

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

San José State University

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Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator
Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing



Legacy of Poetry Day May 5, 2016
5:30-8:00 PM, Hammer Theater
Featuring U.S. Poet Laureate, Juan Felipe Herrera

Spring Office Hours

MA students should find Professor Brada-Williams in her office at FO 102 this semester Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-4:00 PM, and other days by appointment. Phone: 924-4439; email: Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu. MFA students should consult Professor Soldofsky in FO 106; hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 2:30 – 4:00 PM, or Thursday by appointment; phone: 924-4432; email: alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu.

Program Approval Deadline: December Graduates

If you are planning to graduate in December of 2016, and you have not filed your “Departmental Request for Candidacy” form (i.e. “Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy” form) you need to do this by April 1st, 2016. The form will ask you about all of the courses you plan to complete for your degree so it is always possible to file revisions to the list of courses you plan to complete. Find the “Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy” form at the GAPE website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/docs/candidacy.pdf> Please note that “Written Competency” is completed by English grads in your 201 or 201C courses (a requirement that must be completed in advance of filing this form).

Proposed Fall 2016 Graduate Course

| Class | Sem. | Day | Time | Professor |
|-------|--------|-----|-------------|----------------------|
| 201 | F 2016 | M | 19:00–21:45 | Adrienne Eastwood |
| 201c | F 2016 | M | 19:00–21:45 | Alan Soldofsky |
| 208 | F 2016 | M | 16:00–18:45 | Revathi Krishnaswamy |
| 211 | F 2016 | W | 16:00–18:45 | Sam Maio |
| 241 | F 2016 | R | 16:00–18:45 | Nick Taylor |
| 242 | F 2016 | R | 19:00–21:45 | Cathleen Miller |
| 255 | F 2016 | T | 19:00–21:45 | Susan Shillinglaw |
| 259 | F 2016 | T | 16:00–18:45 | Tom Moriarty |

In addition, the 140A and 140B series will run during the Fall and Spring semester of 2016-2017 for those of you interested in acquiring reading knowledge of Old English. Examples of upper division courses that may be of interest to Graduate students and which will be offered ONLY in Fall 2016 are Professor Mesher's 190 Honors seminar on Booker Prize winning literature and 183, our Major Authors seminar on Jane Austen.

List of Possible Spring 2017 Courses

We hope to offer these courses in the Spring, including:

- 203: Narrative Craft and Theory - C. Miller
- 240: Poetry Writing Workshop - Soldofsky
- 241: Fiction Writing Workshop - Lurie Chair (to be announced)
- 253: Victorian Literature - Wilson
- 254: Genre Studies in American Literature - Brada-Williams
- 257: History of Rhetoric - Skinnell

MA Comprehensive Exams

Please note that the next round of MA Comprehensive exams, the Fall MA Exam Part One (pre-1800) will be offered on Saturday September 10th and the Fall MA Exam Part Two (the post-1800 section) will be offered on September 17th (so as to avoid the Labor Day weekend which is the weekend of September 3rd-5th). Please let Professor Brada-Williams know by August 24th (the first day of instruction for the Fall semester) at the latest if you plan to take either or both parts of the exams. She will then issue you an identification number which will be used for the exam(s) you take. If you have not already done so, she will ask you to fill out the self-inventory of your reading in various fields and you will need to show it to her when you sign up (via email or in person). The entire reading list and the form to fill out your own inventory of your reading can be found by clicking on "guidelines" at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps.html>

MFA Comprehensive Exam

If you plan to graduate in Fall 2016 or Spring 2017, you should consult your thesis director about taking the Fall Exam. The Fall MFA Comprehensive Exam will be distributed on Friday, September 23, at 9:00 AM and is due on Monday, September 26, at 5:00 PM. Sign up to take the Fall 2016 MFA Exam by May 16, 2016 by emailing Prof. Soldofsky your SJSU I.D. number, Primary and Secondary Genre, and Thesis Director's name.

MA & MFA Foreign Language Exams

Both degree programs require a level of fluency in a second language equivalent to two years of college study of a language. If within five years of filing your program (achieving Candidacy), you have completed the fourth semester (or sixth quarter) of an approved university-level foreign language course sequence with a grade of "B" or better, you have already satisfied this requirement. Please bring that to the attention of your adviser when you file for candidacy.

Students who have taken coursework longer than five years previous to filing for candidacy or who have acquired their language skills and knowledge outside of an academic institution can satisfy the foreign language requirement in French, German, or Spanish, by taking the following steps:

1. Contact a language advisor (see below) and request authorization to take a foreign language placement test administered in our Media Center.
2. If the placement test results show a level of 4th semester or higher, the student will take a proficiency exam administered by a faculty member in the World Languages department in order to confirm his or her level and discuss a path to improvement, if needed.
3. If placement test results show a lower than 4th semester language level, the student will have to take the appropriate level language course, based on a conversation with the appropriate World Languages faculty member.

| Examiner | email | phone |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Professor Jean-Luc Desalvo | jean-luc.desalvo@sjsu.edu | 924-4620 |
| Professor Romey Sabalius (German) | romey.sabalius@sjsu.edu | 924-4616 |
| Professor Eleanor Marsh (Spanish) | eleanor.marsh@sjsu.edu | 924-4614 |

(it is usually best to call Professor Marsh or meet her in person in office hours)

Evidence of a first-language literacy other than English also satisfies the requirement. For answers to questions about this requirement, or to satisfy this requirement in a language other than French, German, or Spanish, please contact Professors Brada-Williams or Soldofsky for more information.

Graduate Assistant and Teaching Associate Positions for 2016-2017

Both current MA and MFA students and applicants who are eligible for admission to the program in Fall 2016 are invited to apply to our Teaching Associate and Graduate Assistant positions. New admits to the department and applicants with little or no teaching experience may apply to be Graduate Assistants for a semester or for a year. They will assist faculty teaching composition courses or large sections of literature courses, or sometimes other duties. Applicants who have served as Graduate Assistants or who have otherwise acquired the necessary experience may apply to be Teaching Associates. They will usually teach one section of composition, English 1A, under the guidance of the Writing Program Administrator, Professor Richard McNabb. Graduate Assistants can expect to work an average of 10 hours a week and gross about \$489 a month during the academic year (about \$2,934 per semester). Teaching Associates earn \$534 a month (\$3,204 per course). Teaching Associates are also given fee reimbursements which pay for state and campus fees at the California-resident level for up to 6 units per section taught (if the TA is not already covered by a grant for fees). TAs must successfully complete English 259 (the Pedagogy of Composition) during or before their first semester of teaching.

To apply, write to Professor Brada-Williams and submit a résumé, a writing sample, a cover letter which includes your reasons for applying, and two letters of reference from faculty in the department. If you are currently applying for admittance to the program in the Fall, you may use letters from people outside SJSU, preferably faculty who know your undergraduate work or who have supervised you in some kind of employment related to education. Also include your undergraduate GPA in English and a list of any English graduate courses you have taken with the grade you earned in each. All materials should be sent directly to Professor Brada-Williams. **Applications must be received no later than April 4th.** Please note that SJSU's Spring break lasts from March 26th to April 3rd this year and campus will be closed Tuesday, March 31st for Cesar Chavez day. We will conduct interviews during the first and second week of April for 2016-2017 appointments. Appointments are generally for the full academic year and we will not consider applications for TAships again until Spring 2017.

Deadline for MA and MFA Thesis Proposals

Thesis proposals must come to the Graduate Committee in the semester preceding the semester in which you will enroll for English 299. If you plan to write your thesis in the **Fall 2016** term, you must get your proposal to the Graduate Committee by **April 4th**. Those planning to write theses in the **Spring 2017** term will need to get proposals to the committee no later than **October 31st 2016**. Before you can present your proposal to the committee, you must 1) find a faculty member who will direct your work, 2) see your program coordinator to get a copy of the program's guidelines for developing proposals, and 3) develop your proposal in consultation with your thesis director/first reader, and 4) show your program coordinator a draft of your proposal and coversheet that has been approved by your director. (MFA students should also propose the names of second and third readers.) Only after you have done all this will you be ready to submit eight copies of your proposal to the committee. All this must be done *before* the deadline.

Deadline for Completing Theses

English department policy requires that every thesis must be approved by the thesis director, revised according to the director's instructions, and placed in the hands of the second and third readers in plenty of time to meet the Graduate Studies deadline for submission of theses. In Spring 2016 the department expects that revised theses will be in the hands of the second and/or third readers by **March 1st**. Readers need time to consider your work and you need time to revise it according to their suggestions. Ideally, you should be working closely with the second reader well before this date. Even if you meet the March 1st deadline, required revisions may still be so extensive that they cannot be completed in time to meet the university deadline of **April 8, 2016**. The Fall deadline for submitting completed theses to Graduate Studies is usually around the end of October. *Start early.*

Conditionally Classified Graduate Students

Conditionally classified students must complete required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. A list of upper-division literature courses approved for conditionally classified students is available from Professor Brada-Williams. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; see your advisor to file the necessary form (http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/docs/change_classification.pdf).

Approved Courses for the English MA and MFA

Except for undergraduate courses you have to take if you are a conditionally classified student, most 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. A limited number of upper-division undergraduate English courses can count towards the degree but you must secure the cooperation of the instructor and ask your graduate advisor for approval. Again, seek approval in advance.

PhD Applications

The department would very much like to know about students applying to PhD programs and their success. Please let us know where you are applying and how things are working out. For those of you graduating this May, stopping by the coordinator's office for an informal "exit" interview should be considered a necessary part of your preparations for graduation.

Keep Informed

Please be sure to sign up for the google group for our English Graduate Program. To sign up, send a blank email to: enggrad-group+subscribe@sjsu.edu. Key information is sent out via the google group that is essential for all MA and MFA students. Program descriptions, course descriptions, the most recent Newsletter, and other documents are posted on the **Department website**: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/>. The SJSU **Graduate Studies Office website** publishes important deadlines, forms, and information for current students at: http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/

Student Achievements

Samantha Crain has accepted a guarantee of six years of funding from the University of Minnesota where she will begin her doctoral program in the fall. She will also be going to the Byron conference in Greece in May and her first publications, a book review and a bibliography in the Steinbeck Review will be coming out soon.

The Summer 2015 thesis of **Gayathri Goel**, who is now in the doctoral program at Tufts, has been nominated by the department for the SJSU Outstanding Thesis Award.

Aubrey Laughlin has been accepted to two conferences this Spring including the Peaks Interdisciplinary Conference in Flagstaff where she will be presenting an “Ecofeminist Critique of Patriarchy” in Jane Smiley’s *A Thousand Acres*. At the SWPACA conference in Albuquerque, **Roxanne Powell** presented a paper on “The Evolution of the Hero” and **Rachel Wilson** presented on “The Little Blond Heroine.”

Alexandra Deabler will be giving a paper at the College English Association in Denver in March.



Photo by Christina Olivas

The Certificate Program in Technical and Professional Writing

The Certificate Program in Technical and Professional Writing prepares students for writing jobs in a number of fields, from publishing to high tech. Consisting of four core classes and two classes tailored to a student’s interests, the certificate is a nice complement to an advanced degree, and opens employment possibilities during and after graduation. Classes include Editing for Writers, Technical and Professional Writing, and Intro to Career Writing. Students gain experience writing in the many genres that make up the modern work landscape as well a hands-on training with the digital production tools of the modern workforce. The good news for graduate students, is that they can sign up for these courses with the priority of matriculating students while most Certificate students have to go through Open University after classes start and when spaces are not always available. See Professor Mark Thompson in the English Department for more information.

Important Dates in 2016

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|--------------------------|---|
| March 26- April 3 | Spring Break, no classes meet. |
| April 1 | Deadline to apply for candidacy if you plan to graduate in December 2016. |
| April 4 | Deadline for December 2016 graduates to submit approved official programs ("Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy"/"Departmental Request for Candidacy Form") to Graduate Studies. |
| April 4 | Deadline to submit thesis proposals (for fall 299 credits) to department Graduate Committee. |
| April 8 | Theses approved by all three thesis readers must be submitted to Graduate Studies for review in order for their authors to be eligible for May 2016 graduation. |
| May 5 | Legacy of Poetry Day celebration and festival, featuring readings by SJSU student, faculty, staff, and alumni poets, plus special appearances by Alejandro Murgia, San Francisco Poet Laureate; Al Young, California Poet Laureate Emeritus; and Juan Felipe Herrera, U.S. Poet Laureate, and a special performance of Pachanga by Luis Valdez and Kinan Valdez. Paseo de San Antonio and Hammer Theater Center, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. |
| May 16 | Sign-up for the Fall MFA exams with Professor Soldofsky |
| May 26 | Department Graduation ceremony and reception (contact the department office if you have not already received an invitation and plan on graduating this May) |
| June 10 | Deadline for August 2016 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the GAPE Office. |
| June 13 | Last day for May 2016 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for electronic publication (or embargoing). |
| July 1 | Last day for August 2016 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies. |
| Aug. 24 | Sign-up for the MA Comprehensive Exams by this date. |
| Aug. 24 | Fall Courses Begin. |
| Sept. 10 | Weekend for MA Comprehensive Exam Part I |
| Sept. 17 | Weekend for MA Comprehensive Exam Part II |
| Sept. 11 | Approximate deadline for December 2016 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the GAPE Office. |
| Sept. 19 | Last day for August 2016 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for electronic publication (or embargoing). |
| Sept. 23 | MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed electronically (9:00 a.m.) |
| Sept. 26 | MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5:00 p.m.) |
| Oct. 1 | Approximate deadline for May 2017 graduates to submit candidacy forms to GAPE |
| Oct. 31 | Deadline to submit thesis proposals for Spring 2017 299 credits to Department Grad Committee. |
| Oct. 31 | Approximate deadline for December 2015 graduates to submit approved thesis to Graduate Studies. |
| Jan. 26 | First day of Spring 2017 classes. |