

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 7

April 2020

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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Revathi Krishnaswamy

Graduate Coordinator



Alan Soldofsky

Director of Creative Writing

Introducing New Faculty

James “Josh” Coleman



Portrait provided by James “Josh” Coleman

It is with great pleasure that we welcome Dr. Josh Coleman to the English Department this Fall. Dr. Coleman receives his PhD in reading, writing, and literacy at the University of Pennsylvania this May. Before this, Dr. Coleman was an English teacher both in South Carolina and France, for two years and one year respectively. He received his BA in English and French Literature at Mercer University and his MA in English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. His work centers on queer history in children’s literature and diverse cultural literature. His dissertation, *Restorying Painful Histories: The Imagination Gap, Critical Literacy, and the Affective Lives of Queer Educators*, and most recent publication, *Feeling Worlds*, explore the innerworkings of educators and how they affect their students. This South Carolina native loves dogs, coffee, and all things peach-flavored. He is thrilled to be moving to the golden coast and plans on adopting a dog as soon as he arrives.

It’s an honor that we welcome Dr. Scott Jarvie as a new professor in English this fall semester. Dr. Jarvie completes his PhD at Michigan State University this May. He has recently published two journals: *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy* and *Journal of English Education*. He was a high school English teacher for four years; he taught in Chicago and Brownsville, Texas. He received his BA in English at Notre Dame and is an avid college football fan. In his spare time, Dr. Jarvie enjoys watching hockey (go Dallas Stars!) and cooking. His favorite recipe at the moment is a Cajun meatloaf. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Jarvie!



Portrait provided by Scott Jarvie

20 Second Poem Contest

The SJSU English Department has announced a new contest to find the best 20 second poem to recite while we are washing our hands! There will be two ways to win –

- the best original 20-30 second poem
- for those combing their anthologies, the best found (already published) poem.

Spring and Summer Contact

Since we have shifted completely online for the rest of the semester, the best way to contact Professors Krishnaswamy and Soldofsky is via email:

Revathi.Krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu

Alan.Soldofsky@sjsu.edu

Both of us will be checking email regularly over the course of the semester.

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Important Policies

Continuous Enrollment and 1290R

Per S17-5, University Policy, Required Enrollment for Culminating Graduate Students, graduate students who have completed all degree program requirements except the culminating experience (thesis, project and/or comprehensive exam) must enroll in the 1- unit UNVS or departmental 1290R for the purpose of continuing enrollment. Appointments for the 1290R open in MySJSU shortly after the last day to add classes.

See: <http://www.sjsu.edu/cgs/current-students/policies/ContinuousEnrollmentGuidelines/index.html>

For students whose culminating experience is or includes a comprehensive exam not connected to an "RP" course: Appointments for 1290R cannot be system generated; request for appointment must come to Graduate Studies from the graduate advisor. The "RP" grade and a filed graduation in the current or future semester will generate an automatic appointment.

Note that no student can receive an appointment with a "CR" grade in the culminating experience course. Nor can an appointment be given to a student whose filed graduation date is in a previous semester. Students do not need the 1290R if they are enrolled in any other course. Note that the course attached to a culminating experience involving a thesis (or project) and a comp exam is given a "CR" upon successful completion of both components. Should the completion of one or both components continue into a subsequent semester(s), the course will carry a grade of "RP" (Report in Progress) and the student will need the 1290R for continuous enrollment for each semester used to complete the component or components.

Fall 2020 Graduate Courses

At least 21 of the 30 units of classes required for the MA program should be in 200-numbered English courses. Of the 30, only 6 units can be taken as credit/no credit independent study of thesis units. Upper-division English coursework (100 level) may count for graduate students if you have received permission of the instructor as well as the MA or MFA Coordinator. Classes taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from your advisor before you take such courses.

Here are the courses, faculty, and meeting times for our Fall 2020 graduate course offerings:

ENGLISH 201	M	4:00 PM - 6:45 PM	PROFESSOR EASTWOOD
ENGLISH 224	R	7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	PROFESSOR VILLAGRANA
ENGLISH 240	M	4:00 PM - 6:45 PM	PROFESSOR ASHTON
ENGLISH 241	R	4:00 PM - 6:45 PM	PROFESSOR TAYLOR
ENGLISH 242	W	7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	PROFESSOR MORIARTY
ENGLISH 254	M	7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	PROFESSOR BRADA-WILLIAMS
ENGLISH 256	T	4:00 PM - 6:45 PM	PROFESSOR KRISHNASWAMY
ENGLISH 259	W	4:00 PM - 6:45 PM	PROFESSOR BAER
ENGLISH 291	R	7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	PROFESSOR ANDERSON
ENGLISH 297	T	7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	PROFESSOR STORK

Registration for Fall 2020

MySJSU should give you appointment times and information on how to register for next semester's courses in May. Registration for graduate students will begin in June. It is important that you register as early as possible. If there are not enough people signed up for a course, even a graduate course could be cancelled.

Contact your advisor if you have any questions. MFAs need to be sure and sign up for any workshops they need for their degree as soon as possible. After a certain point writing workshops are opened up to all graduates on a first come, first served basis, regardless of program (MA or MFA).

Course Requirements

All MA students are required to take English 201 and English 297 (students entering the program in Fall 2017 or later, must be enrolled in 27 to take the comprehensive exam).

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Fall 2020 Course Descriptions

English 201

Materials and Methods of Literary Research

M 4:00-6:45 pm (Professor Eastwood)

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the basic elements of work in the field of literary study. Objectives for the course include introducing students to research materials, tools, various analytical methodologies and critical theories, helping students discover how to apply particular methods to different literary texts, honing analytical and research skills, and gaining experience writing for different audiences. The seminar is organized around the close reading of two very different literary texts (Stoker's *Dracula* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*), to which students apply and analyze various critical lenses before researching and producing their own paper for a mock conference, and then revising that work for a research paper to conclude the seminar.

English 224

Studies in Early Modern Literature: Critical Race Studies

R 7:00-9:45 pm (Professor Villagrana)

This course pairs readings in English, Iberian, and colonial primary sources with seminal works of theory and criticism in early modern critical race studies. Students will become familiar with the theoretical frameworks of historicism and cultural studies; practice close reading works with regard to early modern literary conventions; and integrate these analytical approaches in their original research essays.

English 240

Poetry Workshop: The Prose Poem and Short Forms

M 4:00-6:45pm (Professor Ashton)

What is prose poetry? How does it differ from flash fiction and the lyric essay, or is the question of nomenclature merely "a wart on so much happiness," as Marianne Moore observed? In this graduate level workshop, we'll consider short forms through the lens of the prose poem, including its historical development, structure, and how prose poetry relates to genre classification and hybridity. Poets and prose writers alike are welcome to read, consider, write, and workshop in their genres through these popular forms.

English 241

Fiction Writing Workshop

R 4:00-6:45 pm (Professor Taylor)

This is the most advanced fiction workshop offered at SJSU. Experimentation, risk-taking, and stretching of all kinds will be encouraged. Students submit two original pieces of fiction for plus a significant revision in lieu of a final exam. The texts for the semester are *Best American Short Stories 2019* (eds. Anthony Doerr & Heidi Pitlor) and an anthology of published short stories chosen by the class. Registration priority goes to MFAs with a primary concentration in fiction, followed by those with a secondary concentration in fiction, and finally graduate students in other programs. If you are not in the MFA program, you must submit a writing sample to the instructor before you may register.

English 242

Nonfiction Writing Workshop

W 7:00-9:45 pm (Professor Moriarty)

In this workshop, you will read, discuss, and have the opportunity to write in all the genres of Creative Nonfiction. We will discuss and critique each other's work, read pieces from well-known practitioners, and explore nonfiction's many shapes, forms, and possibilities.

English 254

Seminar in Genre Studies in American Literature *E Pluribus Unum: Short Story Collections, Cycles, Sequences and Composite Novels*

M 7:00-9:45pm (Professor Brada-Williams)

Many key works of twentieth-century American literature seem to straddle the border between a short story collection and a novel. Writers ranging from William Faulkner to Jean Toomer, from Louise Erdrich to Elizabeth Strout have used genre-bending styles to represent specific American communities and their experiences. This course will explore both the impact of ethnic Americans in shaping the genres between short story collections and novels and the impact of these boundary-defying genres have on the ability of Americans to depict community. It will be a semester-long examination of the interrelationship of form and content. While we will discuss the various definitions of these forms, the emphasis of the class will be on exploring the aesthetic and political uses of a variety of American authors' choices, rather than on determining set genre definitions.

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Fall 2020 Course Descriptions

English 256

Seminar in Twentieth Century British Literature

T 4:00-6:45 pm (Professor Krishnaswamy)

At the beginning of the 20th century, Britain was the most powerful empire in the world, the British monarch ruled over a quarter of the world's population, and my ancestors on the Indian subcontinent in South Asia were British subjects, some engaged in anticolonial struggles against Britain. By end of the 20th century, Britain had fought two world wars, lost its empire, become part of the EU, and experienced an influx of immigrants from the former colonies while the English language had established itself as the dominant lingua franca of the world. Today, two decades into the 21st century, Britain has Brexit-ed the European Union in an assertion of nationalism and registers significant levels of nostalgia for empire while the country battles the covid-19 global pandemic, the Prime Minister is hospitalized, and British citizens of South Asian origin occupy 4th and 5th positions in the British government's chain of command. What do these massive transformations tell us about the changing nature of British national identity and what role has literature played in creating, propagating, reinforcing, challenging or subverting representations of national identity? We will seek answers to these questions by exploring the relationship between nation and narration in the selected works of T.S. Eliot, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, E.M. Foster, Rudyard Kipling, George Orwell, Graham Greene, Doris Lessing, Jean Rhys, Sam Selvon, Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, Zadie Smith, and others.

English 259

Seminar in Composition Studies

M 4:00-6:45pm (Professor Baer)

What is writing? Why and how have we studied it? How do we learn it? Seminar members will collaborate to explore the intersections of theory and practice as they design a first year writing course for SJSU students. Each research team's course design will grow out of our reading, research, and discussion of the theory and practice of rhetoric and writing studies. This collaboration will yield a culminating project from each seminar member: a teaching portfolio that includes a teaching philosophy statement, proposed course syllabus, and sample reading

and writing assignment(s) and lesson plan(s). English 259 is a prerequisite or corequisite for Teaching Associates; it is highly recommended for anyone who contemplates teaching writing.

ENGL 291

Literary Practicum

R 7:00 – 9:45 PM (Professor Anderson)

This 4-unit CR/NC practicum course prepares Creative Writing graduate students to take the MFA exam and develop and begin writing their theses. In ENGL 291, students will customize their exam reading list, draft the thesis abstract and preface, and participate in vital peer reviews. At the beginning of the course, students will consult with their individual thesis committees (comprised of the thesis director and thesis readers) to create a completion plan and throughout the semester, will work under their guidance to complete a publishable manuscript.

MFA candidates will share drafts with others working in the same primary genre on the class' Canvas page. There they will post texts of their thesis abstracts and introductions, as well as portions of their project. In turn, students will receive comments on their drafts from classmates (working in the same primary genre) and from their respective thesis committees.

Beyond preparation for the exam and developing the thesis, ENGL 291 offers crucial professional development opportunities as students will have the chance to meet with literary agents, visiting writers, and editors. The course also provides a forum for a vibrant writing community through Thursday evening readings presented by the Center for Literary Arts.

English 297

Exam preparation for the Master's Degree

T 7:00-9:45pm (Professor Stork)

In this 2-unit course, we will strategize for taking the Masters Level Comprehensive Examination. With guidance, you will choose your topics for the take-home portion. We will also discuss the literary terms list and practice analyzing poetry. At the end of the semester, you will take the in-class timed portion of the exam on literary terms and poetic analysis.

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MA/MFA Reminders and Guidelines

Theses Reminders



MA/MFA STUDENTS PLANNING TO WRITE A THESIS next year should take note of the following timeline and plan accordingly: Those planning to take thesis units (English 299) in Spring 2021 with intent to graduate in May will be required to submit thesis proposals for approval by November 1, 2020. This means you should ideally do your preliminary research over the summer to identify your area/topic of interest so that you can discuss this with potential advisors/readers early in the fall semester in order to form your thesis committee and prepare your proposal for formal submission by November 1. If your proposal is approved, use the winter break to work on your thesis. In Spring 2021, plan to submit your draft to your thesis director by February 1 and a revised draft to your 2nd and 3rd readers by April 1 to allow sufficient time for further feedback and revision. Planning ahead and following the timeline is critical to ensuring your thesis is of high quality and you are able to finish in time for May graduation.

For MA and MFA students planning to write a thesis next year, please be familiar with the latest MLA Handbook. Graduate Studies will

expect your thesis to be consistently formatted in whatever style you choose. They will not allow you to mix styles, and they will expect you to be up to date, or they will require you to revise before they accept your thesis. MFA students should note that MFA theses must be accompanied by a 2000 - 3000 word (approximate length) preface, in which the author provides a literary context for her/his work, including literary influences, stylistic and theoretical influences, the influence of vhistorical events, cultural and/or linguistic background, etc. It is hoped that the proposal-writing process will help MFAs to flesh out their ideas for their preface.

NEW MA Exam Guidelines

The new MA exam will be offered starting Fall 2020. Guidelines and reading lists are now available on our website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/ma-comps.html>

Note that Part 1 is an in-class exam you will take as part of English 297, a required course offered only in the fall. Please enroll in 297 if you plan to take Part 1 in the Fall. Part 2 is a take-home essay exam in 3 specific areas, administered via canvas. You must indicate which three areas you wish to be examined in when you sign up for the exam.

MA Foreign Language Requirement

The MA Program requires demonstrated proficiency in a language, other than English, equivalent to 2 semesters or 3 quarters of

college-level coursework completed with a grade of B or higher. If you have not already satisfied this requirement at the time of admission, you may be admitted to conditional standing, but you will need to satisfy the requirement by taking the required number of units and achieving the required grade OR proving your language knowledge via a test given by the World Languages Department before graduating from the MA program. For questions about this requirement, or to satisfy this requirement in a language other than French, German, or Spanish, please contact the MA Advisor.

MA and MFA Exam Schedules

MA and MFA students should sign up for the Fall 2020 Exam by May 15, 2020. The MFA exam and the MA Part 2 exam will be distributed on September 25 (9:00 a.m.) and will be due on September 28 (5:00 p.m.). MA students should email Professor Krishnaswamy to sign up for Part 2. To sign up for the MFA exam, students should first have successfully achieved MFA candidacy status and have formed a three-person thesis committee.

Contact Professor Soldofsky to receive a link to sign up.

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MA/MFA Reminders and Guidelines (continued)

Conditionally Classified Graduate Students

Conditionally classified students must complete required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. A list of upper-division literature courses approved for conditionally classified students is available from Professor Krishnaswamy. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; see your advisor to file the necessary form (found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gape/forms/>).

MFA Thesis Reading and Defense

The MFA in Creative Writing's annual public MFA thesis reading is scheduled for May 11, 2:30 p.m., in the University Library rms. 225/229. Theses by students who have received their MFA degrees in December 2018, and will receive their MFA's in May and August 2018 will read from their thesis projects. Family and friends are invited. A reception will follow.

Electronic Theses: Plan B Option

Graduate Studies is now accepting theses electronically and making them available to the public via open access on the web. For those of you who hope to publish your thesis, we suggest you file a form to see that your thesis is "embargoed." That means it will still be available electronically within the library (just as the hard copies of our alumni's theses are available to visitors to the MLK library), but will not be available to people who do not have access to the SJSU library. Currently Graduate Studies' policy is that you can request an embargo for a set number of years (three) and then file an additional form to have the thesis embargoed further. The graduate faculty encourages those of you with the desire to later publish part or all of your thesis to protect your creative and intellectual property. For those of you with no desire to publish your thesis materials in print form, open access will provide you with the immediate and ultimate distribution of your scholarship (or creative work).

Starting in Fall 2020, MFA candidates will be able to select a Plan B Thesis Option. Plan B means enrolling in units for a Departmental Thesis. A Departmental Thesis is not submitted to the Graduate College thesis office but instead to the English Department for final approval. The Departmental Thesis, though submitted in digital form, will not be uploaded to the ProQuest or Scholar Works digital thesis depositories. This option is recommended for students who wish to protect their copyright of their creative work for future publication. The Departmental Thesis option will be available retroactively for students completing their degrees in May, August, and December 2019. And in May and August 2020.



Professional Development Workshops for MA and MFA

In Fall 2019, MA and MFA students in English and Comparative Literature formalized the English Lit & Writing Professional Development Club (ELWPDC) as an official SJSU student organization. Members of the group held a series of meetings to determine leadership, goals for the group, and processes for recruiting new members. In addition, the ELWPDC again offered a series of workshops

during the 2019-2020 school year, including "Paths to Publication: Creative Writing" and "Navigating Conferences and Calls for Papers." The organizers invited faculty from the department to share expertise and experiences about the various topics with the goal of helping students develop knowledge about and strategies for building their professional profiles. Additional workshops were planned

but had to be postponed due to COVID-19. A central goal of the ELWPDC is to build community in the graduate program and open opportunities for graduate student leadership for themselves and future students. In future semesters, the organizers will continue to build the ELWPDC, offer additional workshops, and plan social gatherings.

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Graduate Faculty, Student, and Alumni Accomplishments

San Jose Story Map: Professor Krishnaswamy was awarded a Cal Humanities for all grant for her "San Jose Story Map" proposal to create a digital multimedia story map of San Jose. She will lead a multidisciplinary team of faculty and students that will plan and execute the project over the next two years. The project team plans to organize an online "My San Jose Story Contest" that will be open to the public, including the SJSU community. Submissions will be original multimedia compositions that tell a story about a particular place or location in San Jose. Winning entries from the contest will be collected, curated and used as content for building a geo-locational story map of San Jose. Various activities and events are being planned as part of this project. Students interested in taking an active leadership role in the project (as creative consultants, workshop organizers etc.) are encouraged to contact Professor Krishnaswamy. The project is part of the Deep Humanities and Arts Initiative that Professor Krishnaswamy leads in the college of H&A.

Asa Murphy's essay "A Refutation of the Road" has been accepted and will be forthcoming in *La Piccioletta Barca*.



Racheal Crawford's nonfiction lyrical piece, "Just in Case You Ever Have to Visit Your Sister in Prison" is forthcoming in the Spring issue of *New South*, an art and literary journal published out of Georgia State University. She will also be reading an excerpt from it at AWP in March.

She has also received an AWP Intro Journals Poetry Award for her poem "Just in Case You Ever Have to Visit Your Sister in Prison." The poem will be published in future issue *Quarterly West*.



Alayna Mills's proposal to present her research on "Margery Kempe: Embracing Monstrosity in Mysticism" at the Acacia Conference at CSU Fullerton has been accepted.

Important Dates in 2020

- April 1** Deadline for applications for 2020–21 GA-ships to the Graduate Coordinator.
- April 1** Candidacy forms due to GAPE for December 2020 graduates.
- April 15** Thesis proposals for Fall 2020 credit due to the graduate committee
- April 24** Thesis due to Graduate Studies for May 2020 graduates
- May 15** Last day to sign-up for the Fall 2020 MA-Part 2 and MFA Exams.
- June 8** Last day for May 2020 graduates to submit approved MA and MFA theses for electronic publication. (Remember to select the "embargo" option.)
- July 1** Deadline for August 20 graduates to submit approved theses to Graduate Studies.
- Aug. 21** Fall semester begins.
- Sept. 25** MA-Part 2 and MFA Comprehensive Exam distributed (9 AM).
- Sept. 28.** MA-Part 2 and MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5 PM).
- Oct. 1** Deadline for May 2022 graduates to file Departmental Request for Candidacy form.