

English Department

Graduate Newsletter

Don Keeseey, Graduate Coordinator
FO 108
(408) 924-4435

 dkeeseey@email.sjsu.edu



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BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY

The bread may not always be to the wise, nor the race to the swift, but there is (some) money for the Department to buy books. The Department's Library Committee is, therefore, soliciting book orders from graduate students. If in the course of your researches, you have needed books that were not available in our collection, please make a note of them and give the pertinent information soon to Professor Balance Chow, chair of the committee. The funds, such as they are, will not cover serial subscriptions, alas.

GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

Plans are being made for a conference of, for and by graduate students to be held on campus 23-24 April 1999. More information will be posted soon. In the meantime, John Brinkworth (4-4517) is the person to contact

TEACHING AND GRADUATE ASSOCIATES

The Department is fortunate to have a talented corps of graduate students serving as

GAs and TAs.

GAs are: Jennifer Cole; Eve Culver; Jason Edwards; Melinda Elliot; William Orchard; Eugene Schragg; Theodore Shank; Pam Simeon; Allison St. Dennis; John Swanson; Reina Williams; and Leila Yasmin.

TAs are: John Brinkwirth; Kelly Caufield; Steve Dondershine (F98); Mark Dowdy; Homeira Foth; Kristine Gardner; Jay Gutierrez; Henry Hasklett; Jessica Hooper-Fernandez; Laima Kardokas; Craig Lore; Kirsty MacKay; Martha McNeely; Priska Pittet; Annalisa Rava; and Inga Silva.

GRADUATE ASSISTANT POSITIONS FOR SPRING 1999

The Department will have a few new Graduate Assistant positions for spring 1999. Duties will 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 will be supplying letters of recommendation and be sure to add your current phone number and address. Get this letter to me by Dec. 1, and have your referees send their letters directly to me by the same date.

ENGLISH GRADUATE GROUP

EGG meets on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in FO 104. There is also a listserver for graduate students, please contact Mark Dowdy, President of EGG, for details at 924-4518.

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING 1999

The Schedule of Classes for spring 1998 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 under-enrolled 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.

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.

APPROVED COURSES FOR THE ENGLISH M.A.

Except for undergraduate courses you may have to take if you are a conditionally classified student and aside from certain upper-division courses required in the writing emphases, 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.

ENGLISH GRADUATE SEMINARS FOR SPRING 1999

- 201 Materials and Methods R 1330-1615 Stork**
- 204 Modern Approaches to Lit. W 1900-2145 Douglass**
- 211 20th-Century Poetry R 1900-2145 Maio**
- 217 English Renaissance T 1900-2145 Grant**
- 230 18th-Century British M 1900-2145 Rice**
- 233 Victorian Literature R 1900-2145 Wilson**
- 253 Early American Literature T 1900-2145 Engell**
- 255 20th-Century American T 1600-1845 Shillinglaw**
- 256 20th-Century British W 1600-1845 Mesher**
- 257 History of Rhetoric M 1600-1845 Cullen**

(Seminars offered in Fall 1999 will probably include 200, 201, 215, 225, 229, 230, 232, 240, 255, 256 and 259.)

Course Descriptions

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 with 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. Douglass):

This seminar treats the field of Critical Theory, which combines traditional criticism, psychology, philosophy, political science, history and even biology. Critical Theory questions fundamental assumptions about reading; it also assumes familiarity with a vast background of cultural material. You will be reflecting on your reading and attempting to formulate clearer answers to the great questions: What is literature? How should we interpret it? How should we evaluate it? What is its relation to culture in general? What are the rights and duties of artists? Of critics and scholars? I predict the course will significantly alter your views of writing and reading in general and of the works of particular authors. We will very briefly review some important concepts in what was criticism, poetics, and aesthetics in the European tradition. We will then seek to assess the achievements of certain intellectual schools of the past half-century, like New Criticism, Formalism, Structuralism, Reader-response, Marxism, Freudianism, New Historicism, Cultural Studies, Feminism, Deconstruction, Queer Theory, and Postcolonialism. To focus our discussion, we will read essays by practicing critics together with a few common literary texts.

211. Twentieth-Century Poetry (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.

217. English Renaissance (Prof. Grant):

A study of lyric poetry and drama, of Platonism and passion, a study of the courtier and the poet and their attitudes towards women, language, and reality. We begin with *The Courtier* by Castiglione and end with *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore* by John Ford. Students who have had little background in Renaissance literature should read or review "The Sixteenth Century" as well as the works of Donne, Jonson, and Webster in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Students should buy this anthology if it is not already in their personal library. The instructor refers to it frequently and it is our text for Marlowe's "Hero and Leander." There will be one midterm and a seminar paper.

230. Eighteenth-Century British Literature (Prof. Rice):

A study of 18th-century prose style. Focusing on Samuel Johnson and Edward Gibbon, we will investigate the significance of Richard Lanham's statement that "Every prose style allegorizes a lifestyle." In other words, we will explore the relationship between ideas and world views and their embodiment in language. This methodology should provide a particularly useful approach to Johnson and Gibbon, who encapsulated a great deal of previous learning, who were deliberately and heroically derivative in their thinking, but who were also men of genius and originality. Each was reflective of his

culture yet each found a distinctive and appropriate prose style to express his vision. Texts: Samuel Johnson, *Selected Writings* (Penguin); Edward Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I (Penguin).

233. Victorian Literature (Prof. Wilson):

Daniel Deronda, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the poetry of Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, the Pre-Raphaelites, Hopkins and Hardy. Art, music, and critical prose will supplement the above readings.

253. Early American Literature (Prof. Engell):

The working title of this seminar is "Frontier Representations in American Literature, 1680-1850." Using seven pairs of literary works written between 1680 and 1850, we will explore English-language representations of the North American frontier. We are not out to prove a unified thesis about frontier representations. Quite the opposite. We will read works of various genres, tones, and styles exemplifying a range of personal and cultural attitudes toward the frontier as those attitudes evolved over nearly three centuries. One work, written by an Amerindian, does not even acknowledge *A Narrative of the Captivity*, and William Byrd, *Histories of the Dividing Line* (both non-fiction prose); 2) Anne Bradstreet, "Contemplations," and Ebenezer Cook, "The Sot-weed Factor" (both poetry); 3) J. Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, and William Bartram, *Travels* (both non-fiction prose); 4) Philip Freneau "On the Civilization of the Western Aboriginal Country," and William Cullen Bryant, and George Washington Harris, selected *Sut Lovingood Yarns* (satiric non-fiction and fiction); 6) Black Hawk, *Autobiography*, and Margaret Fuller, *Summer on the Lakes* (both non-fiction prose); and 7) James Fenimore Cooper, *The Deerslayer*, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (both novels). NOTE: A number of these literary works are quite brief; only a few are quite long. In several instances we will read selections rather than entire works. Requirement: two oral presentations; a twenty page research essay; and regular involvement in discussion.

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

The Literature of Exile. Focusing on Paris and France in the 1920s, we will devote the majority of the course to a study of representative expatriate writers. One critic has argued that "exile is the essential characteristic of the modern writer"--separation from a familiar native landscape. We will examine works by Hemingway (*The Sun Also Rises*, *A Moveable Feast*, *The Garden of Eden*, and selected stories), Fitzgerald (*Tender is the Night*), Djuna Barnes (*Nightwood*), and Gertrude Stein (*Paris France*) as well as selected memoirs. We will conclude the course with Steinbeck's *Cannery Row* and his selections on Paris published in *Figaro Litteraire* in 1954.

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

The focus for this semester will be on narrative form, a look at nearly a century of experimental narratives by pioneers of such techniques as stream-of-consciousness

and narrative unreliability. Texts for the course will be: Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*; Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*; Joyce, *Ulysses*; Lessing, *The Golden Notebook*; Ishiguro, *A Pale View of the Hills*; A.S. Byatt, *Possession*; Lawrence Norfolk, *Lempriere's Dictionary*.

257. History and Theories of Rhetoric (Prof. Cullen):

This course provides a brief survey of rhetorical theory and practice from Plato to the present. Major assignments will include a research paper and an oral presentation.

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 ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

If you will not be taking classes next semester but would like to receive the Newsletter, send me a note with your address and I'll put you on the mailing list.

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.

IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 16, 1998: Last day for December graduates to submit theses to Graduate Studies Office, WLN 125

Feb. 1, 1999: Last day for August or December 1999 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. 26, 1999: Last day for May 1998 graduates to file application for graduation at the Graduate Studies Office

Mar. 11, 1999: Departmental foreign language exams, FO 104, 3:30-5 p.m.

Apr. 10, 1999: Part 1 of the M.A. Comprehensive Exam, FO 104, 0900-1200

Apr. 14, 1999: Last day for May 1998 graduates to submit thesis to Graduate Studies Office

Apr.17, 1999: Part 2 of the M.A. Comprehensive Exam, FO 104, 0900-1200

[April 98 Newsletter](#)

