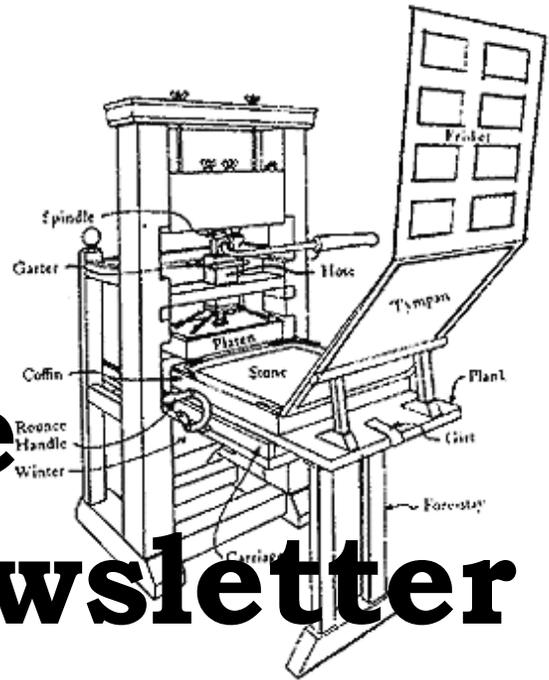


# English Graduate Newsletter



San Jose State University

Volume XXXXII, Number 2

November 2009

Noelle Brada-Williams, Graduate Coordinator

Alan Soldofsky, Director of Creative Writing

## REGISTRATION FOR SPRING 2010

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.

## TIM CAHILL ON CAMPUS IN SPRING 2010

The Robert and Constance Lurie Professor of Creative Writing in spring 2010 will be travel writer Tim Cahill who 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 18.

## ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2010

204 Modern Approaches to Lit,	M	1600-1845,	Krishnaswamy
208 Comparative Literature,	R	1600-1845,	Karim
229 17th century British Lit,	W	1900-2145,	Fleck
230 18th century British Lit,	T	1600-1845,	Brada-Williams
240 Poetry Writing Workshop,	M	1900-2145,	Soldofsky
241 Fiction Writing Workshop,	R	1900-2145,	Taylor
242 Nonfiction Writing Workshop,	T	1600-1845,	Cahill (Lurie Prof.)
253 Period Studies in American Lit,	T	1900-2145,	Shillinglaw
254 Genre Studies in American Lit,	W	1600-1845,	Douglass
292 Beowulf	R	1900-2145,	Stork

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR SPRING 2010:**

### **English 204: Seminar in Modern Approaches to Literature ((Professor Krishnaswamy)**

This course deals with the field of Critical Theory, which includes literary criticism but 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 be tough and 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 (Prof. Karim)**

"Banned Books and Novel Ideas"

This graduate seminar will explore the topic of literature and censorship through a comparative approach. We will read literature that has been banned, censored, or which deals with the topic of censorship and banning in a variety of contexts and cultures around the world. While most of these texts are written in the 20th century, they deal with a variety of concerns that challenge dominant ideologies, views, and perceptions about things ranging from sexuality, politics, religion, science, and race.

We will explore the ways that literature and the authors of various texts have moved the ideas of their society by writing and publishing controversial texts and topics. Books will include:

- \* Bertold Brecht, *The Life of Galileo*
- \* Lillian Hellman, *Collected Plays* "The Children's Hour"
- \* Xianling Zhang, *Grass Soup*
- \* Manuel Puig, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*
- \* Salman Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*
- \* Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*
- \* Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- \* Packet of xerox materials to be purchased from Maple Press.

### **English 229: Seminar in Seventeenth Century British Literature (Prof. Fleck)**

"The Seventeenth Century: Poetry and Prose in the Age of English Imperial Expansion."

"O my America! My new-found-land! / My kingdom safest when with one man manned." Sex as imperial conquest? Satan as conquistador? And where exactly is Caliban's island? What did English writers discover as they imagined travel to other shores? Shakespeare, Jonson, Wroth, Donne, Herbert, Milton, Behn. In this course we'll explore a vibrant, energetic period of English poetry and prose, when love, power, and faith were the themes, and when concepts like sex and empire were discussed in each other's registers. Take a peek under the covers; you'll be surprised!

**English 230: Seminar in Eighteenth Century British Literature (Prof. Brada-Williams)**

Novels, Women, and the Marketplace: The course will focus on the novel in English and the importance of women at its birth as authors, readers, and subject matter. This era marks the beginning of copyright laws and thus the emergence of literary text as a commodity. Thus we will also look at the rise of the new literary marketplace and the depiction of that market in the satires of Pope and Swift. We will examine the intersection of social contexts and genre formation, studying a sampling of texts from across the “long eighteenth century.”

**English 240: Graduate Poetry Writing Workshop (Prof. Soldofsky)**

This workshop's theme will be “Poetry and Nature.” Students will write 10 poems during the semester, of which four will be required on the broad subject of nature, landscape, ecology, or “poems of place.” We will also read a number of poems in the Nature Poetry tradition (from the Romantics to the Postmodern) including works by Blake, Keats, John Clare, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Dickinson, Whitman, Robert Frost, Robinson Jeffers, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop, Kenneth Rexroth, Gary Snyder, Denise Levertov, James Wright, Maxine Kumin, Mary Oliver, Charles Wright, Robert Hass, Billy Collins, Jon Anderson, Jane Kenyon, Brenda Hillman, and others. We’ll also look at poems in translation from Pablo Neruda, and from classical Chinese and Japanese poets. The readings will be guided by John Felstiner's recent book, *Can Poetry Save the Earth: A Field Guide to Nature Poetry*. There will be one short poetry craft paper required in addition to a poetry portfolio. MA students may apply to be admitted to this class after all eligible MFA student enrollments have been accommodated. NOTE: *MA students may apply on the basis of a brief sample of poems, a sample critical paper on poetry, or both. MA students may take the course as mostly a literary seminar whose content includes works by the poets listed above and by poets in the class, whose work will also be the subject of MA student critical writing. These students will write, in addition to the four assigned nature poems, two full-length critical papers as well as short critical analysis of selected poems discussed in the workshop*

**English 241: Graduate Fiction Writing Workshop (Prof. Taylor)**

This is the most advanced fiction workshop offered at SJSU. Students are required to submit two original works of fiction. Participation and written commentary are also required. We will read selections of published fiction from an anthology compiled by class members.

Note: Preference is given to MFA students, but MFAs must notify Prof. Soldofsky or Prof. Taylor by December 18 if they plan to take this course. After December 18, the class will open up to students in other graduate programs.

**English 242: Graduate Nonfiction Writing Workshop (Lurie Chair Tim Cahill)**

(Tim Cahill writes about himself: *I have been an editor and writer for over 30 years, and though I have written nine books, I've spent most of that time writing and editing articles for magazines. And lately, a bit more for various internet sites.*)

My goal is to use my skills to help students write publishable work. I can help those who are working on books, but we will have more immediate success working on articles aimed at very specific outlets. To that end, at least two editors who purchase travel related articles will visit to discuss their requirements. I may be able to bring in an agent as well.

In the workshops, we will concentrate on matters of craft: structure is especially important. I will talk about how to build a scene, how to produce emotions and suspense and how to keep the reader turning the page. The simple process of taking thoughtful contemporaneous notes will be emphasized. There will be discussions of "the creative process," and how it relates to the working writer.

Workshop students will be required to research and write two or more articles which will be read and critiqued by the group.

### **English 253: Modernism and the Southern Writer: William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor (Prof. Shillinglaw)**

The past is never dead," wrote William Faulkner, "it's not even past." Faulkner's great experiments in prose were grounded in that aching sensibility. Flannery O'Connor--caught, she said, like all other southern writers in Faulkner's long shadow--wrote of another South, where sacred and profane rub uneasily together, boundaries never certain. This seminar examines the two writers' work and region, posing questions about modernism, regionalism, race, class, gender and environment. Texts include *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Go Down, Moses*; *Wise Blood* and O'Connor's Collected Stories.

### **English 254: Genres in American Literature (Prof. Douglass)**

Detective Fiction: An American Genre?

Detective (or crime) fiction is arguably an American invention, though extended in Anglo-European venues. But crime detection has deep roots in literature. *Oedipus Rex* and *Macbeth* are among its many precursors. Is Detective Fiction part of the development of American Literature in some integral way? Does urban culture require such fantasies as the rogue cop and the killer with the golden rule? How do Crime and Thriller stories differ from Detective Fiction, and how have films and film adaptations affected its production? How are the Short Story and Detective Novels related? Does Detective Fiction rehearse the acts of reading and interpretation in some useful or insightful way? These and other issues will be considered in a traditional seminar format, with a research project and oral reports, augmented by brief film presentations and some experimentation with creating fictional characters.

### **English 292: Beowulf (Prof. Stork)**

A reading of the entire poem of Beowulf in the original Old English, along with a consideration of critical problems and issues related to this epic poem. Prerequisite: a one semester course in Old English (i.e. English 140A at San Jose State or the equivalent.)

You 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.

### **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.

### **APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH MA AND MFA**

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).

### **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 BULLETIN BOARD AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES**

The SJSU Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations website publishes important forms, deadlines, rules, and information useful to graduate students. Go to <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/> and click on “Current Students.” Important dates and other useful information will also be posted on the English Graduate Bulletin Board in the first-floor hall of the Faculty Office Building. New information will be posted as we receive it. So make a point to check the bulletin board frequently and check, too, the English department website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/>. If you would like to restart the English Graduate Organization or start your own version, let Professor Brada-Williams know and she will look into what support the department and university can offer.

### **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:

<u>Examiner</u>	<u>email</u>	<u>phone</u>
Professor Trudeau (French):	<a href="mailto:trudeau@sjsu.edu">trudeau@sjsu.edu</a>	924-4594
Professor Sabalius (German):	<a href="mailto:sabalius@email.sjsu.edu">sabalius@email.sjsu.edu</a>	924-4616
Professor Eleanor Marsh (Spanish):	<a href="mailto:eleanor.marsh@sjsu.edu">eleanor.marsh@sjsu.edu</a>	924-4592

*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.

## KEY DATES FOR SJSU ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENTS

Please note that since April first falls during Spring break, many of the traditionally April 1<sup>st</sup> deadlines are moved up to March 25, the last business day before a March 26 furlough day and Spring break.

- Dec. 18** Last day that Writing Workshops will be open only to MFA's. After this date, spaces will be available to interested MA students.
- Jan. 19** Last day for Dec. 2010 grads to submit University-approved thesis to Graduate Studies and Research for binding.
- Jan. 25** Last day to sign up for MA Exam Part I.
- Jan. 26** First day of instruction for Spring 2010 Semester
- Jan. 29** Last day to sign up for MA Exam Part II
- Jan. 30** MA Exam Part I offered, 9-12:30 in FO 104.
- Feb. 6** MA Exam Part II offered, 9-12:30 in FO 104.
- Feb. 12** August 2010 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. To be safe, do it before the end of fall semester 2009.
- Feb. 15** Last day for May 2010 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at GAPE
- March 1** Last day to sign up for the Spring 2010 MFA Exam.
- March 1** Last day to submit MA and MFA thesis to 2nd and 3rd readers.
- Mar. 15:** Deadline for May 2010 and December 2010 MFA graduates to sign up for the MFA Comprehensive Exam.
- March 25** Deadline for thesis proposals to be submitted to the graduate committee to sign up for Fall 2010 299 units.
- March 25** December 2010 graduates should submit approved Candidacy forms to GAPE
- March 25** TA and GA applications for 2010-2011 school year due to Graduate Coordinator.
- March 27-April 4 Campus closed for Spring Break and Cesar Chavez Day**
- April 5** Deadline for May graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.
- April 5-12** TA and GA interviews are planned for the first two weeks of April.
- April 16** MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed (9:00 AM).
- April 19** MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5:00 PM).
- June 15** Last day for May 2010 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for binding.
- June 7** Last date for August 2009 graduates to reactivate or file application for graduation.
- July 7** Deadline for August graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.

