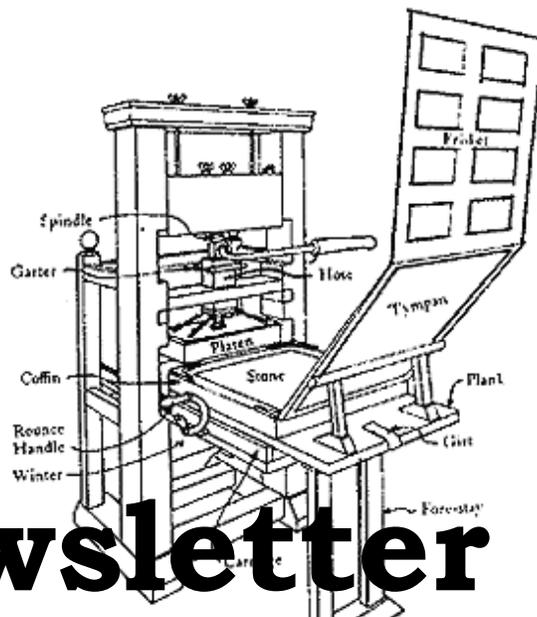


English Graduate Newsletter



San José State University

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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 2:30-3:45 in FO 106. His office phone is 924-4432 and his email is alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu.

ANDREW LAM ON CAMPUS IN SPRING 2015

The Spring 2015 Lurie Chair, Andrew Lam, is an award-winning journalist and the author of two books of nonfiction, *Perfume Dreams: Reflections on the Vietnamese Diaspora* (2005), which received the PEN Open Book award, and *East Eats West* (2010). He recently published a collection of his short stories, *Birds of Paradise Lost* (2013), which was a finalist for the California Book Award. He is an editor for *New America Media*, a collaboration of 3000 ethnic news organizations across the country. He has been a contributor to *National Public Radio* and *The Huffington Post*. Born in South Vietnam, Lam immigrated with his family to the United States in 1975. He earned his bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and, after working in research biology, earned an MFA at San Francisco State.



ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2015

228	16	W	19:00	21:45	Adrienne Eastwood
232	16	M	16:00	18:45	Paul Douglass
240	16	M	19:00	21:45	Alan Soldofsky
241	16	T	19:00	21:45	Andrew Altschul
242	16	TH	19:00	21:45	Lurie Chair Andrew Lam
255	16	TH	16:00	18:45	Robert Cullen
257	16	W	16:00	18:45	Linda Mitchell

English 228: Seminar in Genre Studies—Comedy, Professor Eastwood

Until 1660, all theatrical roles were played by men. So, when Romeo and Juliet breathlessly say goodbye on the balcony, the audience accepts the performance of femininity offered by the boy under the dress. But in Shakespeare's comedies, the performance of gender becomes itself the focus, as the playwright gives us characters like Rosalind, Portia, and Viola who, while playing the role of "women," assume "male" identities, and try to pass (with varying degrees of conviction) as men. In Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*, the title character was based on a well-known actual 17th century transvestite—Mary Firth—who roamed the streets of London dressed as a man. When women took the stage in 1660, they played male roles as well, acting in "breeches parts," as well as the traditional female characters.

This course approaches the dramatic mode of comedy from a critical perspective that takes such issues into account and historicizes them. Some questions that will guide our reading include: Do these performances destabilize gender difference, or reaffirm it? How much of a role does sexual desire play in such performances? How might these performances have responded to social controversies over the role of women in the early modern period? What is the relationship between cross-dressing on the street and cross-dressing on stage? What is the relationship between role-playing on stage, and the development and transformation of sexual identity? Since we will be reading plays by men and women, how might the gender of the author shape the performance of gender by her/his characters on stage?

Beginning with a solid grounding in the genre of comedy, we will read plays from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The reading list will probably include (but won't be limited to) the following:

Shakespeare:

As You Like It

Twelfth Night

The Merchant of Venice

Other Authors:

Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (and Moll Frith's autobiography)

Beumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*

Ben Jonson's *Epiocene or the Silent Woman*

Aphra Behn's *The Widow Ranter*

Thomas Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love or the Rambling Lady*

Charlotte Charke's *The Art of Management* (and her autobiography)

Henry Fielding, *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*

Charles Shadewell, *The Humors of the Army; or the Female Officer*

Critical texts by Judith Butler, Marjorie Garber, Stephen Orgel, Kathryn Shevelow, and others.

English 232: Seminar in “Romanticism: Re-Making the Self and the World,” Professor Douglass

Literary romanticism forms part of a revolutionary epoch that has, in a sense, never ended, for the aspirations to freedom, self-expression, and national identity are still erupting in world news. Many British writers of the Romantic era were imaginatively engaged with countries in the throes of revolutionary movements, like France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Albania. Wordsworth was profoundly affected by the French revolution, and Coleridge had made plans to create a Utopian community in America. This course surveys significant works of Romantic literature and their major themes, including celebration of the individual and of democracy, “mental” realism, nature, childhood, and the sublime. Along with the canonical male poets, substantial attention will be paid to the poetry, drama, and prose of female writers of the period—including the life and works of Lady Caroline Lamb, an area of interest for the instructor—and to elements of literary theory that find origin or place in Romantic literature: feminism, gender, race, and class.

English 240: Graduate Poetry Workshop “Narrative and Poetry, “Ultra-talk,” and the Conversation Poem,” Professor Soldofsky

(Non-poetry track students may take this course for literary research credit with permission). In this MFA-level poetry workshop, we will explore varieties of narrative poetry and what Coleridge called “the conversation poem.” We will read and write poems that are based on narrative conventions, from realist traditional narrative to the fragmented discontinuous narratives associated with the Postmodern. Critics Brian McHale and Marjorie Perloff have argued that narrative has made a comeback in postmodernist poetry after its relative eclipse in modernist poetic writing. This come back is what poet Tony Hoagland refers to in “[Fear of Narrative and the Skittery Poem of Our Moment](#).” In this course we will explore narrative poems that we can read as models for our work from the Romantic era (Coleridge and Shelley) to the modern (A.E. Robinson, Robinson Jeffers, Robert Frost) to the postmodern (John Ashbery, Anne Carson, Mark Halliday, Matthea Harvey, David Kirby, Maggie Nelson, James Tate, Rachael Zucker, and others). Poetry-track students will complete a final manuscript of short narrative and narrative-lyric poems plus one middle-length (3-page plus) narrative poem. Students taking the course as literary research will write two full-length analytical papers (10 – 15 pages). All students will practice close-reading of poetry written in the workshop and also read critical essays on poetry and narrative. All students will give individual presentations on published narrative poems/poets read in the course. Non-Poetry Track students applying to be in the workshop should submit a small sample of their poetry to the instructor prior to enrolling. 3-units.

English 241, Fiction Writing Workshop, Professor Altschul

This is the most advanced fiction workshop offered at SJSU. Students will benefit from the careful feedback of a community of writers with varied perspectives and aesthetics, so that they may start to see their work from the outside and begin to revise their original ideas and approaches. By closely reading the work of other students and articulating their responses, students will hone their analytic skills and strengthen their sense of what makes a good story. Students will submit two original pieces of literary fiction, plus a significant revision of one of these. We will also read

James Wood's book *How Fiction Works* as a way of approaching fundamental questions not only about *what* and *how* we write, but also *why*.

English 242: Nonfiction Writing Workshop, Lurie Chair Andrew Lam

In this non-fiction writing workshop students will learn how to write the personal essay and how to craft a piece of literary journalism. The nuts and bolts of publishing—and its many heartbreaks and possibilities—will be discussed along with work by contemporary essayists. Three substantial essays are required, along with editing and rewriting and group participation in a workshop setting. In addition, there will be a handful of shorter essay assignments with possibilities of getting published with New America Media where Andrew Lam works as an editor.

English 255: Thematic Studies in American Literature: “Dangerous Women,” Professor Cullen

This seminar will examine portrayals of dangerous women in American literature, including witches, farmers’ daughters, shape-shifters, Hollywood starlets, and re-imagined versions of Hedda Gabler, Medea, and Mammy from *Gone With the Wind*. What do these characters suggest about American history, culture, mores, institutions, and gender roles? At the core of the course will be major novels by Henry James (*The Portrait of a Lady*); Toni Morrison (*Song of Solomon*); John Updike (*The Witches of Eastwick*); and Jane Smiley (*A Thousand Acres*). We’ll round out the reading with three short and extremely diverse texts: Nathaniel West’s Hollywood novel *The Day of the Locust*; Thomas Perry’s thriller *Vanishing Act*; and Jeff Whitty’s mashup drama *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler*. Requirements: weekly participation, a seminar paper, and a short presentation. All English M.A. and M.F.A. students are welcome—dangerous women or not!

English 257: The History of Rhetoric, Professor Mitchell
Study of Rhetorical Theory and Practice from Classical to Modern Times

This course introduces students to the history of rhetoric, concentrating on ancient Greek and Roman rhetorical theory but also including its transmission into the Middle Ages and its legacy in the modern era. Students will read primary works by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, St. Augustine, Vinsauf, Bacon, and others. Classes will be part lecture and part practical application of the assigned reading. Students will turn in weekly response papers (or the equivalent) and will do a semester project/paper applying some aspect of the required reading. Students will leave this course with strategies for analyzing literature, teaching writing, building critical thinking skills, and understanding rhetorical techniques.

English 181: *Beowulf*, Professor Stork

This course is normally offered as English 292 but will be offered this Spring as English 181 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 10:15 in the morning. This class is the second class in a year-long sequence of Old English. Students will be translating all 3,182 lines of *Beowulf* and considering its linguistic, historical and cultural context as the first epic poem recorded in the English language.

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). In addition to the Beowulf class, two upper division courses that may be of interest to Grad students this Spring include a new course in Gaming and Narrative being offered by Professor Harris (English 108) and Asian American Literature taught by Professor Brada-Williams (English 165).

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 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 13 for May 2015 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 NEW 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, and remember that no MFA candidate has ever failed to recruit a committee. 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.

GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Lisa Francesca's new book, *The Wedding Officiant's Guide* will be out from Chronicle Books in early December. Her first public reading will be in the Martin Luther King Jr Public Library, November 16, as part of a local author gathering. **Andrea Deabler** and a collective of 14 other authors have just published *Ashes in a Teardrop: A Stanislaus County Community Novel*. **Evelyn So** has two poems appearing in *Red Wheelbarrow's* new national edition and a nonfiction story in the anthology *Three* (PushPen Press). A release party for *Red Wheelbarrow* will be held on November 19, at 7 P.M., at Works, at 365 S. Market Street, San Jose. A book launch party for *Three* will be held on November 25, from 7 P.M. to 10 P.M., in the lobby reception room at the School of Arts and Culture at Mexican Heritage Plaza, 1700 Alum Rock Avenue, San Jose. **Katy King's** short story "Rootwork" was published by *Wild Violet Literary Magazine* last month. **Michael Quintana's** *White Rabbit* took the first place award for a feature screenplay at the CSU Media Arts Festival on November 8th.

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. 18:** Deadline for signing up to take the Spring 2015 MFA Comprehensive Exam. Recommended for May, August, and December 2015 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 2014 graduates to submit thesis for publication
- Jan. 31:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 1, FO 104, 9-12:30.
- Feb. 7:** Spring MA comprehensive exam, Part 2, FO 104, 9-12:30.
- Feb. 7:** Deadline for August 2015 graduates to file their “Department Request for Candidacy” forms (requires MA or MFA Advisor’s signature).
- Feb. 14:** Deadline for May 2015 graduates to submit application for award of Master’s Degree to the Graduate Studies Office.
- Feb. 20:** MFA Comprehensive Exam Distributed (9:00 A.M.)
- Feb. 23:** 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 2015-2016 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 2015 299 units.
- April 1:** Deadline for December 2015 graduates to file their “Department Request for Candidacy” forms (requires MA or MFA Advisor’s signature).
- April 1:** Approximate deadline for May 2015 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office.
- June 6:** Approximate last date for August 2015 graduates to reactivate or file application for graduation.
- June 12:** Approximate last day for May 2015 graduates to submit approved MA and MFA theses for electronic publication
- July 1:** Approximate deadline for August 2015 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.

