



English Department Graduate Newsletter



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FALL OFFICE HOURS

My office hours this semester will be T, Th 2-3 and Wednesday evening, 6-7; other hours by appointment. My office phone is 924-4435 and my e-mail address is dkeeseey@email.sjsu.edu. Please feel free to call or to stop by my office (FO 108) if you have any questions about the graduate program.

New students especially should pick up the latest version of "The M.A. in English: A Guide for Students," a six-page brochure which you'll find in the rack outside the English office. This should answer most questions about the program and it includes the reading list for the comprehensive exam. (The Guide is also available on the English department home page at www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/.)

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING 2001

The Schedule of Classes for spring 2001 will give you detailed information on how to register for next semester's courses. Please plan to register as early as possible; the budget will again be tight and underenrolled seminars may be canceled early in the registration process. If you have questions about your schedule for the spring, please get in touch with me.

CAROLYN KIZER ON CAMPUS

Carolyn Kizer, one of the nation's most distinguished poets, will be joining the English department for the spring semester as holder of the Lurie Professorship. Ms. Kizer will teach two courses, one of them our creative writing seminar, English 240, the other, English 151: Twentieth-Century Poetry. Students admitted to the M.A. Creative Writing Emphasis will have priority enrollment for the seminar. Others may be admitted at the instructor's option. Graduate students may take English 151 for graduate credit, but must do extra work of the "amount and kind expected at the graduate level."

CONDITIONALLY CLASSIFIED GRADUATE 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. Be sure to take only courses from this list. When you are eligible for classified status, the change is not automatic; you need to see me to file the necessary form.

NEW GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR MASTER'S THESES

Thesis writers and their advisors should know that the Graduate Studies Office has revised (as of May 1999) the "General Instructions for Master's Theses," the document that sets the rules for thesis style, format, binding, etc. Copies are available at the GSO and on the GSO website (see below). Note, too, that December graduates are encouraged to submit a disk copy as well as a hard copy of their thesis, and in the spring semester all theses must be submitted on disk.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 2001

201 Materials and Methods M 1600-1845 Stork

204 Modern Approaches to Lit. T 1900-2145 Keeseey

208 Comparative Literature W 1600-1845 Karim

225 Shakespeare R 1600-1845 Birenbaum

240 Creative Writing W 1900-2145 Kizer

255 20th-Century American T 1600-1845 Douglass

256 20th-Century British R 1900-2145 Wilson

(Seminars offered in Fall 2001 will probably include 200, 201, 217, 226, 233, 253, 254, and 259.)

201 Materials and Methods of Literary Research (Prof. Stork):

This course will introduce graduate students to the resources and techniques of formal literary research and to the standards of scholarly work. Students will learn to evaluate and use specialized libraries, indices, bibliographies, journal publications, checklists, concordances, histories, data bases for computer searches, handbooks, and other materials. In addition, they will gain practical experience in transcription and text editing by working with the Steinbeck Ledger Book of 1934 housed in the Steinbeck Research Center. We will also discuss various (and at times competing) theories of literary criticism. Students should complete the course ready to apply the technical and critical competencies they have gained to their work in other graduate seminars. The course will include a number of formal oral presentations and written exercises. English 201 is required of all English graduate students and should be taken as soon as possible after achieving classified standing.

204 Modern Approaches to Literature (Prof. Keeseey):

This course will explore some of the main contemporary approaches to literature, including versions of genetic, reader-response, formal, mimetic, intertextual, feminist, Marxist, poststructural, and cultural criticism. We will read essays by prominent modern critics explaining and defending each type of criticism as well as essays applying some version of each approach to a few target texts. By this plan we will try to strike a useful balance between the "practical" and the theoretical aspects of criticism, and the format will also allow us to compare the different approaches by seeing what they can show us about the same literary texts. Required texts: Keeseey, Contexts for Criticism (3rd ed, 1998); Richter, Falling into Theory (2nd ed, 2000). (Those who think ahead may save money by ordering from web discounters like amazon.com.)

English 208 Comparative Literature (Prof. Karim):

"Seminar in Postcolonial Literature:" While formal de-colonization has taken place in many parts of the world, the legacy of colonial domination continues to exercise a great influence on the cultural, economic, and political realities over most of those nations. India recently celebrated its fifty-year anniversary as an independent, "post-colonial" nation. As recently as 1997, the British colony of Hong Kong was officially handed back to China after 156 years of British colonial rule. South Africa, a nation which had been

colonized by both the British and Dutch, and sustained a system of segregation known as apartheid which oppressed the majority black population, had its first open and free elections in which black people could vote in 1994. While many countries have struggled to free themselves from the devastating economic, political and social effects of imperial and colonial conquest, almost all of them have had to eventually recognize that the historical realities of colonialism can never be erased; the "end of empire" carries with it a lasting legacy which continues to influence the psyches, cultures, and institutions of every nation it has touched. This graduate seminar focuses on fiction, poetry, and essays from nations and regions where European and American colonialism and imperialism have had and continue to have a significant impact on the peoples of those nations. Class meetings take the form of student-directed discussions interspersed with brief discussions by the professor of postcolonial theory, political and social contexts, and other contextual and methodological information. In addition to literary selections, we will read a number of essays that help us to understand the theoretical and cultural framework of this body of literature called "postcolonialism." Required Texts: *This Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Indonesia) *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri (Pakistan) *Once Were Warriors* by Alan Duff (New Zealand) *Ake: The Years of Childhood* by Wole Soyinka (Nigeria) *Lucy* by Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua) In addition, you will need to purchase a Course Packet that contains articles, poems, and excerpts.

225 Shakespeare (Prof. Birenbaum):

You know who that is: still the best stuff going somehow. Likely plays are Hamlet or Lear, Measure for Measure, Winter's Tale, Antony and Cleopatra, Twelfth Night, Richard II, Troilus and Cressida. Or let me know your choices. Emphasis will be on the literary tradition to which Shakespeare's style belongs (i.e., romance) and on approaches to interpretation, promoting an archetypal reading in terms of comic and tragic experience.

240 Creative Writing (Visiting Professor Carolyn Kizer):

Students in the M.A. Creative Writing Emphasis will have enrollment priority. Others may be admitted at the instructor's option.

255 Twentieth-Century American Literature (Prof. Douglass):

"The City in American Literature." This course assesses some of the attempts to comprehend the city's powerful and dire consequences for North American life. Readings (drawn primarily from the MA Comprehensive Examination Reading List) will include works by Sherwood Anderson, Amiri Baraka, Gwendolyn Brooks, Raymond Chandler, John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, T.S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Tama Janowitz, Susanna Moore, Thomas Pynchon, William Carlos Williams, and Anzia Yezierska. Consideration will also be given to film portrayals of urban life,

including film noir.

256 Twentieth-Century British Literature (Prof. Wilson):

The first half of the course will be devoted to a study of novels by Conrad, Joyce, Lawrence, Woolf, Beckett, and Amis. The second will cover the poetry of Yeats, Auden, Thomas, Larkin, Heaney, McGuckian, Carson, and Muldoon.

GRADUATE STUDIES OFFICE WEBSITE

The SJSU Graduate Studies Office website publishes important deadlines, rules, and information that may be useful to graduate students. Dial up www.sjsu.edu and follow the links.

PH.D. APPLICATIONS

The department would very much like to know which students are applying to Ph.D. programs and what success you are having. Please drop a note or give me a call to let me know where you are applying and how things are working out.

GRADUATE BULLETIN BOARD

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.

ENGLISH GRADUATE GROUP

Interested students should contact Stephanie Bryant (4-4517). Meeting dates and times will be posted and circulated in the seminars.

APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH M.A.

Except for undergraduate courses you may have to take if you are a conditionally classified student, it is assumed that your graduate work will be in 200-numbered English classes. Courses taken outside the department will not count except in unusual circumstances. Get prior approval from me before you take such courses. Similarly, upper-division English course work will not count unless you have convincing reasons to take undergraduate courses. Again, check with me in advance.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT POSITIONS FOR SPRING 2001

The department will have a few new Graduate Assistant positions for spring 2001. Duties may include working as an assistant to a professor or tutoring in the writing lab. If you are interested, write me a brief letter of application sketching your background and listing your graduate school courses and grades. Also include the names of three professors who could be contacted for recommendations (you don't need to supply letters) and be sure to add your current phone number, address, and e-mail address. Get this letter to me by Dec. 1.

IMPORTANT DATES

Feb. 1, 2001 Last day for August or December 2001 graduates to submit approved programs to Graduate Studies. You must see me to fill out the appropriate form. To be safe, do it before the end of this fall semester.

Feb. 1, 2001 Last day for May 2001 graduates to file or reactivate application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office

Mar. 14, 2001 Departmental foreign language exams, FO 104, 3:30-5 p.m.

Mar. 14, 2001 Last day to submit thesis to 2nd and 3rd readers

Apr. 2, 2001 T.A. and G.A. applications for fall 2001 due

Apr. 2, 2001 Last day for May 2001 graduates to submit thesis to Graduate Studies Office

Apr. 7, 2001 M.A. Comprehensive Exam, Part 1, 9-12, FO 104

Apr. 14, 2001 M.A. Comprehensive Exam, Part 2, 9-12, FO 10