

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Spring Office Hours

MA Advising

Revathi Krishnaswamy
revathi.krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu
virtual office hours: MW 10:15-11am and
by appointment

MFA Advising

Prof. Alan Soldofsky
alan.soldofsky@sjsu.edu
M and W 3:15-4:30 pm.
and Th by appointment



Revathi Krishnaswamy

Graduate Coordinator



Alan Soldofsky

Director of Creative Writing and
MFA Program Coordination

Introducing New Faculty

Brook McClurg



Brook McClurg will be joining the English department in Fall 2023. He is currently a 2022-23 Fulbright scholar in Mexico City. Brook received a B.A. in Creative Writing from Columbia University (Fiction), an MFA from Rutgers University-Camden (Nonfiction), and a PhD in English from Texas Tech University. His Spanish language translations have appeared in the Loch Raven Review. His own poem appeared in Iron Horse Literary Review. His Creative Nonfiction and Fiction work have appeared in Luminaire, Wanderlust, Roadrunner Review, Cagibi, Pideonholes, Exposition Review, and elsewhere. His first nonfiction book, *A Dictionary of Modern Consternation* won the 2022 Permafrost Book Prize and is forthcoming from University of Alaska Press.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Important Policies

Continuous Enrollment and 1290R

Course Requirements per S17-5, University Policy, Required Enrollment for Culminating Graduate Students, apply to graduate students who have completed all degree program requirements except the culminating experience (thesis, project and/or comprehensive exam). Such students 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: <https://www.sjsu.edu/cgs/docs/forms/1290R%20FAQs%20rev%2009.27.21.pdf>

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.

Registration for Fall 2023

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). All MA students are required to take English 201 and English 297, which are offered only in the Fall. Students planning to apply for TAs should complete 259, which is also offered only in the Fall.

Fall 2023 Schedule of Classes

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 2023 graduate course offerings:

English 201	M	16:00 - 18:45	HGH227	Professor Urcaregui
English 207	W	16:00 - 18:45	online	Professor Gorman-DaRif
English 233	T	16:00 - 18:45	HGH227	Professor Spangler
English 240	W	19:00 - 21:45	online	Professor Soldofsky
English 241	R	19:00 - 21:45	HGH227	Professor Taylor
English 242	M	19:00 - 21:45	HGH227	Professor McClurg
English 255	T	19:00 - 21:45	HGH227	Professor Johnson
English 259	R	16:00 - 18:45	HGH227	Professor Skinnell
English 291	M	16:00 - 18:45	online	Professor Anderson
English 297	M	16:00 - 18:45	online	Professor Krishnaswamy

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Fall 2023 Course Descriptions

English 201

Methods and Materials of Literary Research

M 16:00 - 18:45 (Professor Urcaregui)

Materials and Methods of Literary Research provides a foundation for graduate students and advanced undergraduate majors to read, write, and research at the graduate level. We develop our close reading and formal analysis as we read literary texts alongside relevant works of theory and criticism. We will read selected poetry from the "British & American: 1900 - Present" and the "Multiethnic American Literature" exam lists, and our primary literary text throughout the semester will be Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban* (also on the "Multiethnic American Literature" exam list). We will also familiarize ourselves with various research methods within the discipline of literary studies and practice writing across multiple academic genres (including an abstract and annotated bibliography, a conference paper, and a journal article) as well as within alternative-academic, digital, and public-facing spaces (such as book reviews, op-eds, and blog posts). A significant portion of our class will be focused on students pursuing their own original research projects: first, by familiarizing yourself with relevant scholarship, then by developing your own original interpretation and contribution, and finally by writing, revising, and presenting your ideas. The course will underscore researching and writing as a process and will rely heavily on peer-review, feedback, and revision. By the end of English 201, students will have a wider skillset to participate in ongoing conversations within the discipline, and we will celebrate your original contributions with a class mini-conference.

English 207

Global Anglophone Literatures: The Postcolonial Novel

W 16:00 - 18:45 (Professor Gorman-DaRif)

"If you don't like someone else's story, write your own" – Chinua Achebe

This course examines literature from former British colonies, exploring how texts respond to the violence of empire, and create ways of seeing, resistant ideas, and new visions of the future. Pushing back against an imperial logic and discourse based on racist assumptions

and an extractive view of the environment, postcolonial writers make important interventions into both global thinking and literary form. This section of Global Anglophone literatures examines novels from three broad periods of postcolonial literature through the study of novels from India and across Africa to explore how authors grapple with literary form and the English language to comment on the status and future of the postcolony. We will examine early postcolonial novels that are part of the project of cultural nationalism, as well as the novels of disillusionment, especially those written by women, after independence, and will end with considering the status of the postcolonial novel today in light of globalization and climate crisis. This course will serve as a broad introduction to postcolonial literature and relevant theory, and will also help prepare students for Part II of the MA exam.

English 233

Studies in Period of British Literature: Modern and Contemporary Irish literature

T 16:00 - 18:45 (Professor Spangler)

Perhaps no nation over the last century plus has produced a wider range and larger number of writers than Ireland. From James Joyce to Sally Rooney, Ireland's literary output is remarkable, and all the more impressive considering the size of its population, which, at 5 million, is smaller than the San Francisco Bay Area. One reason for this success is the unusually close and sometimes explosive relationship between art and Irish society. Theatre and literature, for instance, were instrumental in galvanizing the nation toward independence from Britain in 1921 (though Northern Ireland remains part of the U.K.), and later, was the primary site for criticizing Ireland's social conservatism.

This course will examine modern and contemporary Irish literature – roughly, 1897 to the present day – in its cultural, political, social, and global contexts. It will explore how narrative fiction, theatre, and to a certain extent film have contributed to shaping Irish national and cultural identities. We will look at three eras in Irish literary history: a colonial period in which Ireland was part of the United Kingdom; a post-colonial period of independence; and a contemporary period, marked, among other things, by immigration to Ireland from places like Eastern Europe, West Africa, and South America.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Fall 2023 Course Descriptions

Please note: from June 7-10, 2023, San José State will host the American Conference for Irish Studies. This academic conference will feature presentations by scholars and artists from around the world on a variety of interdisciplinary topics related to Ireland. If you would like to get a jump on the course, I highly encourage you to attend. More information on the conference can be found here: <https://acisweb.org/conferences/acis-national-conference-2023/>. Email me directly if you are interested in the conference or the course: matthew.spangler@sjsu.edu

English 240

Poetry Workshop: Making Strong Opening Lines, Closing Lines, and the Lines In-Between

W 19:00-21:45 (Professor Soldofsky)

Poet/critic Elisa Gabbert writes that "first lines, or first poems in collection, do a lot of work in setting the tone and the reader's expectations." In the Graduate Poetry Workshop, we will give close attention to what makes a good, strong first line. And how to determine the best line lengths in free verse, rhythm, and where to break the line. Also, what makes a strong closing line(s). We will examine first lines and closing lines in published poems (in English and in translation), and investigate the poetic decisions that allowed those lines to happen. We also will investigate a variety of forms and styles of free verse as well as strategies that produce both strong short poems as well as long poems. And also, poem sequences. We'll experiment writing poems that are "wild": wild as in surprising; and wild as in the non-human natural environment. We'll write and discuss poems that contain "language events" --linguistic or imagistic surprises that induce pleasure-- that make the strange familiar and the familiar strange. Class members will attempt to start a new poem each week, and complete (by way of revision) a portfolio at least 8 to 10 poems by the end of the semester. (This is the last poetry workshop I will lead before fully retiring from SJSU in Fall 2024.)

ENGL 241

Fiction Writing Workshop

R 19:00 – 21:45 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 2022 (eds. Andrew Sean Greer & 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 Workshop

M 19:00-21:45pm (Professor McClurg)

This workshop will focus on the reading and writing of Creative Nonfiction. We will explore several modes and subgenres, including but not limited to, Memoir, Essay, Lyric, Reportage and hybrid texts. We will balance our reading of literary works with craft and critical essays, while using formal experimentation and structural play to help shape and reshape your works in progress. We will also interrogate the generic borders of Creative Nonfiction, considering the ethical implications—to facts, to those we write about, amongst others—that complicate our writing practices. This class will contain both discussion and workshop.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Fall 2023 Course Descriptions

English 255

Landscape and the Environment in American Literature

T 19:00-21:45 (Professor Johnson)

Landscape and the Environment in American Literature examines the crucial role the unique landscape of what is now the United States played in the development of a national literature, paying particular attention to issues of expansion, ecology, and the wilderness.

English 259

Seminar in Composition Studies

R 16:00-18:45 (Professor Skinnell)

In this course, we will study current approaches to studying and teaching writing. Specifically, we will examine perspectives about writing that inform its instruction: what writing is, how it is studied, how people learn, how writing is taught, how it should be taught, and whether or not it even can be taught. Our overarching goal will be to understand writing/composition as a complex, situated act in order to chart possibilities for developing and improving our work as teachers and scholars. The course will focus on situating issues associated with teaching writing in theoretical frameworks of rhetoric and composition studies, and we will discuss practical teaching issues, as well.

English 291

Lit Practicum

R 19:00-21:45 (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 gain skills to create a sustainable arts practice as well as meet with visiting experts in the field. The course also provides a forum for a vibrant writing community through Thursday evening readings presented by the Center for Literary Arts.

English 297

MA Comprehensive Exam Prep

M 16:00-18:45 (Professor Krishnaswamy)

This is the required, 2-unit Exam Preparation Course for the MA Exams, Part One and Two. We will begin with a historical and theoretical perspective covering all areas in Part Two of the Exam. We will conclude with intensive work on literary terminology and the close reading and explication of English poetry. Part One of the Exam, consisting of 25 multiple choice questions on literary terminology and a poetry explication, will be given on the last day of class, in November. Students may also opt to take both Parts of the Exam in the following Spring semester.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

MA/MFA Reminders and Guidelines

Thesis 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 2024 with intent to graduate in May will be required to submit thesis proposals for approval by November 1, 2023.

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 2024, 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 historical 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.

MA Exam Guidelines

Guidelines and reading lists for the MA Exams are now available on our website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/comp-exam.php>

Note that Part 1 is an in-class exam that 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.

The Fall 2023 Part Two exam will be given out on October 20th (9:00 AM) and will be due on October 23rd, (5:00 p.m.).

MA students should email Professor Krishnaswamy (Revathi.Krishnaswamy@sjsu.edu) by May 1st to sign up for Part 2.

MFA Exam

To sign up for the MFA exam, students should first have successfully achieved MFA candidacy status and have formed a three-person thesis committee.

The MFA exam will be distributed on October 20th, (9:00 a.m.) and will be due on October 23rd, (5:00 p.m.).

Contact Professor Soldofsky (Alan.Soldofsky@sjsu.edu) by August 31st to receive a link to sign up.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

MA/MFA Reminders and Guidelines (continued)

MA Foreign Language Requirement

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

Conditionally Classified Graduate Students

Conditionally classified students must complete required undergraduate course work before enrolling in graduate seminars. 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 Event

The MFA in Creative Writing's annual public MFA thesis reading is scheduled on Saturday, May 13th, 2:30 - 4:00 pm. A Zoom link will be available from Professor Soldofsky after May 1. Following the reading, there will be an **in-person reception and celebration** at a downtown San Jose venue TBA, 4:30 - 6:30 PM.

Students receiving their MFAs in May and August 2022 will read from their thesis projects.

Join Reed Magazine!

Join a 155-year legacy—and earn marketable credits toward your degree! English 133—Reed Magazine, California's oldest literary journal—eagerly encourages graduate students to enroll. This unique, four-credit course exposes students to the work of thousands of writers and offers real-world experience in editing and promoting a publication that has held fast through world war, cultural revolution, and the turns of two centuries. See www.reedmag.org.

For an add code, contact Editor in Chief Helen Meservey at helen.meservey@sjsu.edu.



Electronic Theses Or 298D 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 are able to submit a 298D 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.

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

ENGLISH GRADUATE CONFERENCE

SJSU | DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

A one-day conference for SJSU English graduate students who will present on topics related to literary studies, rhetoric, and creative writing analysis.



PANEL SCHEDULE

Hauntings

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Landscapes

4:15 pm - 5:15 pm

Cultural

Encounters

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

New

Approaches

6:45 pm - 7:30 pm

Sweeney Hall 229

April 14th, 2023 | 3 - 8 PM

Refreshments will be provided

ENGLISH GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Volume L, Number 13

May 2023

SJSU DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Brag Time!

Graduate Faculty, Student, and Alumni Accomplishments

Emily Coletta

MFA student Emily Coletta published a cover article for Metro in Feb 2023 about the speculative writers of the South Bay. There is a [web-version of the piece here.](#)

Annie Cheilek

MFA student Annie Cheilek has two poems, "Interruption" and "Great Falls," accepted for publication in this year's issue. Cider Press Review will publish another poem "The Work" in their April issue.

Ian Power-Luetscher

MFA student Ian Power-Luetscher's story, "365 Yay BrightCheer Fitness Challenge" was published in the November 2022 issue of Hare's Paw Literary Journal. His short story "Driftless," is forthcoming in the print issue of The Greensboro Review in spring 2023.

<http://greensbororeview.org/issues/>

<https://www.harespawlitjournal.com/issue-7-home>

Ryan Smith, Anne Cheilek, Tim Cech, and alum Allie Maier

MFA students Ryan Smith, Anne Cheilek, Tim Cech, and alum Allie Maier have launched their own online literary publication, Midnight Chem. They seek work that's outside traditional form, that blends genres, and experiments. Submissions are free and open at <https://www.midnightchem.org/>

Important Dates in 2023

- January 10** Deadline for December 2023 graduates to submit thesis for publication (or embargo).
- January 23** Deadline for signing up for the Spring MFA Exam.
- February 1** Deadline for May 2023 graduates to submit graduate application to Graduate Studies Office.
- February 24** MA Part 1 Exam 10-12 pm online via Canvas.
- February 28** Deadline for applications for 2023-2024 TAs.
- March 3** MA (Part 2) and MFA Comprehensive Exam given (9:00 am).
- March 6** MA (Part 2) and MFA Comprehensive Exam due (5:00 pm).
- April 2** Deadline for December 2023 graduates to file their "Request for Candidacy" forms (requires MA or MFA advisor's signature).

Deadline for applications for 2023-2024 TA and GA due to the Graduate Coordinator..
- April 3** Deadline for submitting MFA Thesis Proposals to the Department Graduate Committee.
- April 17** Deadline for May 2023 graduates to submit signed theses to the Graduate Studies Office or to the English Department for Departmental Thesis (298D).
- May 15** Last day to sign up for the Fall 2023 MA Part 2 and MFA Exams.
- June 30** Last day to submit your thesis or dissertation to ProQuest for publication.

Visit the Graduation Admissions and Program Evaluations website for a list of [Thesis and Dissertation deadlines.](#)