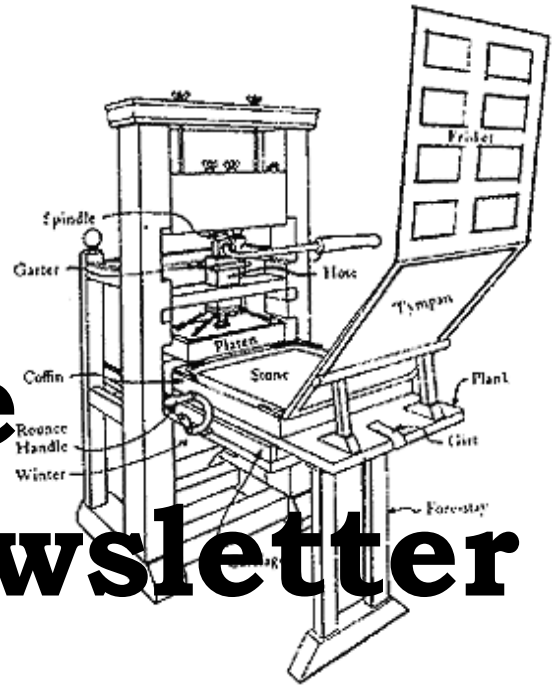


English Graduate Newsletter



San Jose State University

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Noelle Brada-Williams, MA Advisor

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REGISTRATION FOR SPRING 2008

The *Schedule of Classes* will 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.

Z.Z. PACKER ON CAMPUS

The Robert and Constance Lurie Professor of Creative Writing in spring 2008 will be Z.Z. Packer, who will teach the fiction writing workshop, English 241. Students admitted to the MFA program will have priority enrollment for this seminar, with others admitted at the instructor's discretion.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2007

202	Poetic Craft and Theory	W	1900-2145	Pollock
204	Modern Approaches to Lit	M	1900-2145	Brada-Williams
208	Comparative Literature	T	1900-2145	Karim
211	20 th -Century Poetry	T	1900-2145	Maio
225	Shakespeare	R	1900-2145	Fleck
233	Victorian Literature	M	1600-1845	Wilson
240	Creative Writing: Poetry	W	1600-1845	Soldofsky
241	Creative Writing: Fiction	R	1600-1845	Packer
253	Periods in American Literature	T	1600-1845	Engell
255	Genres in American Literature	W	1600-1845	Douglass

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR SPRING 2008:

English 202 - Poetic Craft and Theory (Prof. Pollock)

We'll begin the semester with Mary Oliver's *A Poetry Handbook* as a review of the basic elements of poetry, and then proceed to a quick survey of the overall evolution of poetic styles and form from medieval to modern times. The central focus of the seminar thereafter will be on the theories of "New Criticism" and the application of those theories to lyric poetry, with particular attention to the sonnet as a genre. We'll study critical works by Cleanth Brooks and I.A. Richards and the sonnets of Shakespeare, Donne, Wordsworth, E.B. Browning, John Berryman, and Vikram Seth, in addition to selected critical works and poems by other writers as well. The aim of the course will not be to give the student an exhaustive knowledge of the sonnet as such, but more generally to challenge his or her analytical skills, at the same time developing the student's sense of historical perspective and critical acumen in dealing with poetry as an art form.

English 204 - Seminar in Modern Approaches to Literature (Prof. Brada-Williams)

The Russian Formalists argued that what made literary language different from other forms of language was that literature defamiliarizes, making us see the world in a new way. One could argue that the literary theory and criticism of the twentieth century has, in turn, made us see literature in new ways. The semester will be spent in examining various ways critics and theorists have come to see the way literature works, and to form the questions we must ask of texts, of readers, of authors, and of how literature continues to shape the way we see the world around us. We will read and discuss many rigorous and intellectually challenging critical and theoretical readings, mostly from *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*.

English 208 - Seminar in Comparative Literature (Prof. Karim)

The Legacy of Colonial and Imperial Conquest: Literature of the Modern Middle East and North Africa

This graduate seminar explores the literature of the region that most widely encompasses the modern Middle East and introduces students of the complex regional, historical, and cultural aspects of this geographic area. We will read novels (translated from Arabic, Persian) that introduce us to the ways that the Middle East has been shaped by its great poetic and literary traditions as well as the ways that it has been influenced by literature of the West. To that end we will study poetry, fiction, and some nonfiction, as well as read the work of a number of theorists who either employ postcolonial theory, or who address more specifically the nature of writing and texts from the Middle East and North Africa.

Among the works we will read are: Naguib Mahfouz's *Midaq Alley*, Abdelrahman Munif's *Cities of Salt*, Assia Djebar's *La Fantasiya (L'Amour, La Fantasia)*, Tayib Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*, and Simin Daneshvar's *Savushun*, and Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*. These texts will introduce us to issues of history, gender, orientalism, and the position of these writers in today's modern Middle East. I guarantee this course is socially relevant and very engaging!

211 - Seminar in Twentieth Century Literature (Prof. Maio)

We will treat the major metrical poets of the modern era--Hardy, Yeats, Auden, Frost--as well as key poets of the counter-tradition--Pound, Eliot, and Lowell. Two in-class presentations and one significant research paper will comprise the graded evaluation for the course.

English 225 - Seminar in Shakespeare: Shakespeare and the Nation. (Prof. Fleck)

This graduate seminar in Shakespeare will introduce you to many of the current issues in Shakespeare Studies, especially a number of new-historical concerns: writing the nation, the material book of the new textualism, the invention of authorship, and original staging. My own research falls mostly into the category of the early modern project of the "nation" and the primary works I've selected for our seminar will allow us to grapple with how the English tried to make their nation come into being. We'll focus on two sets of plays: the Henriad, a tetralogy of four great history plays and a subtending comedy, and the Roman plays, four excellent tragedies and an attendant romance. One narrative poem will round out our discussion. While the thrust of these choices will be toward histories and tragedies, we will also touch on other genres in which Shakespeare wrote, giving us a chance to explore a comedy and a romance. We'll talk about other ways to get into Shakespeare too, especially with reference to recent film versions and some film criticism, as well as other theoretical modes and approaches to texts.

English 233: The Victorian Period (Prof. Wilson)

This seminar will examine significant literary works written *circa* 1830 and 1900. We will supplement our readings with important pieces of Victorian art and music. We will read *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, and the Victorian section of *The Norton Anthology*. One short essay, one seminar research project and two class presentations are required.

English 240: Poetry Writing Workshop (Prof. Soldofsky)

COURSE THEME: "Improvisation and Subversion: "The Jazz of Writing Poems"

English 240 is an Graduate poetry writing workshop in which students will write and revise new poems throughout the semester. The course will also include discussions of the craft of poetry and contemporary poetics. We will write a number of poems during the semester based on the influence of jazz as well as other forms of contemporary and popular music. In addition, we will read a selection of poems and essays written by poets as diverse as Allen Ginsberg, Rita Dove, Tony Hoagland, Langston Hughes, Yusef Komunyakaa, Larry Levis, Nathaniel Mackey, William Matthews, Ishmael Reed, Quincy Troupe, and Kevin Young about jazz and popular music as a source of poetic inspiration. We will also read and listen to recordings of poems based upon interactions or collaborations between the poet and musicians. By the end of the course, each student will finish a poem based upon a particular piece of music or a poem to be performed in collaboration with a musician(s). The piece can be presented either as a text or a live or recorded performance (or both). Class members will be given to opportunity to perform their works at the end of the semester for an audience.

English 240 is a course required for students in the MFA program whose primary or secondary genre is poetry. Students in the MA program who write poetry at the advanced level may also be admitted (space permitting) with the instructor's permission. The course may be repeated twice for credit. Conditionally classified graduate students must also obtain the instructor's permission to enroll in the course.

English 241: Fiction Writing Workshop (Lurie Chair Z.Z. Packer)

English 253: Seminar in Period Studies of American Literature. (Prof. Engell)

The American Novel: Romanticism, Realism, & Naturalism, c1820-c1920. We will study six American Novels, three--James Fenimore Cooper's THE PIONEERS, Nathaniel Hawthorne's THE SCARLET LETTER, and Harriet Beecher Stowe's UNCLE TOM'S CABIN--from the "Romantic" period of American literature and three--Mark Twain's ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN, Frank Norris's MCTEAGUE, and Edith Wharton's THE AGE OF INNOCENCE--from the "Realist"/"Naturalist" period of American literature. Our broad discussion topics will include the relationship of romanticism and realism/naturalism, the relationship of American novels to national and international cultural and literary developments from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth century, and the evolution of the criticism and the reception of each novel. Our additional focus will be on very close readings of all six novels. Each student will deliver six short oral presentations, each of which will be accompanied by a one-page handout and a two-page paper. Each student will also write a 10-12 page research essay.

English 254: Seminar in Genre Studies of American Literature (Prof. Douglass)

The Literature of Social and Political Change

Some of the literature of socio-political intent is sentimental, some sensationalist, some as didactic as Plato's The Republic. Whether sentimental, sensational, teacherly, preacherly, or stealthy in its approach, however, a great deal of American literature has been produced from the desire to change the world. Politically engaged literature took a critical beating in the past century, as the New Criticism elevated the art object above the fray of particular political and social conflicts, but the critical schools that flowered in soil turned over by the New Criticism have argued that art is always implicated in the cultural conflicts that produce power and wealth. Instead of looking for the hidden or subconscious intent in works that ask to be accepted as "nonpolitical," this course will focus on literature which overtly engages the social and political issues of its day. We will consider this literature in the light of aesthetic standards and from recent critical perspectives such as Deconstruction, Marxism, Feminism, Queer Studies, and Postcolonialism. Some authors to be considered include Sherman Alexie, Amiri Baraka, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Lorraine Hansberry, Upton Sinclair, Dalton Trumbo, Helen Hunt Jackson, John Steinbeck, David Henry Hwang, Margaret Atwood, and Richard Wright.

Graduate students should also consult the *Department of English & Comparative Literature Newsletter* which has listings of upper division undergraduate courses that may be of interest to you. Dr. Wilson's evening European Literature: Homer to Dante (125A), for example, examines works not focused on in the ten graduate courses offered next semester and is scheduled in the evening hours customarily used for our graduate courses. Dr. English's American novel course (168) would be a very good choice for a conditional admit looking to take a course that will help with coverage for the MA exams but who needs an evening schedule.

TENTATIVE LIST OF COURSE OFFERINGS FOR FALL 2008

The number of graduate seminars offered in Fall 2008 will depend on enrollments and faculty availability but will definitely include English 201, 201C, 203, 240, 241, 259, and probably four

literature seminars such as English 216, 227, one of the 253-255 series, and perhaps 256. The actual offerings should be in the February newsletter or sent out earlier on the Enggrad listserv.

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/gradstudies/Current/Forms.html>. 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

Important dates and other useful information will 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://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/index.htm>

The SJSU Graduate Studies Office website also publishes important deadlines, rules, and information useful to graduate students: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/> .

MA & MFA FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXAMS

Students wishing to satisfy the foreign language requirement in French, German, or Spanish, and who have acquired the fluency of someone with roughly two years of college study of that language, should take an examination offered in the Foreign Language Department. You must contact:

<u>Examiner</u>	<u>email</u>	<u>phone</u>
Professor Trudeau (French)	trudeau@sjsu.edu	924-4594
Professor Sabalius (German)	sabalius@email.sjsu.edu	924-4616
Professor Sempere-Martinez (Spanish)	jsempere@email.sjsu.edu	924-4592

You will be excused from the examination if, within five years of filing your program (achieving Candidacy), you have completed the fourth semester of an approved university-level foreign language course sequence with a grade of “B” or better. 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.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR SJSU GRADUATE STUDENTS IN ENGLISH

- Feb. 15** Last day for May 2008 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office.
- Feb. 15** August or December 2008 graduates should submit approved Candidacy forms to Graduate Studies by this date. The form can be found on the Graduate Studies website but your advisor will need to sign it. To be safe, do it before the end of fall semester 2007.
- March 3** Last day to submit MA and MFA thesis to 2nd and 3rd readers.
- March 3** TA and GA applications for Fall 2008 due.
- March 3** Last day to sign up for the Spring 2008 MFA Exam.
- March 31** Deadline for thesis proposals to be submitted to the graduate committee to sign up for Fall 2008 299 units.
- April 4** Deadline for May graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.
- April 4** MFA comprehensive exam distributed (9:00 AM).
- April 5** MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 1, 9-noon, FO 104.
- April 7** MFA comprehensive exam due (5:00 PM).
- April 12** MA Comprehensive Exam, Part 2, 9-noon, FO 104.
- April 14** GRE Subject Test in English offered
- June 6** Last day for May 2008 graduates to submit MA and MFA thesis copies for binding.
- June 9** Last date for August 2008 graduates to file application for graduation.

