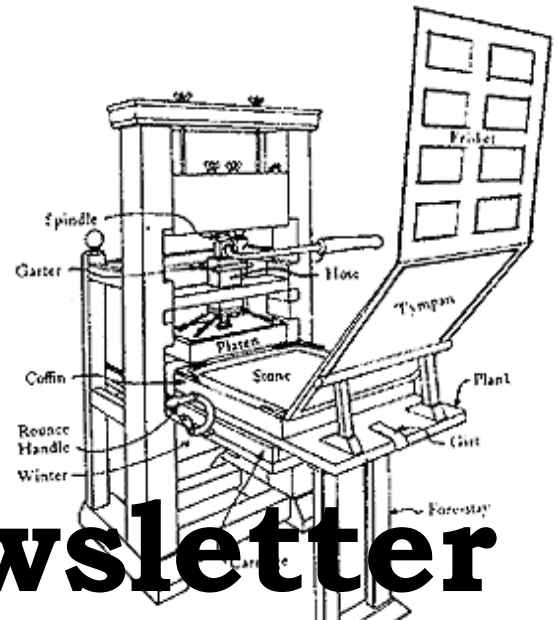


English Graduate Newsletter



San José State University

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Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator

Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing

Office Hours for the MA Adviser are Mondays 1:30 to 4:30 in FO 110.

Office hours for the MFA Adviser are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 2:30 to 4 PM in FO 106.

Both advisers are also available at additional times by appointment.

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING 2012

MySJSU should give you detailed information on how to register for next semester's courses. Please plan to register as early as possible. If you have questions about your schedule for the spring, please get in touch with Professor Brada-Williams or Professor Soldofsky.

JULIA SCHEERES ON CAMPUS IN SPRING 2012

The Robert and Constance Lurie Professor of Creative Writing in Spring 2012 will be nonfiction writer Julia Scheeres, author of the memoir *Jesus Land*, a *New York Times* and *London Times* bestseller. Her second book, *A Thousand Lives: the Untold Story of Hope, Deception, and Survival at Jonestown*, was published in October. She has an M.A. in Journalism from the University of Southern California and has written for *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times* and many other publications. She will teach the nonfiction-writing workshop, English 242. Students admitted to the MFA program will have priority enrollment for this seminar, with others admitted at the instructor's discretion after December 9.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2012

203 Narrative Craft & Theory	W	1600-1845	Taylor
204 Modern Approaches to Lit.	M	1600-1845	Krishnaswamy
227 Comedy	R	1900-2145	Eastwood
230 18 th -Century British Lit.	W	1600-1845	Brada-Williams
233 Victorian Period	T	1900-2145	Wilson
240 Poetry Workshop/Seminar	R	1600-1845	Soldofsky
241 Fiction Writing Workshop	T	1600-1845	Altschul

242 Nonfiction Writing Workshop	R	1600-1845	Scheeres, Lure Professor
253 Period Studies in Am. Lit.	M	1900-2145	Douglass
254 Genre in American Lit	T	1600-2145	Engell

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR SPRING 2012:

English 203 – Narrative Craft & Theory: Extremely Contemporary Fiction (Taylor)

In this graduate literature seminar, we will read American novels published in the last two years.

Selections may include:

Donoghue, Emma. *Room*.

Egan, Jennifer. *A Visit from the Goon Squad*.

Eugenides, Jeffrey. *The Marriage Plot*.

Patchett, Ann. *State of Wonder*.

Perrotta, Tom. *The Leftovers*.

Spiotta, Dana. *Stone Arabia*.

Stockett, Kathryn. *The Help*.

Torres, Justin. *We the Animals*.

The reading load for this course will be approximately one novel per week. Written work consists of weekly response papers of 500-1000 words and a seminar paper of 3000-5000 words.

English 204: Modern Approaches to Literature (Krishnaswamy)

This course deals with the field of Critical Theory, which includes literary criticism but also cuts across other disciplines like psychology, philosophy, economics, political science, history, biology and others. Focusing mainly on theories and methodologies employed by 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, Postcolonialism etc. and discover how they 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.

Course materials consist of the following:

(1) Primary texts: Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. (2) Criticism: critical essays or secondary texts that analyze and interpret the primary texts from a variety of theoretical approaches. (3) Theory: original essays/statements by major theorists, mostly from the *Norton Anthology of Theory & Criticism*.

English 227: Men's Parts, Women's Roles: Transvestite Comedy through the Restoration (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*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Other Authors:

Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (and Moll Firth'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 230: Novels and the Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Brada-Williams)

The history of the early novel in English cannot be extricated from the development of the literary marketplace. We will read texts by some of the biggest selling authors of the eighteenth century and those that have had the largest enduring impact both on the marketplace and on the novel form such as: Aphra Behn, Daniel Defoe, Eliza Haywood, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Charlotte Lennox, Frances Burney, and Jane Austen.

English 233: Seminar in the Victorian Period (Wilson)

The seminar will focus on major novels, poems and drama of the Victorian period. We will read Dickens', *Little Dorrit*, Eliot's *Middlemarch*, and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. In addition we will study poems by Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Christina Rossetti, D.G. Rossetti, Hopkins and Hardy. We will end the term with a look at Wilde's *The Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. One short critical explication, on research paper, and one presentation.

English 240: Poetry Workshop and Seminar on San Francisco Bay Area Poetry (Soldofsky)

Students in this MFA-level poetry writing workshop will not only produce new work of their own but will also investigate the poetic traditions of the San Francisco Bay Area: from eco-poetics, to the poetry of place, to experimental, hybrid, and LANGUAGE poetries. MFA students will create a portfolio of new poems plus blog entries and a presentation on a Bay Area Poet. Several of the poems will be modeled on works by Bay Area poets. MA students may create new poems and/or conduct research--write several short papers/blog entries on individual Bay Area poets or schools/traditions of poetry in the Bay Area. MFA and MA students will participate together in weekly class workshops in which new work by class members (poetry and essays on Bay Area poets and poetries) will be read and discussed with an eye toward revision. MA students should submit three sample poems and/or short writings on poetry prior to enrolling in the course. Email writing samples as an attachment to the instructor Alan Soldofsky c/o Alan.Soldofsky@sjsu.edu.

English 241: Fiction Writing Workshop (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. Workshops will avoid the "diagnosis" of "problems" with a text and instead focus on readers' experiences with a story and their understanding of the writer's goals and strategies.

English 242: Nonfiction Writing Workshop (Lurie Professor Julia Scheeres)

My goal for this class is to help students write gripping true stories. We'll work on the narrative building blocks of scene, summary, and musing, and learn how pacing and small, choice details can turn a bland read into a powerful one. We'll talk about how much of the past you can recreate in personal essay and memoir, and how to craft vibrant journalism while adhering to ascertainable facts.

In workshops, students will analyze submissions for structure, clarity and emotion. Each class participant will be required to research and write two or more articles which will be read and critiqued by the group.

English 253: Periods in American Literature: Modernism and Postmodernism (Douglass)

Labels applied to literary periods metamorphose and sometimes invert their meanings. Until the mid-1980s, "Modernism" in literary study alluded to a tumultuous period occurring mainly between the two World Wars, foreshadowed in Symbolism, Imagism, Futurism, Vorticism, and Dadaism. Modernism was a revolt against realism; it was experimental, *avant-garde*, difficult. It embraced the energies of modern technology and urban culture, while often reviling modern life. Modernist poetics drew from the psychology of James, Freud and Bergson, making prose and poetry emulate the protean flow of human consciousness. Its most extreme forms included Surrealism, and American Modernists were influenced by the work of French and Italian writers like Gide, Camus, Cocteau, Apollinaire, Rimbaud, Breton, Marinetti, and Adorno, as well as writers from Ireland and England, like Joyce, Yeats, O'Brien, Woolf, Wyndham Lewis, and Huxley.

Modernist writers put traditional literary forms through severe, alienating changes. Yet they embraced classical writers such as Virgil, Homer, and Dante, even relying heavily on allusions to

ancient narratives in experimental works like *Ulysses* and *As I Lay Dying*. (Eliot said of Joyce's achievement for modern writing: "Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method.") Modernism was also international, cosmopolitan. Some of its expatriate exponents, like Joyce, Yeats, Pound, and especially Eliot, saw modern literature as a coalescence of Europe into a cultural whole.

Following the mid-1980s, Modernism was redefined by a new generation of writers and critics who recast their iconoclastic predecessors as conservatives. "Postmodernism" claimed to counter Modernism's elitism, its naïve understanding of media, and its unsophisticated belief in unmediated "meaning." After 1990, Modernism was again redefined as a literature of incongruous combinations of high and low culture, with a poetics of change and reactionaryism, often characterized by misogyny, anti-Semitism, and racism. The canon of Modernism expanded to include more women and persons of color (Hughes, Hurston, Cullen), further complicating a retrospective view of Modernism.

English 253 probes what the term "Modernism" seems to have meant and to mean, and to whom. Authors to be read include Amy Lowell, W. C. Williams, Richard Aldington, H. D., Gertrude Stein, T. S. Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Jean Toomer, Hart Crane, William Faulkner, Langston Hughes, John Steinbeck, Robert Coover, John Barth, and Anne Carson.

English 254: Genre in American Literature: Fiction and Creative Non-Fiction of San Francisco and the Bay Area (Engell)

In this literature seminar we will read prose works and excerpts from prose works set in the Bay Area. Early writers might include Richard Henry Dana, Mark Twain, and Frank Norris. However, most works we read and discuss in the seminar will be from the period 1945-present. I have not yet determined the precise reading list, but some works will be by Asian-American, Latino-American, and/or African-American writers. I hope a few of the contemporary writers covered might be able to visit one meeting of the seminar, but I can't guarantee this. Written assignments will include a number of two-page reader-response essays on specific topics and one much longer project--either a research essay or a creative work (fiction or creative non-fiction) with a critical introduction. Each two-page reader-response essay assignment will also include an oral presentation. A couple of "field trips" could be in order.

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 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 Professor Brada-Williams.

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. In the past, students would not need to reenroll but simply complete the thesis for the “RP” to be cleared and replaced with credit. The President’s office notified us on November 2nd that students who receive an “RP” will need to enroll in a one-unit class. Please see the entire policy at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/F11-2.htm> for details.

GRADUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Two of our alumni have new books out: MA Jan Batiste Adkin’s book, *African Americans of San Francisco* will be on sale in January from Arcadia Press. MFA Erica Gross’s book of poems, *Wild Place*, will be available in December from Finishing Line Press. Current MFA student Jessica Hanley’s story, "Christmas in the Desert," is being published in the November/December issue of *Cicada magazine*. MFA Karin McKie published her nonfiction essay “Marlboro Reds” in *Madroad: The Breadline Press West Coast Anthology*. MFA Evelyn So’s personal essay, "Mutanabbi Street” is coming out in *The Mutanabbi Street Starts Here Anthology* from PM Press. Jenny Walicek published the essays “Enlightenment” or "Love in Venice: how a grumpy gondolier helped show me the heart of his city" in AOL’s *Gadling* and “Desolation” in *The Journey magazine*.

Both MA Julie Kline and MFA Karin McKie gave papers last May at the Stanislaus Shakespeare Symposium. McKie also presented on Aemilia Lanyer’s *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum* at the Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) 2011 Conference “transformations,” in San Francisco in March. MA Doll Picotto presented at the Blackfriars Conference in Virginia this Fall.

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.

MA & MFA FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXAMS

Both degree programs require a level of fluency in a second language roughly 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. Just be sure to bring this to the attention of your advisor 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 an examination offered in the Foreign Language Department that has been specially devised for our graduate students. Please contact:

Examiner	email	phone
Professor Trudeau (French):	trudeau@sjsu.edu	924-4594
Professor Sabalius (German):	sabalius@email.sjsu.edu	924-4616
Professor Eleanor Marsh (Spanish):	eleanor.marsh@sjsu.edu	924-4592

(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. All those planning on taking one of the language exams should let their advisor know at the beginning of the semester in which you plan to take it so that we can keep track of the results.

KEY DATES FOR SJSU ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENTS

Please note that since April 1st falls during Spring break, many of the traditional April 1st deadlines will be pushed forward to April 2nd or back to March 23rd, the last business day before Spring break and Cesar Chavez Day.

- Dec. 9** Deadline to sign up for the Spring 2012 MFA exam.
- Dec. 9** Last day that Writing Workshops will be open only to MFA's. After this date, seats also will be available to interested MA students.
- Jan. 13** Last day for Dec. 2011 grads to submit University-approved thesis to Graduate Studies and Research for publication as a pdf (review embargo options)
- Jan. 21** Last day to sign up for MA Exam Part I and II.
- Jan. 25** First day of instruction for Spring 2012 Semester
- Jan. 28** MA Exam Part I offered, 9-12:30 in FO 104.
- Feb. 4** MA Exam Part II offered, 9-12:30 in FO 104.
- Feb. 6** Last day to submit MFA theses to directors, 2nd, and 3rd readers.
- Feb. 12** August 2012 graduates should submit approved Candidacy forms to Graduate Admissions & Program Evaluation by this date. The form can be found on the GAPE website but your advisor will need to sign it.
- Feb. 16** Last day for May 2012 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at GAPE
- Feb. 17** Spring MFA exam scheduled Feb. 17 (9AM) – 20 (5 PM).
- March 23** TA and GA applications for 2011-2012 school year due to Graduate Coordinator.
- March 24-April 1** Campus closed for Spring Break and Cesar Chavez Day
- April 1:** Published deadline for Petitions for Advancement to Candidacy due to GAPE for December 2012 graduates.
- April 5** Deadline for May graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.

- April 6:** Deadline for thesis proposals to be submitted to the graduate committee to sign up for Fall 2012 299 units.
- April 2-13** TA and GA interviews are planned for the first two weeks of April.
- June 7** Last date for August 2012 graduates to reactivate or file application for graduation.
- June 15** Last day for May 2012 graduates to submit approved MA and MFA theses for electronic publication
- July 1** Deadline for August 2012 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.

