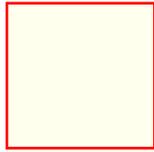


# English Department Graduate Newsletter



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## SPRING OFFICE HOURS

Prof. Keeseey's office hours this semester will be M 6-7, M 3:30-4:30; other hours by appointment. Phone: 924-4435; E-mail: [dkeeseey@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:dkeeseey@email.sjsu.edu). Please feel free to call or to stop by his office (FO 108) if you have any questions about the M.A. program. M.F.A. students should consult Prof. Soldofsky: Office: FO 106, Hours:T,Th 2-3. Phone: 924-4432, E-mail: [soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu).

## DEADLINES: AUGUST AND DECEMBER GRADUATES

If you are planning to graduate in August or December of 2003, you should have filed your approved program (i.e. been formally advanced to candidacy) by Feb. 1. If you missed this deadline, please see your advisor immediately. Remember, you need to file your program nearly two semesters before you plan to graduate. Remember, too, that you must apply for graduation (at the Graduate Studies office, 10th St. Garage) early in the semester you plan to graduate. For August graduates, the deadline is June 13. August graduates must present their completed theses to the Graduate Office by July 8.

## PROGRAM APPROVAL DEADLINE: MAY 2004 GRADUATES

If you plan to graduate in May 2004, you will need to file your approved program very early in the fall. To be on the safe side, you should file before the close of this spring semester. Course descriptions for the fall seminars and a tentative list of spring offerings are included in this issue of the newsletter. Once you have determined what courses you will take to complete your program, see your advisor to fill out the official form.

## REGISTRATION FOR FALL 2003

The Schedule of Classes for fall will give you detailed information on how to register for next semester's courses. Touch-tone registration for graduate students will begin in mid-May. It is very important that you register as early as possible; the budget will again be tight and underenrolled seminars may be canceled early in the registration process. If you have any questions about your schedule for the fall, please get in touch with me before the end of the spring semester.

## ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR FALL 2003

201 Materials and Methods T 1900-2145 Stork

201C M&M for MFA T 1900-2145 Soldofsky

204 Modern App to Lit W 1900-2145 Keeseey

215 Myth and Symbolism R 1600-1845 Birenbaum

217 English Renaissance R 1900-2145 Grant

225 Seminar in Shakespeare T 16:00-18:45 Fleck

230 18th-Century British W 1900-2145 Rice

240 Poetry Writing R 1900-2145 Maio

241 Fiction Writing M 1600-1845 Fink

242 Non-Fiction Writing W 1600-1845 TBA

254 Seminar in Genre Studies of American Literature [**Added**]

255 Themes in American Lit. T 1600-1845 Shillinglaw

256 20th-Century British M 1900-2145 Wilson

259 Composition Studies M 1600- 1845 Rico

(Seminars for Spring 2004 will probably include 200, 201, 204, 211, 225, 226, 227, 233, 241, 242, 253, and 254)

## **201 Materials and Methods of Literary Research ([Prof. Stork](#))**

**This course will introduce graduate students to the resources and techniques of formal literary research and to the standards of scholarly work. Students will learn to evaluate and use specialized libraries, indices, bibliographies, journal publications, checklists, concordances, histories, data bases for computer searches, handbooks, and other materials. In addition, they will gain practical experience in transcription and text editing by working with the Steinbeck Ledger Book of 1934 housed in the Steinbeck Research Center. We will also discuss various (and at times competing) theories of literary criticism. Students should complete the course ready to apply the technical and critical competencies they have gained to their work in other graduate seminars. The course will include a number of formal oral presentations and written exercises. English 201 is required of all English graduate students and should be taken as soon as possible after achieving classified standing.**

## **201C Methods and Materials of Literary Production ([Prof. Soldofsky](#))**

**This course introduces Creative Writing graduate students to the resources, traditions, techniques, and culture associated with professional creative writing both inside and outside academia. The class will study the role of the individual writer within the literary and academic communities, and explore various forms of literary activity that commonly support "the literary life." Students will learn to find and evaluate dominant and alternative literary magazines and publishers, book review indexes, academic journals, and online and other electronic resources. By means of this course, they will find ways to apply their knowledge of these resources that are useful in their own writing, in their other courses, and in fulfilling other requirements for the MFA. In order to succeed, a Creative Writing MFA student needs to understand how the interlocking networks within the literary, academic, and publishing communities function. To gain such an understanding, students will accomplish the following objectives in this course: Explore the traditions, conventions, sub-genres, and schools, associated with contemporary poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Examine the role of the creative writer within academia. Become familiar with a wide range of literary journals, publishers, and electronic resources for creative writers. Examine evolving genres and new literary forms and forums. Gain a familiarity with some common professional forums and networks for creative writers within academe. Gain familiarity with various avenues for publication and other professional activity. (This course is required of all M.F.A. students and should be taken as early as possible.)**

## **204 Modern Approaches to Literature (Prof. Keesey)**

**This course will explore some of the main contemporary approaches to literature, including versions of genetic, reader-response, formal, mimetic, intertextual, feminist, Marxist, poststructural, and cultural criticism. We will read essays by prominent modern**

critics explaining and defending each type of criticism as well as essays applying some version of each approach to four target texts: *The Tempest*, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," *Benito Cereno*, and *The Yellow Wallpaper*. By this plan we will try to strike a useful balance between the "practical" and the theoretical aspects of criticism, and the format will also allow us to compare the different approaches by seeing what they can show us about the same literary texts. Required texts: Keesey, *Contexts for Criticism* (4th ed, 2003); Richter, *Falling into Theory* (2nd ed, 2000). (Those who think ahead may save money by ordering from web discounters like amazon.com. Those who read ahead should start with the target texts listed above. The last three are reprinted in *Contexts for Criticism*.)

## 215 Myth and Symbolism ([Prof. Birenbaum](#))

This course focuses on the symbolic reality of culture as it appears in literary mythmaking at different periods. Literary imagination will be studied in relation to principles of traditional lore, the symbolic nature of language, dynamics of cultural transformation, stylistics of imagination, and the personal participation in literary projection. Authors will probably range from preliterate, classical, and medieval texts to E.T.A. Hoffmann, Blake, Baudelaire, Kafka, and Ionesco. If you want to do some advanced preparation, you might read Birenbaum's *Myth and Mind*.

## 217 English Renaissance ([Prof. Grant](#))

A study of lyric poetry and drama, of Platonism and passion, a study of the courtier and the poet and their attitudes towards women, language, and reality. We begin with *The Courtier* by Castiglione and end with reality with love, incest, and death in John Ford's *Tis a Pity She's a Whore*. Students who have had little background in Renaissance literature should read or review *The Sixteenth Century* as well as the works of Donne, Jonson, and Webster in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Any edition will do. Students will give a few seminar reports, take one midterm, and write a critical paper.

## 225 Seminar in Shakespeare ([Prof. Fleck](#))

A close study of selected plays and of selected major issues in Shakespearean criticism.

## 230 18th-Century British ([Prof. Rice](#))

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

idiosyncratic Shandeanism, and Smollett's hybrid blend of comedy and satire).

## **240 Poetry Writing Workshop ([Prof. Maio](#))**

With emphases on metrical rhythms and the Greek, Italian, and French lyric forms, this course asks of each student to complete a publishable portfolio of poetry by semester's end.

## **241 Fiction Writing Workshop ([Prof. Fink](#))**

241 is the graduate seminar in fiction writing. Students are required to submit 40-50 pages of new fiction--in the form of stories or novel excerpts--during the course of the semester. The seminar will focus on elements of craft including point of view, style and characterization. No text is required, though students will read variously from literary magazines, anthologies, story collections and craft manuals. Evaluation will be based primarily on quality and consistency of creative work, as well as revision, participation, and peer critique.

## **242 Non-Fiction Writing Workshop (T.B.A.)**

Nonfiction writing as preparation for thesis. Study and critique of canonical and contemporary nonfiction. Intensive workshop experience.

## **254 Seminar in Genre Studies of American Literature (Genre Bending: Creative Recategorization of Canonical American Texts) ([Prof. Kreger](#))**

This seminar will introduce students to the basics of genre theory through creative rereadings and recategorizations of "classic" works of American literature. As 21st-century readers, we have inherited a literary canon that privileges the novel, a form prized by the modernist critics who constructed the field of "American literature" as we now know it. Yet, this focus on book-length fiction has skewed our understanding of print culture prior to 1900, when the novel was neither the most influential nor the most admired American literary form. In fact, many non-fiction genres had a far greater impact upon the formation of national discourse and identity. In this class we will focus on three such genres--the advice manual, the captivity narrative, and the travel diary--first reading works traditionally placed in these categories, then defamiliarizing canonical works by considering them as examples of an alternate, currently less-privileged, literary form. How are our responses and interpretations impacted if we consider *Walden* a self-help book? "The Yellow Wallpaper" a captivity narrative? Our readings of these primary texts will also be supplemented by significant critical essays discussing genre theory and canon formation.

## **255 Thematic Studies in American Literature ([Prof. Shillinglaw](#))**

**California Literature: "When I am in California, I am not in the west, I am west of the west."  
--Theodore Roosevelt**

**This course will examine the diverse voices and visions of California literature, discussing its distinctive qualities. Focusing on 19th and 20th-century texts, we will compare writers' visions of the "Golden State," and discuss place, issues (water rights, the environment, migration patterns, ethnicity, etc), peoples and visions as reflected in various California authors. Texts will include an anthology, *The Literature of California*, Hicks, Houston, Kingston, Young; as well as selected novels, including *The Pastures of Heaven*, John Steinbeck; *McTeague*, Frank Norris; *The Big Sleep*, Raymond Chandler; *Angle of Repose*, Wallace Stegner; *Flower Drum Song*, C.Y. Lee; *The Land of Little Rain*, Mary Austin. Two films will be discussed as well.**

## **256 Twentieth-Century British Literature ([Prof. Wilson](#))**

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

## **259: Composition Studies (Prof. Rico)**

**This course is designed to provide hands-on skills to teach composition in a changing world and to explore the many aspects of its process, from a first idea-gathering to the final finished product. The guiding focus for this course will be human time-consciousness which has given human beings the power to express a non-existent past, a present now, and an imagined future, holding them fast on a page for examination. This language power has resulted in such rhetorical conventions, as for example, narrative, comparison/contrast, and argument. Because the best teachers are also learners, we will experience idea-gathering processes such as clustering and mind-mapping, will devise writing assignments to enhance student success, and culminate in a publication project of the best (or favorite) of the class participants' writing, giving the whole a title, a theme, and a purpose. We will also examine the issues common to ESL students, issues of reading, and the complexities of the technological revolution as it is relevant to learning to write good papers. Requirements are 1) on-going writing throughout the semester to explore various facets of writing and language use; a one-page student hand-out, entitled "Why Write?" 2) the creation of two empowering writing assignments; 3) an oral presentation of issues in teaching composition in a changing world by each class member; 4) a final paper addressing the complexity of teaching writing in a rapidly changing world.**

## **COURSE SELECTION**

**Remember that courses taken outside the English department normally will not count toward your official program. Please check with your advisor before you take such courses. You will need special approval to include such a course in your official program. Usually upper-division literature courses offered by the department will count toward the M.A., if they also carry English major credit, if you have a compelling reason to take an upper-division rather than a graduate course, and if you do extra work in the course. If you plan to take any upper-division courses, again, check with your advisor in advance.**

## **CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED GRADUATE STUDENTS**

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

## **STUDENT HONORS**

**Congratulations to Denise Millstein (M.A. 2002) whose thesis, *Fame, Sexuality, and Exile: Lord Byron s Influence on Oscar Wilde*, was chosen as the Humanities and Arts Outstanding Thesis for 2002-2003. The thesis will be the College s entry in the university-wide thesis competition. Denise is currently in the Ph.D. program at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Congratulations also to Emily Scott (M.A. 2002) who has been accepted to the Ph.D. program at Loyola of Chicgao.**

## **ARE YOU APPLYING TO PH.D PROGRAMS?**

**We would like to know which of our graduates go on to Ph.D. work and what success they find in the application process? If you are applying to Ph.D. programs, let me know how it is working out for you. This information might be useful to those who follow in your footsteps.**

## **KEEP INFORMED**

**Important dates and other useful information will be posted on the English Graduate Bulletin Board in the first-floor hall of the Faculty Office Building. New information will be posted as we receive it. So make a point to check the bulletin board frequently and check, too, the English department website at [www.sjsu.edu/depts/english](http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english). To receive information about English department activities via email, join the English Society's List Server. To join, simply send an email message to this address: [listproc@listproc.sjsu.edu](mailto:listproc@listproc.sjsu.edu). In the body of the text, type this: SUBSCRIBE EngDept [your first name] [your last name]. You will receive an automatic reply acknowledging your successful subscription and explaining how to unsubscribe any time you wish. And remember that the SJSU Graduate Studies Office website publishes important deadlines, rules, and information useful to**

graduate students. Dial up [www.sjsu.edu](http://www.sjsu.edu) and follow the links.

## SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

**June 13:** Last day for August graduates to file application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office (10th St. Garage)

**July 8:** Last day for August graduates to submit thesis to the Graduate Studies Office.

**Sept. 5:** Last day for August graduates to submit thesis copies for binding to Graduate Studies Office.

**Sept. 1:** Last day for December graduates to file application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.

**Oct. 1:** Last day for May 2004 graduates to file their official programs with your advisor. To be safe, complete this task in May 2003 before the summer break.

**Oct. 13:** Deadline for December graduates to hand in revised thesis manuscript to second and third readers.

**Oct. 31:** Deadline for December graduates to submit thesis to Graduate Studies.

**Nov. 7:** Take home MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed (Spring 2004 Graduates).

**Nov. 10:** MFA Comprehensive Exam due in English Department by Noon.

Though the deadline for second and third readers is October 13, it would be useful for the other readers to have a revised copy of your thesis prior to the deadline. You must be realistic about the amount of time you will need to complete revisions requested by your committee. The deadline allows only two weeks for having additional revisions and corrections approved.

### February 2003 Newsletter

