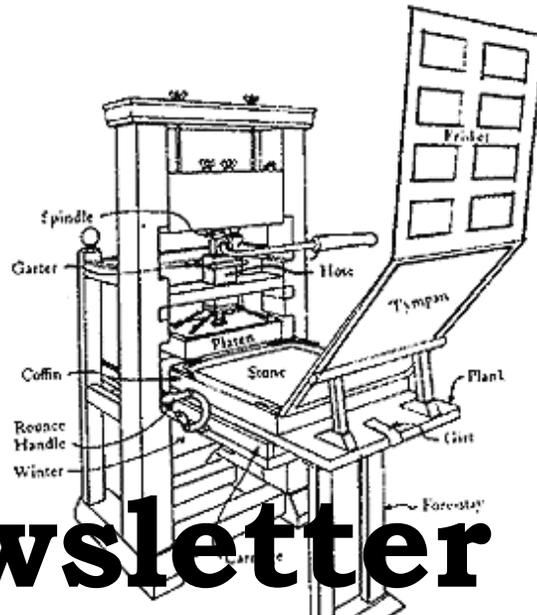


English Graduate Newsletter



San José State University

Volume XXXXVI, Number 2

November/December 2013

Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator

Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing

MA Advising: Professor Brada-Williams' office hours this semester are Mondays 1 to 2 PM, Tuesdays 1-3 PM, and Fridays 1-3 PM. Additional times are available by appointment. Please feel free to call or to stop by her office at FO 110. Phone: 924-4439; email: Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu. Professor Soldofsky's hours are Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday 1:30-2:45 in FO 106. His office phone is 924-4432 and his email is alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu.

ANDREW SEAN GREER ON CAMPUS IN SPRING 2014



Novelist and short-story writer Andrew Sean Greer's latest book is the 2013 novel *The Impossible Lives of Greta Wells* (2013). The New York Times called his 2008 novel *The Story of a Marriage* "lyrical" and "inspired." His first novel, 2001's *The Path of Minor Planets*, was well received, and his second, 2004's *The Confessions of Max Tivoli*, earned him comparisons to Proust and Nabokov from critic John Updike. His stories have appeared in *Esquire*, *The Paris Review*, *The New Yorker*, and other national publications. Born in Washington, D.C., Greer received his bachelor's degree from Brown University and his master's degree from the University of Montana. He currently resides in San Francisco.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2014

204	16	W	16:00	18:45	Krishnaswamy, Revathi
208	16	R	16:00	18:45	Karim, Persis M
230	16	T	19:00	21:45	Brada, Angela Noelle
256	16	W	19:00	21:45	Wilson, William A
240	16	M	19:00	21:45	Soldofsky, Alan D
241	16	M	16:00	18:45	Lurie Chair Greer
242	16	R	19:00	21:45	Miller, Cathy A
255	16	T	16:00	18:45	Engell, John

English 204: Modern Approaches to Literature, Professor Krishnaswamy

This course deals with the multidisciplinary field of Literary Critical Theory, which not only includes literary criticism but also cuts across other disciplines like psychology, philosophy, anthropology, economics, political science, history, biology and others. Focusing mainly on theories and methodologies employed by literary scholars and critics of the 20th century, we will engage with fundamental questions about language, literature, and reading/writing: What is literature? How do we interpret it? How should we evaluate it? What is its relation to culture and to society? What are the rights and duties of artists? Of critics and scholars? We will try to understand major intellectual schools such as New Criticism, Structuralism, Marxism, Feminism, Deconstruction, New Historicism, Psychoanalysis, and Postcolonialism to discover how their ideas may be applied to literature. While this course will challenge you to read a considerable amount of complex material, it should also be exhilarating because you will have an opportunity to form clearer perspectives on language/literature and to acquire tools you can use for interpreting language/literature.

English 208: Seminar in Comparative Literature, Professor Karim

"Reading the Magical Realist Novel across the Globe"

This course investigates how "magical realism" as a literary style and mode of narration is employed in a number of world literature contexts, beginning with the *The Arabian Nights*, one of the oldest and popular oral narratives in the world which is suggestive of the earliest use of the magical elements in storytelling. Other novels include: Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Columbia), Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (US), Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (India) and Abdelrahman Munif's *Cities of Salt* (Saudi Arabia). We will also read some critical texts to understand how magical realism has been adapted to address socio-political, cultural, and historical moments and traumas such as colonialism and its aftermath, slavery and violence, and the emergence and rise of nation-states and nationalist narratives.

In addition to reading these wonderful texts, students will write two short papers and one longer paper. The longer paper will allow students to either write their own magical realist narrative (fiction) or do a more investigative research paper into one of the texts we're reading or select among several other classics of magical realist literature.

English 230: Bestsellers of the Eighteenth Century, Professor Brada-Williams

In this course we will focus on the authors and texts that excited readers in the 18th century as the novel in English was just developing and satire in English was reaching its zenith. You will read texts that make *Downton Abbey* seem like a tepid imitation. Some of these texts are still perennial favorites throughout the world while others dropped in popularity with changes in moral norms. We will explore how these texts appeal to readers then and now as well as how they intersect with the material world of the literary marketplace, the growth of British imperialism, and the gender politics of the time. This is an excellent course to take in preparation for part one of the MA comprehensive exam or for contemporary novelists interested in the origins of the form.

English 240: Graduate Poetry Workshop: Professor Soldofsky

This semester's workshop theme is "Singing School": Lyric Poetry and Song Lyrics. In this MFA-level poetry workshop, we will explore the links and blurred boundaries between lyric poetry and song lyrics (in rock, jazz, and new classical genres). Students will create a portfolio of ten new poems plus write weekly blog entries and give a presentation on a poet or poet/songwriter whose work we discuss in the workshop. In addition to the students' original poems and song lyrics that we will workshop, we will examine the work of other poets and poet/songwriters including: Kim Addonizio, Elizabeth Bishop, Elvis Costello, Leonard Cohen, Bob Dylan, Louise Gluck, Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Joni Mitchell, Robert Pinsky, Lou Reed, Bruce Springsteen, Derek Walcott, Lucinda Williams, Amy Winehouse, Neil Young, and Warren Zevon. *Students who are not enrolled in the MFA program should send samples of their poetry and/or song lyrics to the instructor to receive permission to enroll in the workshop.*

English 241, Fiction Writing Workshop Lurie Chair Andrew Sean Greer

We will be confronting, enjoying and advising on your short fiction weekly, along with discussing techniques of writing, beginning with words and sentences and ending with how to structure a novel. Readings will be various and startling. Cross-genre fiction encouraged, along with reckless abandon and love of language. There will be poetry. There may be robots.

English 242: Nonfiction Writing Workshop, Professor Cathleen Miller

Publishers Weekly calls "narrative nonfiction" the two hottest words in publishing today. In this class we will explore the genre's myriad facets by reading the *Best American Essays 2013* edited by Cheryl Strayed. We'll discuss the techniques and fundamentals of creative nonfiction for newcomers; seasoned veterans are welcome to bring in portions of their theses for workshop. And of course by popular demand our no-stress experimentation with the ubiquitous two pagers will continue, culminating in our end-of-the-semester reading and celebration.

English 255: Genres of American Literature, Professor John Engell

Title: AMERICAN ROMANTICS, AMERICAN BEATS

In this seminar we will read poetry, fiction, and non-fiction prose by a number of American "Romantic" writers active during the mid-nineteenth century and a number of American "Beat" writers active during the mid-twentieth century. The writers we read and discuss will be selected from the following lists:

American "Romantics": Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Herman Melville,

American "Beats": William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gary Snyder, Diane DiPrima, Anne Waldman

NOTE: We will not study all of these writers, but a significant number of them.

In addition to extensive reading, the seminar will require each student to do several oral presentations accompanied by handouts, several short two page essays, and a longer essay, either a research essay or a more personal "creative" essay. I intend this seminar will be of value to both M.A. and M.F.A. students.

English 256: Twentieth-Century English Literature, Professor Wilson:

The seminar will trace the origins of literary modernism in early twentieth-century literature and their ramifications through the remainder of the century. The anchor will be *Ulysses*. We will also read Lawrence's *Women in Love*, Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and Greene's *The End of the Affair*. Yeats's and Hardy's verse will be at the center of our investigation of the period's poetry. We will supplement their work with selections from Auden, MacNeice, Larkin, Heaney and Muldoon. Requirements: One short explication; a long comparative essay; and one class presentation.

English 298: Special Studies Internship Opportunities

The MFA Curriculum requires that you complete 6 units of "Professional Training," which can be fulfilled in several ways, including by enrolling in one or two 3-units of an internship (a minimum 120 hours of work per 3-units per semester). Appropriate tasks for a student intern include but are not limited to the following:

- Writing or editing printed or electronic texts of various kinds
- Working in the marketing, promotion, or other non-editorial functions of an arts-related organization
- Teaching or assisting in a K-12 or college class (on a subject related to the graduate student's area of study)
- Teaching or assisting in a college class in creative writing, working in a live classroom or using an online learning management system for which you have received training

To qualify for credit, students must present documentation of having secured an internship. This means providing an official job description or list of responsibilities on company, organization, or agency letterhead (or a printout of an email from an official organizational or faculty email address) indicating the specific tasks to be performed. The letter (or email) must also include the name of a supervisor who will verify that the student completed the requisite number of hours, and who will write an evaluation of the student's performance at the **end of the internship**. In order to get an add code for ENGL 298 units, the student must also fill out a department 298 form ("Individual Studies and Directed Reading"), listing the Director of Creative Writing or your faculty supervisor as "Professor with whom you will work." Take the signed form, along with a copy of the internship letter, to the department office for approval. At the end of the internship, students must submit to the Director of Creative Writing a 5-7 page report discussing the internship experience: what they did, what they learned, and how their academic training was applied during the internship. Students must also present a written assessment from the internship supervisor. Credit (a grade of CR) will not be awarded without these two assessments.

APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH MA AND MFA

Graduate students may take a limited number of undergraduate upper division courses for graduate credit. Please look over the entire department schedule of classes for courses that may be of specific interest to you but which we are not offering at the graduate level in the spring semester.

Courses taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from your advisor before you take such courses. Upper-division undergraduate English course work can count if you secure the approval of both the instructor and the graduate advisor to take the class as a graduate student (with assignments and standards befitting your advanced level).

CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED MA STUDENTS

Conditionally classified students must complete their required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. A list of upper-division literature courses approved for conditionally classified students is available in the rack outside the English department and is posted on the Department website. Be sure to take only courses from this list. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; you need to apply. The form is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>. Bring this form and a print out of your grades from Mysjsu when you contact your adviser.

CHANGE IN “RP” OR “REPORT IN PROGRESS” POLICY FOR THESIS WRITERS

Students who do not complete their thesis within the semester for which they have enrolled in 299 units are given an “RP” for Report in Progress. Students who receive an “RP” will need to enroll in a one-unit class until they complete their thesis. Please see the entire policy at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/F11-2.htm> for details.

GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

David Coad, Kelly Curtis, and Jonathan Cook, with secondary authors Valerie Cruz, Dylan Grozdanich, Randy Holaday, Amanda Kolstad, Alexander James Papoulias, Ilyssa Russ, Genevieve Sanvictores, and Erik White just published their article, "BeardStair: A Digital Humanities Project History" in *The Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy* (Issue 4, Fall 2013).

ENGLISH GRADUATE LISTSERV

To subscribe to the EngGrad listserv, follow the directions at this website:

<http://lists.sjsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/enggrad>. Key information is sent out on that listserv. Consider joining the listserv a requirement of all MA and MFA students.

PHD 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 FORMS

The university is constantly updating the various forms required of graduate students. To ensure that you have the most up to date version, go directly to

http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/current_students/forms/index.htm Note that the “petition for advancement to candidacy” has to be signed off by your advisor and turned into GAPE the semester before graduation and you have to submit the application to graduate early in the semester that you plan to graduate (February 15 for May 2014 graduation).

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
or Professor Dominique van Hooff (French):	dominique.vanhooft@sjsu.edu	924-4610
Professor Larissa Chiriaeva (German):	larissa.chiriaeva@sjsu.edu	924-4591
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.

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/index.htm

KEY DATES FOR SJSU ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Dec. 17:** Deadline for signing up to take the Spring 2014 MFA Comprehensive Exam. Recommended for May, August, and December 2014 MFA graduates.
- Dec. 20:** Deadline to submit reading lists to sign up for the Spring MA exams (see the “Guidelines” at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps.html>) You will receive your number for identifying your MA exam at this time. The exams in Spring will be written on computer in SH 229.
- Jan. 20:** Deadline for December 2013 graduates to submit thesis for publication
- February 1:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 1, FO 104, 9-12:30.
- February 8:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 2, FO 104, 9-12:30.
- Feb. 7:** Deadline for December 2014 graduates to file their “Department Request for Candidacy” forms (requires MA or MFA Advisor’s signature).
- Feb. 14:** Deadline for May 2014 graduates to submit application for award of Master’s Degree to the Graduate Studies Office.
- Feb. 21:** MFA Comprehensive Exam Distributed (9:00 A.M.)
- Feb. 24:** MFA Comprehensive Exam Due (5:00 P.M.)
- Mar. 21:** Last day that campus is open before TA and GA applications and thesis proposals for Fall 2014 299 credit are due. Be sure to keep this date in mind as you ask for letters of recommendation and/or advice on your thesis proposal.
- April 1:** Applications for 2014-2015 TA and GAships due to the Graduate Coordinator. GA & TA interviews are planned for the first two weeks of April.
- April 1:** Deadline for thesis proposals to be submitted to the graduate committee to sign up for Fall 2014 299 units.
- April 4:** Deadline for May 2014 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office.
- June 7:** Last date for August 2013 graduates to reactivate or file application for graduation.
- June 13:** Last day for May 2014 graduates to submit approved MA and MFA theses for electronic publication
- July 1:** Deadline for August 2014 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.

