



ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

Volume IL, Number 2

December 2016

Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator

Alan Soldofsky Director of Creative Writing

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours for both the MA Advisor, Professor Brada-Williams, and the MFA Advisor, Professor Alan Soldofsky, will resume once the Spring semester begins January 26, 2017. Until then, it is best to contact your advisors via email: Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu or alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu. Please be patient about are responses to your emails during the holidays.



VENDELA VIDA ON CAMPUS IN SPRING 2017

Novelist Vendela Vida will be the Connie L. Lurie Visiting Author in Spring 2017 when she will teach the Graduate Workshop in Fiction (English 240) on Tuesdays. She is editor of the literary magazine *The Believer*. She has published many books including *Girls on the Verge* (2000), *And Now You Can Go* (2008), *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name* (2008), *The Lovers* (2010), and *The Diver's Clothes Lie Empty* (2015). She is also involved in 826 Valencia with her husband Dave Eggers.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2017

203	16	R	W	4-6:45 PM	Nicholas Taylor
224	16	M	M	4-6:45 PM	Adrienne Eastwood
240	16	M	W	7-9:45 PM	William Wilson
241	16	T	M	7-9:45 PM	Alan Soldofsky
242	16	R	T	4-6:45 PM	Lurie Chair Vendela Vida
254	16	W	T	7-9:45 PM	Noelle Brada-Williams
257	16	W	R	4-6:45 PM	Ryan Skinnell

See the October/November 2016 newsletter for course descriptions.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT AND TEACHING ASSOCIATE POSITIONS FOR 2017-2018

Both current MA and MFA students and applicants who are eligible for admission to the program in Fall 2017 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 be assigned as 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 be assigned as Teaching Associates. They will usually teach one section of composition, English 1A, under the guidance of the Teaching Associate Coordinator, Professor Ryan Skinnell. 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 (Seminar in Composition Studies) 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 describing your goals and your experience, and three 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 for Teaching Associates must be received no later than February 1st, 2017.

Applications for Graduate Assistants must be received no later than April 1st, 2017. You may

write a single letter of application to cover GA and TA positions—simply tell us your preference and let us know if you would accept the alternative if offered (and all applications for both must meet the earlier deadlines for the TAsip).

We will conduct interviews during the first and second week of February for 2017-2018 appointments. Appointments are generally for the full academic year and we will not consider applications for TAsips again until Spring 2018. For more information, please visit <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/TA/>.

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). Three upper division courses that may be of interest to Grad students this Spring include Professor Harris' Digital Dickens Special Topics Coures (English 181, TR 12-1:15), Professor Karim's class on Muslim American Literature, (English 165 TR 3-4:15 PM), and Professor Stork's 140B (TR 1:30-2:45), which is the final semester in the two-semester series on Old English.

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/forms/> . 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 10 for May 2017 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
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.

THE MFA THESIS PROPOSAL PROCESS

Before you can enroll in Thesis Units (ENGL 299), you must write a thesis proposal, which first must be approved by the faculty members who you have recruited to be on your Thesis Committee. Once your committee has signed your Thesis Proposal form, the proposal will be sent to the Department Graduate Committee for approval. This committee is a group of half a dozen tenure-line faculty members who meet regularly to discuss the department's MA and MFA programs. In general, the first reader (or Thesis Director) should be a tenure-line faculty member in your primary genre. The Director is the person you will work with most often while you are writing and revising your thesis. He or she will also help you draft and submit your Thesis Proposal.

Usually the second and third readers will review the finished manuscript only once, whereas the Director may read the manuscript twice (or more). Many MFAs have chosen literature faculty members as their third or sometimes second readers. You might even ask a writer or professor from another school who you know and/or has an interest in your work to serve on your committee. Note however that the University guidelines require a majority of the committee (i.e., two people) to be SJSU faculty. Allow plenty of time to recruit your committee. Faculty are very busy, and sometimes your first choices may not have time to serve. Be flexible. All three committee members must sign off on your proposal before you send it on to the Graduate Committee.

THE NEW THESIS PROPOSAL FORM CONSISTS OF THREE SECTIONS:

Part 1: Content

The candidate must provide a summary (in approximately 500 words or less) of the project's content, style, and literary goals (works their project has the most resemblance to or affinities with).

Part 2: Influences/Bibliography

A. The candidate will write a concise descriptive introduction to an annotated bibliography listing works that have influenced the project. (Under 100 words)

B. The candidate will provide an annotated bibliography of works that are most like or most influential on the project proposed. In the annotations, students should succinctly describe each individual work's affinity or influence on their project in concrete terms. (The annotated bibliography and its introduction will be the basis of the Preface section you are required to include in your finished thesis manuscript.)

Part 3: Writing Sample

Attach a writing sample from your thesis project. The sample should be a representative selection from the work, showing its character and style, in the area of 10 to 12 pages in length.

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/deadlines/

SOME IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2017:

- Jan. 21:** Deadline to submit reading lists to sign up for the Spring MA exams (see the “Guidelines” at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macoms.html>)
- Jan. 12:** Deadline for December 2016 graduates to submit thesis for publication (or embargo).
- Jan. 26:** First day of Instruction for the Spring semester.
- Feb. 1:** Deadline for August 2017 Graduates to have their “Departmental Request for Candidacy” forms signed and submitted to GAPE.
- Feb. 1:** Deadline for applications for 2017-2018 TAships due to the Graduate Coordinator
- Feb. 4:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 1, SH 229, 9-12:30. Deadline for May 2016 graduates to submit application for award of Master’s Degree to the Graduate Studies Office. (or Graduation Date Change Request).
- Feb. 10:** May graduates must have their “Application for award of Masters degree” filed.
- Feb. 11:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 2, SH 229, 9-12:30. MFA Comprehensive Exam Distributed (9:00 A.M.) MFA Comprehensive Exam Due (5:00 P.M)
- Feb. 17:** MFA Comprehensive Exam Distributed (9:00 A.M.)
- Feb. 20:** MFA Comprehensive Exam Due (5:00 P.M)
- April 1:** Approximate deadline for December 2017 graduates to file their “Request for Candidacy” forms (requires MA or MFA Advisor’s signature).
- April 1:** Deadline for applications for 2017-2018 GAships due to the Graduate Coordinator.
- April 7:** Deadline for May 2016 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office.
- May 13:** MFA Graduation Reading and Celebration, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m., MLK Library rms. 225-229.

