

English Department Graduate Newsletter

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SPRING OFFICE HOURS

MA Students will find Prof. Douglass in his office this semester TTH 9:30-10:30 AM and TH 3:00-4:00 PM, also on most Wednesdays and other days by appointment. Phone: 924-4429; email:  pdouglas@email.sjsu.edu. Please feel free to call or to stop by his office (FO 108). MFA students should consult Prof. Soldofsky in FO 106, Hours TWR 2:00 - 3:30 PM. Phone: 924-4432, email:  soldofsk@email.sjsu.edu.

DEADLINES: AUGUST AND DECEMBER GRADUATES

If you are planning to graduate in August or December of 2005, you should have filed your approved program (i.e. been formally advanced to candidacy) by February 15 or April 1, respectively. If you missed the deadline, please see your advisor immediately. Remember, you need to file your program nearly two semesters before you plan to graduate. Remember, too, that you must apply for graduation (at the Graduate Studies office, 10th St. Garage) early in the semester you plan to graduate. For August graduates, the deadline is June 10. For December Graduates, the deadline is September 23. August

**graduates must present their completed theses to the Graduate Office by July 8, 2004.
December graduates must present completed theses by October 28, 2004**

PROGRAM APPROVAL DEADLINE: MAY 2005 GRADUATES

If you plan to graduate in May 2005, 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, fill out the official form and get your advisor's signature.

REGISTRATION FOR FALL 2005

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 important that you register as early as possible; the budget will again be tight and under enrolled 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 Professors Douglass or Soldofsky before the end of spring semester.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR FALL 2005

201 M 1600-1845 Wilson

201C T 1900-2145 Soldofsky

203 W 1600-1845 Engell

204 M 1900-2145 Keeseey

216 T 1600-1845 Cox

217 R 1900-2145 Grant

229 T 1900-2145 Fleck

230 M 1900-2145 Rice

240 R 1900-2145 Maio

241 W 1900-2145 Swigart

254 T 1600-1845 Douglass

255 W 1600-1845 Shillinglaw

256 W 1900-2145 Wilson

259 R 1600-1845 Cullen

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

Use and evaluation of resource for literary research; problems in critical writing and literary history. Required for all English Masters students (to be taken as early as possible after achieving Classified standing).

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

This course introduces Creative Writing graduate students to the resources, traditions, techniques, and culture associated with the field of 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." A creative writer's work is both a personal journey toward increasingly masterful artistic expression as well as an increasing understanding of what the literary world requires of a writer as a professional. In order to succeed, an MFA candidate needs to understand how the interlocking networks within the literary, academic, and publishing communities function. In 201C students will discover and learn to evaluate dominant and alternative literary magazines and publishers, book review indexes, academic journals, and online and other electronic resources. Students will also write a book review, a personal essay, a conference paper, and a book proposal. By means of this course, they will learn to apply their knowledge of these of real-world tasks to their own writing, in their other courses, and in fulfilling the MFA requirements. This course is a co-requisite for students in the MFA program to be taken with their first graduate writing workshop or first graduate literature seminar. The course fulfills the Graduate Studies requirement in written communication.

203 Narrative Craft and Theory ([Prof. Engell](#)):

Study of prose fiction and nonfiction as a literary genre (with sub-genres) and an art which can be learned through imitation and analysis. Course emphasizes the formal and technical properties of prose narrative, with some attention to Narratology.

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*.)

216 Medieval English Literature ([Prof. Cox](#))

This course will study some of the greatest dramatic and poetic texts of (mostly) fourteenth-century England, texts whose combined wit, urbanity, sophistication, skepticism, and ambiguity articulate the concerns, conditions, and contradictions of a time aptly characterized by G.L. Kittredge as "scrambling and unquiet [...], when nobody was at rest but the dead." Students will be expected to engage and explore the texts from a variety of contexts and viewpoints: textual, literary, political, social, and cultural; to become familiar with a range of critical approaches to the texts across time and place; to reflect on the texts' influences within the English literary tradition; and to demonstrate a working knowledge of Middle English. Students will write weekly responses to the assigned readings; lead the class discussion of two assigned readings; make one 15-20 minute presentation that summarizes the content and evaluates the thesis of a scholarly critical article; write a 20-25 page seminar using both primary and secondary sources; prepare, present, and distribute to the class an informational abstract of their seminar paper, with an annotated bibliography.

217 English Renaissance ([Professor 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.

229 Seventeenth Century British Literature ([Prof. Fleck](#))

"O my America! My new-found-land! / My kingdom safest when with one man manned." Sex as imperial conquest? Satan as conquistador? And where exactly is Caliban's island? Shakespeare, Jonson, Wroth, Donne, Herbert, Milton, Behn. In this course we'll explore a vibrant, energetic period of English poetry and prose, when love, power, and faith were the themes, and when concepts like sex and empire were discussed in each other's registers. Take a peek under the covers; you'll be surprised!

230 Eighteenth Century British Literature ([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. Swigart](#))

Intensive writing workshop in which students draft, revise, and complete short fictional pieces.

254 Genre Studies in American Literature ([Prof. Douglass](#))

This course will focus upon American Fiction's development from the 19th into the 20th centuries, touching upon American Romantics, Realists, Naturalists, Feminists, and Modernists. Economic systems (slavery, women's oppression, whaling, advertising, autos), and their technologies (ships, trains, electricity, telephony, internal combustion engines, film cameras) provide context for and influence upon the American fiction of the period from the Civil War to the Second World War (1860s to 1930s). Probable authors covered include Hawthorne, Douglass, Melville, Stowe, Twain, Freeman, James, Gilman, Wharton, Stein, Cather, Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck.

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

"California Literature": This course will examine the diverse voices and visions of California literature. During the first few weeks of the course, the class will discuss 19th century texts from the anthology, *The Literature of California*, Hicks, Houston, Kingston, Young. Then we will read longer works, focusing on four central issues in the state's development: land use (*Ramona* by Helen Hunt Jackson; *The Octopus*, Frank Norris; "Chinatown," selections from *Cadallie Desert*); continent's end (*Cannery Row*, John Steinbeck; *Big Sur*, Jack Kerouac; selections from Robinson Jeffers' poetry); migrations (*Flower Drum Song*, C.Y. Lee, short story selections); LA (*The Big Sleep*, Raymond Chandler; *The Day of the Locust*, Nathanael West).

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 Seminar in Composition Studies ([Prof. Cullen](#))

English 259 will address a broad range of topics in composition studies, including how students write and revise, how teachers evaluate compositions, and how instructors can design courses to accommodate a diverse student community. We will examine the styles, genres, and audiences available to student writers. We will address both highly practical issues (preventing plagiarism, surviving holistic scoring sessions) and those with a more theoretical flavor (liberating education, second-language acquisition). The required reading load will be light, so expect to do lots of independent research. Major assignments will include a seminar paper/project and a presentation to the class.

A NOTE ABOUT COURSES LIKELY TO BE SCHEDULED FOR SPRING 2006:

Seminars for Spring 2006 will probably include all of the following: 201, 202, 204, 208, 211, 225, 232, 233, 240, 241, 242, 253, 254, 292 (Beowulf).

English 292 Beowulf

Please consider availing yourself of a once in a long time chance to study a full year of Old English at San Jose State. If you take Old English in fall 2005, or have studied it elsewhere, you will have the prerequisite for this graduate seminar. We will be reading Beowulf in Old English in its entirety. (That's right, all 3182 lines!) Along the way, we will also study important critical questions concerning the Beowulf-manuscript, the Beowulf-poet and the rediscovery of this sui generis medieval poem in the nineteenth century. If you are interested, consider taking English 140A in Fall 2005:

English 140A Introduction to Old English (Fall 2005, MW 900-1015)

This class will provide an introduction to the language and literature of Old English. We will begin by learning the forms of nouns, adjectives and verbs and reading simple sentences from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. We will end with progressively more difficult pieces, including the great Old English elegies, *The Seafarer*, *The Wanderer* and the *Battle of Maldon*. We will also study Anglo-Saxon culture and the influence of Old English poetic style on more modern poetry (e.g. Ezra Pound's translation of *The Seafarer*.) This course is the prerequisite for English 292, Beowulf, to be offered in the spring, if there is sufficient interest.

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.

APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH MA AND MFA

Except for undergraduate courses you may have to take if you are a conditionally classified student, it is assumed that your graduate work will consist in 200-numbered English classes. Courses taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from your advisor before you take such courses. Similarly, upper-division English course work will not count unless you have convincing reasons to take undergraduate courses and you secure the cooperation of the instructor. Again, get approval in advance.

ENGLISH GRADUATE ORGANIZATION

The English Graduate Organization needs YOU! The EGO has been going through a dormant period lately, but we are still very much alive. EGO consists of grad students in

both the MA and MFA programs here at SJSU, and we always welcome new members. The EGO is exactly what you make it. Need study partners for your exams? Someone to critique your new poem? Just want to hang out, have a beer, and play Scrabble? (Since we all have SO MUCH time on our hands!) Look no further than your friendly neighborhood EGO! We have a Yahoo! group where we list upcoming conferences, calls for papers, and general announcements of concern to our members. Stop by <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SJSUEnglishGradOrg/> to sign up. There's no obligation, and best of all, it is 100% FREE! For those who are already EGO members, we need new officers, as all of us have or will have graduated shortly. We are looking for a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. responsibilities are, again, exactly what you make them. This is your group, do what you want with it. Post your interest on the site, and let's get an election going! Contact Matthew Kraft for more information: eurokrafty@hotmail.com Join the Enggrad list by sending an email message to: listproc@listproc.sjsu.edu and in the body of the text type this: SUBSCRIBE EngGrad [your first name] [your last name].

PH.D. APPLICATIONS

The department would very much like to know about students applying to Ph.D. programs and their success. Please let us know where you are applying and how things are working out.

GRADUATE BULLETIN BOARD AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

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 <http://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/index.htm> The SJSU Graduate Studies Office website also publishes important deadlines, rules, and information useful to graduate students: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/> To join the English Society's List Serve send an email message to: listproc@listproc.sjsu.edu and in the body of the text, type this: SUBSCRIBE EngDept [your first name] [your last name].

IMPORTANT DATES

April 1, 2005: Deadline for December 2005 graduates to have submitted Approved Program (Request for Candidacy) forms to Graduate Studies Office (10th St. Garage).

April 8, 2005: MFA comprehensive exam distributed (9:00 AM).

April 9, 2005: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 1, 9-12, FO 104

April 11, 2005: MFA comprehensive exam due (Noon).

April 16, 2005: MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 2, 9-12, FO 104

June 6, 2005: Last day to submit M.A. thesis copies for binding.

June 10, 2005: Last day for August graduates to file application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.

July 8, 2005: Last day for August graduates to submit thesis to the Graduate Studies Office.

Sept. 2, 2005: Last day for August graduates to submit thesis copies for binding to Graduate Studies Office.

Sept. 23, 2005: Last day for December graduates to file application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.

February 2005 Newsletter

