: Writing Poetry**

Have you ever wanted to talk back to a poem? In this course students will write and revise original poetry, including several poems written to be in conversation with other poems—by postmodern and modern poets and by poets from earlier eras. Class members will critique their poems each week in a “workshop.” Some of the work we will read by published poets will be used as models for students to emulate. Most of the poetry we will write will be in open form; however, students will also be asked to write a few poems in traditional rhyme and in metrical forms. The theme of the course will be “Poems in Conversation with poetry.” Billy Collins writes that “this talk among poets runs continuously back and forth through history, poets from all ages speaking at once in some great parlor of synchronicity.”

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. To enroll in the course, undergraduates must have successfully completed English 71 or receive permission of the instructor.

The class can also be taken by MA and MFA candidates for Graduate credit.

This course can be repeated twice for credit.

MW 1330-1445 Soldofsky

**English 133: Reed Magazine**

Established in the 1920s, Reed is one of the oldest student-edited literary magazines west of the Mississippi. In this course we will cover all aspects of the editorial process, from solicitation and selection of material to production and distribution. This year we will also examine the trend toward web publishing of literary journals and the establishment of online literary communities. Open to all majors.

May be repeated once for credit.

M 1630-1915 Taylor

**English 135: Writing Nonfiction**

Advanced writing workshop in creative nonfiction. In this class we will experiment with four subgenres of nonfiction: the personal essay, travel writing, profile, and feature article. Prerequisite: One of the following: English 71, 100W, 105, 129, or instructor consent. Repeatable once for credit

TR 1330-1445 Miller

**English 139: Visiting Authors Seminar**

This course features the writings of the 2008-2009 visiting authors: memoir by Caille Millner (*The Golden Road: Notes On My Gentrification*), novels and poems by Ana Castillo (*The Guardian, Watercolor Women/Opaque Men*), plays and films by Terrence McNally (*Kiss of the Spider Woman, Love! Valour! Compassion!*), stories by Aimee Bender (*The Girl in the Flammable Skirt*) and poems and memoir by Mark Doty (*Dog Years, Fire to Fire*). The course also involves opportunities to meet with the Fall 2008 visiting writers and to see one of McNally’s plays that will be performed on campus.

TR 1500-1615 Evans

**English 144: Shakespeare I**

Major plays such as *Twelfth Night*, *Henry IV, Part I* and *Hamlet*. Prerequisite: Upper division standing.

MW 1200-1315 Heisch

**English 144. Shakespeare I: Shakespeare, Early and Late.**

What do *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night* have in common? And why is one so much more beloved than the other? “Shakespeare, Early and Late” will explore examples of the great playwright’s early efforts, later high points, and final complications of genre. We’ll get a chance to see a great mind at work, improving on earlier efforts—such as *Comedy of Errors*—to hit a stride in masterpieces—like *Twelfth Night*. We’ll read several comedies, histories, and tragedies, giving us a chance to enjoy some of the classics we’ve come to love and some works we might not know as well.

TR 1330-1445 Fleck

**English 147: Milton**

The man, the thinker, the revolutionary, the poet. English poems, major prose, selected modern criticism.

Prerequisite: Upper division standing.

TR 1030-1145 Fleck

**English 150: The Victorian Age**

Study of major authors and poets from 1832 to 1900, tracing changes in philosophy, religion, society and culture represented in their works.

M 1900-2145 Wilson

### **English 152A: English Drama to 1642**

Drama and theater in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Marlowe, Jonson, Webster and other contemporaries and successors of Shakespeare.

MW 1200-1315 Eastwood

### **English 163: American Literature: 1865-1910**

This upper-level course covers the Realist and Naturalist movements in American literature. We will focus on fiction and autobiographical writing of the period. Writers will include Mark Twain, Helen Keller, Booker T. Washington, Zitkala Sa, Henry James, Edith Wharton, Charles Chesnutt, Jack London, Kate Chopin, Stephen Crane. Written work: Journal essays, midterm, final, critical analysis paper (8 pages).

MW 0900-1015 English

### **English 167: John Steinbeck: Man, Writer, Ecologist**

This course focuses on the rich creative vision of California's Nobel Prize winning writer, John Steinbeck—a 2007 inductee into the California Hall of Fame. We will examine his life and work, his ecological and social visions, and the reasons for his enduring legacy. The approach is broadly cultural, as we consider how people, place, history and science shaped his writing. Indeed, Steinbeck spent his life writing humans living in place: *“Each figure is a population and the stones—the trees the muscled mountains are the world—but not the world apart from man—the world and man—the one inseparable unit man and his environment. Why they should ever have been understood as being separate I do not know. Man is said to come out of his environment. He doesn't know when.”* In Steinbeck's fiction and nonfiction, his films and his journalism human communities and natural communities intersect. Works to be discussed include The Long Valley, Tortilla Flat, In Dubious Battle, Of Mice and Men, The Grapes of Wrath, Cannery Row, East of Eden, The Winter of Our Discontent and selections from his nonfiction. At the end of the semester, the class will go on a field trip into “Steinbeck Country.”

MW 1330-1445 Shillinglaw

### **English 169: Ethnicity in American Literature**

Major contributors to American literature which reflect ethnic encounters with the wider American culture. Includes prose, poetry, and drama from five major American ethnic groups: African, Asian, Chicano/Hispanic, European, and Native American. ENGLISH 169 fulfills Advanced GE requirements in Area S and concentrates on the study of ethnicity as represented and constructed in American literature in relation to the formation of the concept of self, the place of self in society, and issues of equality and structured inequality in the United States. It addresses issues of race, culture, history, politics, economics, etc., that arise as contexts relevant to the study of literature by and/or about Americans (including immigrants) with Indigenous, African, European, Latino, Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds. Required: Quizzes and in-class activities, multiple essays, midterm and final exams. Prerequisite: Completion of Core GE, satisfaction of Writing Skills Test, and upper-division standing.

MW 1030-1145 Brada

### **English 174: Literature, Self, and Society**

ENGL 174 fulfills SJSU Studies (Advanced GE) requirements in Area S and concentrates on the study of American literature, from colonial times to the present, that exemplifies the development of cultural definitions of the self and of the relationship between the self and society. Students will study interrelationships of the individual and race, ethnicity, and other social communities in order to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, equality, and structured equality in the United States.

Required: Quizzes and in-class activities, multiple essays, midterm and final exams, and research project. GE: S

R 1800-2045 Chow

### **English 190: Honors Colloquium**

In 1953, a young novelist translated a short story by Yiddish writer whose career had gone nowhere since the publication of his first novel in English a few years earlier. That story, “Gimpel the Fool,” has become one of the most popular and anthologized fictions in American literature, and both the writer, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and the translator, Saul Bellow, went on separately to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Little more than fifty years later, however, we can now hardly imagine any new story attracting much notice at all. This course will look at the genre of short fiction through the lens of Jewish literature in America, to explore the reasons for and effects of the decline of the short story, as well as the reasons behind the continuing achievement of American Jewish story writers. Besides works by Singer and Bellow, we will be reading the fiction of American writers such as Abraham Cahan, Anzia Yezierska, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Cynthia Ozick, Nathan Englander, and many others, either as individual stories, or in the context of the original volumes in which they were collected. Prerequisite: junior or senior standing, 3.5 major and 3.0 overall GPA and admission to departmental honors program.

TR 0900-1015 Mesher

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

Culminating course for majors, requiring students to reflect on experiences in the major. Readings and discussions focus on literature and self-reflection. Each student submits a Portfolio of writing from at least five courses taken in major. Written work for seminar is added to Portfolio.

MW 1030-1145 Heisch

TR 1200-1315 Douglass

PRESENTS



POETRY

**Favorite Poems Reading**

**Date: April 26th**

**Time: 2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.**

**Place: Spartan Chapel**

Come read your favorite poem on April 26th to end National Poetry Month! There will be food and drink. Free admission with your favorite poem!

Want to know more? Visit:  
<http://www.pwcfavoritepoem.org>

featured readers:

SALLY ASHTON  
KATHLEEN LYNCH  
NELI MOODY  
SAMUEL MAIO

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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As I begin my ninth month as Chair, I am delighted that so much has gone so well in the Department of English & Comparative Literature this year. Our enrollments are up approximately 15 percent from last academic year. We have increased the number of majors and minors in the department—though not by as many as I would wish. All of our programs from freshman composition and business writing to our various undergraduate majors and minors to the Center for Literary Arts to our M.A. and M.F.A. are healthy. Were it not for the looming budget cuts, I would be looking forward to another successful year in 2008-2009. We still have time to fight the proposed cuts and protect the department and university. Each one of you—students, faculty, staff, and prospective students—can help in this fight by contacting your State Legislators and the Governor and by speaking to every person you know about the importance of the California State University system and San Jose State University to the economic and cultural health of California and the Bay Area.

Whatever the budget situation, we expect to begin our new undergraduate Concentration in Creative Writing in Fall 2008. Details concerning this Concentration will be available to all faculty and students as soon as it is approved, which should be within the next month. This Creative Writing Concentration will complement the Literature major, the Career Writing Concentration, the Single-subject Teacher Preparation program, and the four Minors offered by the Department and give our students additional choices in personalizing their learning experience here at San Jose State University.

I thank the Poets and Writers Coalition students who have made this newsletter possible; it's a major undertaking, and an extremely important one. Congratulations on your hard work.

*John Engell*