

# ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 12

October 2022

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND  
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

## Jean Guerrero, 2023 Lurie Chair Distinguished Visiting Author-In-Residence



**Jean Guerrero** is a columnist at the Los Angeles Times. She is the author of *Hatemonger: Stephen Miller, Donald Trump and the White Nationalist Agenda*. Her first book, *Crux: A Cross-Border Memoir*, won a PEN Literary Award and was named one of NPR's Best Books of 2019. Her writing is featured in *Vanity Fair*, *Politico*, *The Nation*, *Wired*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Best American Essays 2019* by Rebecca Solnit and more. She won the 2022 "Best Commentary" award from the Sacramento Press Club. While working at KPBS as an investigative border reporter, she won an Emmy, contributed to NPR, the PBS NewsHour and more. Months before Trump's family separations captured national attention, her PBS reporting on the practice was cited by members of Congress. She started her career at the Wall Street Journal and Dow Jones Newswires as a foreign correspondent in Mexico and Central America. She was named one of the California Chicano News Media Association's most influential Latina journalists.

### Fall Office Hours

#### MA Advising

Revathi Krishnaswamy

revathi.krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu

Virtual office hours: M 6:45-7:30 p.m. & by  
appointment

#### MFA Advising

Prof. Alan Soldofsky

alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu

Virtual office hours: T/Th 3:30-4:30 pm. &

W by appointment



### Revathi Krishnaswamy

Graduate Coordinator



### Alan Soldofsky

Director of Creative Writing and  
MFA Program Coordination

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## Important Policies

### Deadlines for MA and MFA Graduates

Please consult the GAPE website for current candidacy and graduation deadlines: [www.sjsu.edu/gape/deadlines/index.php](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/deadlines/index.php)

Note that if you are planning to graduate in May 2023, you should file your official "Petition for Advancement to Graduate Candidacy" by October 1, 2022. Applications (or reactivations of applications) for May 2023 graduation must be filed by February 1, 2023. The relevant forms can be found at the GAPE forms website: [www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/index.php](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/index.php)

### University Policy

University Policy requires that graduate students must be enrolled in classes when they finish their culminating experiences (such as theses and exams). Note that students must finish their theses while they are enrolled in their 299 units (or else enroll in UNVS 1290R which is basically just a fee, not a class).

### Deadline for MA and MFA Thesis Proposals

Thesis proposals must come to the Graduate Committee at least five weeks before the end of the semester preceding the semester in which you will enroll for 299 credits. If you plan to write your thesis or project in the Spring 2023 term, you must submit your proposal to the Graduate Committee by Nov 1, 2022. If you plan to write your thesis in the Fall 2023 term, you must get your proposal to the Graduate Committee no later than April 3, 2022.

Guidelines for MFA thesis and thesis proposals: [www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/mfa/thesis-guidelines.php](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/mfa/thesis-guidelines.php)

Guidelines for MA thesis and cover sheet: [www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/thesis.php](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/thesis.php)

After you have secured a thesis advisor or "first reader," and the thesis advisor has read and approved your proposal, you may submit your proposal electronically to the chair of the Graduate Committee ([revathi.krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu](mailto:revathi.krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu)). Be sure to cc your thesis advisor in the email so that the Graduate Coordinator knows that the first reader has approved the proposal being submitted to the Graduate Committee.

### Spring 2023 MFA Exam

Exam Distributed 9:00 am, Friday March 3;

Exam due by 5:00 pm, Monday March 6

### Spring 2023 MA Exam

**Part 1** February 24 Friday 10:00-12:00 pm

**Part 2** Exam Distributed 9:00 am, Friday March 3;

Exam due by 5:00 pm, Monday March 6

Deadline to sign up for Spring 2023 MA exam – Dec 1 2022

Full Details including Deadlines and Readings Lists:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/comp-exam.php>

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## MA Foreign Language Exam

The MA degree program requires a level of fluency in a second language equivalent to one year of college study of a language. If you were conditionally admitted and asked to satisfy this requirement, you can take the language placement exams for the most commonly taught languages in the SJSU World Languages Media Center in Clark 206. See [www.sjsu.edu/wll/proficiency-exams/index.php](http://www.sjsu.edu/wll/proficiency-exams/index.php).

If you score higher than a 2nd semester level in a given language, take the printout to the World Language office and the department chair will sign off on it. If you place at the level of 2nd semester or below, you must do whatever coursework is needed for you to achieve a level of language skill equivalent to one year of study. As always, native fluency in a language as shown by schooling in that language or attestation by an academic skilled in that native language are also ways to satisfy this requirement. Evidence of equivalent first-language literacy in languages other than English also satisfies the requirement. For questions about this requirement, or to satisfy this requirement in a language not tested by the World Languages Department, please contact Professor Krishnaswamy.

## Spring 2023 Schedule of Classes

Here are the tentative courses, faculty, and meeting times for our Spring 2023 graduate course offerings:

English 233	M	Online	16:00 - 18:45	Revathi Krishnaswamy
English 240	W	HGH227	19:00 - 21:45	J. Michael Martinez
English 241	T	Online	16:00 - 18:45	Keenan Norris
English 242	T	Online	19:00 - 21:45	Jean Guerrero
English 255	W	BBC128	16:00 - 18:45	Maite Urcalegui
English 257	W	HGH227	16:00 - 18:45	Ryan Skinnell

At least 21 of the 30 units of classes required for the MA program should be in 200-numbered English courses. Of the 30, only 6 units can be taken as credit/no credit independent study of thesis units. Upper-division English coursework (100 level) may count for graduate students if you have received permission of the instructor as well as the MA or MFA Coordinator. Classes taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from your advisor before you take such courses.

Also check the schedule for additional upper division undergraduate course offerings that may be of interest, and which will not be covered by the Graduate Curriculum.

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 the MA Coordinator to file the necessary form and await approval.

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## Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

### English 233

#### The Literature of the Victorian Empire

M 16:00 - 18:45 (Professor Krishnaswamy)

This seminar expands the scope of Victorian literature to all of Queen Victoria's empire. Our goal will be to (i) extend "Victorian" beyond the national boundaries of England/Great Britain and Queen Victoria's death/WWI (ii) scrutinize the constitution of "Victorian literature" as a distinct, coherent, hallmark of English high culture, and (iii) examine the emergence of realism as the privileged aesthetic of the great tradition of the Victorian novel. We will undertake this project through close readings of major works of literature as well as criticism. Throughout the course we will explore the connections between literature, culture, history, and politics. Readings and discussions will be of relevance to the 19th Century MA exam area. Intellectual curiosity, academic rigor, openness of mind, commitment to work hard, tolerance for difficulty, ambiguity, and uncertainty are essential to succeed in the class. The course will be taught mostly synchronously, using Canvas and Zoom. The course satisfies the 4-unit GVAR requirement for both MFA and MA students.

### English 240

#### Poetry Writing Workshop

W 19:00 - 21:45 (Professor Martinez)

This course will focus on the study of formal prosody, and historical poetics. We will write, workshop, and read for a deeper understanding of prosody, paying close attention to the historical poetics from which those techniques emerged. Covering the 17th century's use of the heroic couplet to Gerard Manly Hopkins' conception of *Sprung Rhythm*, from Charles Olson's *Projective Verse* to Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderland Theory*, our class will read to expand our knowledge and practice of poetic form. Poetics and poetry writing as preparation for a thesis. Includes theory and practice of major trends in contemporary poetry. Intensive workshop experience. May be repeatable for credit for up to 12 units.

### English 241

#### Fiction Writing Workshop

T 16:00 - 18:45 (Professor Norris)

This is the most advanced fiction workshop offered at SJSU. It is designed for students pursuing writing as a vocation. Students enrolled in the MFA Program in Creative Writing have registration priority. If there is extra space, graduate students in other disciplines may enroll with instructor permission. The majority of our class time will be spent discussing student work. We will also read several short stories and essays on literary craft.

This class is divided into two thematics: ghosts and dreams. The "ghosts" represent memory, how we are visited by history and our personal experiences and how we as storytellers metabolize these memories in the narratives that we create. The "dreams" represent imagination as it is manifested in experimentation with different narrative structures and surprises and the pure virtuosity of language. Within this two-part prism, we will take a tour of different styles of creative writing. We will look deeply at the ghosts and dreams of writers past and present, learning what's been invented, what's trending, and, ultimately, we will press forward with writing that is informed by other literature but that is all our own.

Additionally, we will discuss aspects of the writing profession, with visits from literary professionals to-be-announced. Topics of these discussions will include finding time, managing writing time, finding and building literary community, finding an agent or publisher, and networking. Students will workshop their work as many as three times during the term (2,000-5,000 words) and will also be required to provide written feedback to their classmates when their classmates are the focus of the workshop. The objectives of this course are to study and work toward establishing our voice(s) as writers, to learn in nuanced fashion the deep lives of our characters, and to learn how to creatively corral history and the unknown.

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## Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

### English 242

#### Nonfiction Workshop

T 19:00-21:45 (Jean Guerrero)

From memoir to reportage, the art of narrative nonfiction is a catalyst for change. It can shape the personal and political in our times of escalating, multiplying, falsehood-fueled crises. In this course led by SJSU's Lurie Distinguished Visiting Writer – acclaimed memoirist and Emmy-winning journalist Jean Guerrero – students will learn to be thoughtful agents of that change. They'll study masters of the craft in memoir, personal essays, political biography, conflict reporting, commentary, criticism and other literary nonfiction to hone their voice and creative vision. Through short exercises and a longer project, they will improve their grasp of style, structure, investigative skills and the ethics of writing about the self and other people. In a world where truth and democracy are under attack, they will also examine the personal safety, health and fighting tactics necessary for long-term success in this vocation.

### English 255

#### Visuality in Multiethnic American Literature

W 16:00-18:45 (Professor Urcaregui)

Within the United States' racist and colonial history, race has long been (mis)understood as a stable visual signifier, something that is written on the body. Yet, authors and scholars alike have pointed out the ways in which our ways of seeing race are not only socially constructed but also rife with contradictions. In this course, we will examine how 20th and 21st-century multiethnic American literature takes up the vexed relationship between visuality and race, or what many scholars refer to as the visual politics of race. We will read works of literature by Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian American authors who explore racialized experiences of (in)visibility, the refusal to properly "perform" one's race, the role of visual aesthetics in identity formation, and the ways that images might bear witness to and resist racist violence. We will read texts across forms and genres, including novels, plays, poetry, short stories, and graphic novels, that not only thematically depict the visual politics of race but also creatively represent and resist them through their aesthetic form.

Some of these literary works explicitly comment on ways of seeing or represent and respond to visual art and others reproduce or incorporate images within their pages; all of these works playfully experiment with the role of visual aesthetics within literature and the possibilities therein. Finally, we will engage with critical texts from literary studies, visual studies and art history, ethnic studies, and feminist and queer studies to build an interdisciplinary and intersectional framework through which to read the aesthetic and political strategies of multiethnic American literature. This course will incorporate at least two texts from the "Multiethnic American Literature" M.A. comprehensive exam list and will provide students with a broad understanding of the field and historical and theoretical frames through which to engage it.

### English 257

#### History of Rhetoric

W 16:00-18:45pm (Professor Skinnell)

Rhetoric covers a vast intellectual territory that draws on more than 3000 years of history and touches on every geographical area of the world. We cannot hope to cover it all in one course, so ENGL 257 will serve as (1) an introduction to influential Western texts, thinkers, and ideas, that have been important in the field of rhetoric, and (2) an introduction to important texts, thinkers, and ideas from around the world that complicate our notions of "influence" and "the field of rhetoric." This class is intended to act more as a sample of disciplinary possibilities than a definitive guide to all things rhetoric. Students will have the option to focus their attention on one or more particular areas of interest.

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## MA/MFA Reminders and Guidelines Stay 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](mailto: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 English Department website: [www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate).



The SJSU Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE) Office website publishes important deadlines, forms, and information for current students at: [www.sjsu.edu/gape](http://www.sjsu.edu/gape)

## GRADES

Graduate Resource and Academic Development for English Studies (GRADES) is up and running. Two socials and a professional workshop on how to make an academic CV with Dr. Skinnell have already been held. The next workshop in November is about Ph.D applications with Dr. Johnson. GRADES will continue to organize once a month workshops and twice a month socials. Look out for announcements!

GRADES has two social media accounts:

**Discord:**

[discord.gg/E3kTZr9z](https://discord.gg/E3kTZr9z)

**Instagram:**

[instagram.com/sjsu.grades?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=](https://www.instagram.com/sjsu.grades?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

For more information, please email

[Amna.Yusuf@sjsu.edu](mailto:Amna.Yusuf@sjsu.edu)

## Graduate Student Conference, coming in Spring 2023

Be on the lookout for a Call for Papers for a graduate student conference in late April 2023! Share a seminar paper or creative piece during a mini-conference with other SJSU English MAs and MFAs. Full details will be announced soon.

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## Important Dates in 2022-2023

Oct 1	Deadline for May 2023 Graduates to submit their "Departmental Request for Candidacy" form to GAPE. Requires the MA or MFA advisor's signature.
Nov 1	Deadline to submit thesis or project proposals (for Spring 2023 ENGL 299 units) to the English Department Graduate Committee.
Nov 14	Deadline for December 2022 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office.
Dec 17	Deadline for signing up to take the Spring 2023 MFA Comprehensive Exam.
Jan 10	Deadline for December 2023 graduates to submit thesis for publication (or embargo).
Jan 23	Deadline for signing up for the Spring MFA Exam: Sign up <a href="#">here</a> .
Feb 1	Deadline for May 2023 graduates to submit graduation application to Graduate Studies Office.
Feb 24	MA Part 1 Exam 10-12 pm online via Canvas
Feb 28	Deadline for applications for 2023-24 TAships
Mar 3	MA (Part 2) and MFA Comprehensive Exam given (9:00 am).
Mar 6	MA (Part 2) MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5:00 pm).
April 2	Deadline for December 2023 graduates to file their "Request for Candidacy" forms (requires MA or MFA advisor's signature).  Deadline for applications for 2023-2024 TA and GA due to the Graduate Coordinator.
April 3	Deadline for submitting MFA Thesis Proposals to the Department Graduate Committee
April 17	Deadline for May 2023 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office or to the English Department for Departmental Thesis (298D).

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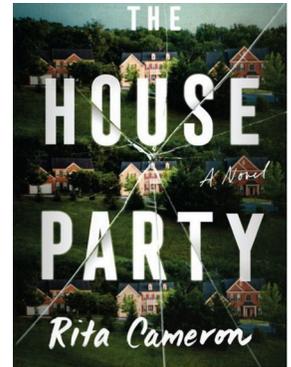
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## Graduate Faculty, Student, and Alumni Accomplishments

### Rita Cameron

[Rita Cameron](#), student in the MFA program (Fiction), has published a new novel, *The House Party* (William Morrow/HarperCollins).



### Anne Cheilek

Anne Cheilek, student in the MFA program, has a poem titled "Eclipse" published in the latest issue of [The Shore](#), and a second poem titled "Unforgiven" accepted for publication in an upcoming issue of *Juked*.

### Emily Coletta

MFA student Emily Coletta published a short story in [Catamaran, Issue 38, Fall 2022](#).

### Dolly Estrada

McNair Scholar and MA student Dolly Estrada completed her research project on women in classical Greek tragedy.

### Alan Soldofsky

Alan Soldofsky, MFA Director, published a poem "[Want Not](#)" in *Fence*, a magazine published by SUNY Albany (digital); two poems in [Puerto del Sol](#), Spring 2022 issue (print): "Excessive Heat Late Summer" and "Naglee Park"; edited and contributed to the LA Review of Books section "[Remembering Denis Johnson](#)"; and made a presentation at the [2022 Conference on Religion & Spirituality in Society](#) in Cordoba Spain, June 9-10, 2022.



### Seher Vora

Seher Vora published two short stories over the summer: "[The Bridge Between Us](#)" in *Carve Magazine* and "[In the Long-Remembered Afters](#)" in *Corvid Queen*.

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## Departmental Awards Recipients (Spring 2022)

### **Bonita M. Cox Award For Classical And Medieval Literature**

Dory Albert

### **Kichung Kim Scholarship**

Amna Yusuf

Seher Vora

### **The Lois King Thore Scholarship Fund**

Andres Ocampo

Elaina Davey

### **The Dr. Jack E. Fink and Maxine Hunt Fink Scholarship Endowment**

Nicole Calande

Ian Power-Luetscher

### **The Dorrit A. Sibley Writing Scholarship Award Fund**

Felipe de La Rosa

Addie Mahmassani

Catherine Tosti

### **Marjorie McLaughlin Folendorf Award**

Ume Ali

### **Anne Lillis Memorial Scholarship Fund**

Phuong L. Pham

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## **The Robert H. Woodward Memorial Scholarship**

Amna Yusuf

Alicia Lovelace

## **The Abraham and Eleanor H. Bezanker Scholarship Endowment**

Jendreick Viernes

Leah Tyus

## **James Phelan Award for Criticism**

1st: Aaron Langerman

2nd: Amna Yusuf

## **James Phelan Award for Poetry**

1st: Catherine Tosti

2nd: Phuong Pham

## **James Phelan Award for Fiction Story**

1st: Cassie Blair

2nd: Seher Vora

## **James Phelan Award for Non-fiction Essay**

1st: Anonymous

2nd: Sirui (Sisy) Zhou

## **Ida Fay Sachs Ludwig Memorial Scholarship**

Felipe de La Rosa

## **Academy of American Poets Virginia de Araujo Prize**

Phuong Pham