



# Department of English and Comparative Literature

San José State University

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## Spring 2008 Welcomes ZZ Packer as Lurie Professor

by Kathy Geary

The spring semester of 2008 will welcome a fresh face to the Department of English and Comparative Literature. ZZ Packer will hold the Lurie Distinguished Professor in Creative Writing position on the SJSU campus. Ms. Packer will be the seventh visiting author to hold this position at SJSU. Her book, *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*, is the SJSU Campus Reading Selection for the 2007-2008 school year.

As Lurie Professor, Ms. Packer will be speaking at a variety of events next semester, as well as teaching both an undergraduate literature course (English 177: TR 1200-1330) and a graduate workshop in writing fiction (English 241: R 1600-1845).

She comes to SJSU with stellar credentials. After graduating from Yale in 1994, Ms. Packer attended The Writing Seminar at Johns Hopkins University and The Writers' Workshop at Iowa University; she received a Stegner Fellowship at Stanford University and recently was a Jones Lecturer at Stanford. In addition to these accomplishments, Ms. Packer has received multiple awards for her published works: a Rona Jaffe Writers Foundation Grant, the Ms. Giles Whiting Award,



the *Bellingham Review* Award, and a Guggenheim Fellowship in fiction. The title story in her short-story collection, *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*, was published in *The New Yorker* in the 2000 debut fiction issue. ZZ Packer will most certainly be a welcome addition to both the Department of English and Comparative Literature and the SJSU campus at large.

Though born in Chicago, Zuwena (Swahili for "good") was raised in Atlanta, Georgia and Louisville, Kentucky, an upbringing that imbues her writing with the essences of the American South. With race relations and conflicts woven into the fabric of her storytelling, Packer captivates her reader with events told through the eyes of African-American youth, exciting the senses with a view that focuses on the quintessential human experience, crossing both racial and cultural barriers. The stories in

*Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* capture the growth of the human spirit through life's drama as experienced by her young black characters, and her voice allows her readers to connect with her protagonists.

I had such an experience with her story, "Our Lady of Peace." In that story, a young teacher who is looking to make a difference accepts a position to teach English in an inner-city public school. Having personally assisted in an array of demographically diverse educational programs, I found myself stepping into the classroom along side the character in the story and sharing the frustration and sense of inadequacy that an instructor can feel when trying to reach the unreachable student.

The stories in *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* guide the reader toward a sense of hope, but nearly always end in a calamity of sentiment that questions the emotional rationality of life. The tone of Packer's storytelling is tense, and resolutions never come easily.

Having demonstrated her mastery of the short story, Packer is currently finishing her first novel, titled *The Thousands*. The post-emancipation novel is about "the forgotten masses of blacks who went West."

In honor of National Black History Month in February 2008, as Lurie Professor Ms. Packer will feature in three literary events hosted by the SJSU Center for Literary Arts.

- February 27 at 1:00 PM, the University Room. Scheduled for the afternoon is a conversation with ZZ Packer, a Q&A, and a book signing.

- February 27 at 7:30 PM, the Music Concert Hall. The evening with ZZ Packer will include a lecture, a reading, an audience Q&A and a book signing.
- March 5 at 3:00 PM at Mt. Pleasant High School. The event will be of similar format.

If you have not yet read *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*, don't worry; there is plenty of time to get it read before Ms. Packer's arrival on campus next semester. Watch the bulletin boards in Faculty Office Building next semester and check the CLA announcements for more information on opportunities to learn more about ZZ Packer and her experiences with the craft of writing.



## The Lurie Chair

The Lurie Distinguished Professor in Creative Writing position was established through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie to bring a distinguished author to San José State University to teach for one semester each year. The permanent endowment provides association with and education by the selected Lurie professor for SJSU students and the public through university courses and public appearances. The program that began in 2000 has thus far brought the following distinguished authors to the SJSU Campus: Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young, Molly Giles, Simon Winchester, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and James Kelman.



www.litart.org

## Meeting Today's Greatest Authors

by Huy Tran

For more than two decades, the the SJSU Center for Literary Arts' (CLA) Major Authors Series has been the most significant literary series in the region, providing SJSU students and the South Bay community the chance to interact with writers of contemporary literature of the highest caliber. To date, the Major Authors Series has hosted presentations by twenty-eight winners of the Pulitzer Prize, fifteen winners of the National Book Award, and five winners of the Nobel Prize, and continues to bring more award-winning authors every year. From Neil Gaiman to Gore Vidal, the CLA has brought the best of the best to our campus.

In its 21<sup>st</sup> year of the Major Authors Series, the CLA brings four outstanding writers to the campus during the 2007-2008 academic year: Dorothy Allison, Salman Rushdie, ZZ Packer, and Kimiko Hahn.

Dorothy Allison, winner of the 2007 Robert Penn Award for Fiction and National Book Award finalist, was the first author featured in this year's Major Authors Series. Her major works include *Bastard out of Carolina*, *Cavedweller*, *Trash*, and *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure*. Earlier this semester, the CLA hosted an informational session to acquaint the community with her major book, *Bastard out of Carolina*, followed by two on-campus presentations. That book, which became a major motion picture, explores drinking, sexual abuse, and gender issues; its conflict centers on Anney Boatwright and her bastard daughter Ruth Anne, who is sexually abused by Anney's new husband.

Allison's visit made quite an impact and left many pleasantly stunned by how blunt she was about her beliefs and experiences. According to Tina Quach, a University of California Berkeley student who traveled 1.5 hours to attend one of the Allison events, "Dor-

othy is just an amazing person to meet. She throws around colorful words like nobody's business, telling people how the publishers can keep writers down and how it was like at the forefront of the woman's movement."

The second author to be featured in this year's Major Author Series is Salman Rushdie, winner of the Booker Prize. Rushdie's works include *Midnight's Children* and *Satanic Verses*. In *Midnight's Children*, he presents a journey through thirty years of modern India's path to independence through the eyes of two characters who are switched during birth. *Midnight's Children* has significantly shaped Indian writing in English, as many consider it one of India's best works since that nation's independence.

The CLA will host one event with Salman Rushdie on November 8, 2007 at 7:30 p.m., sponsored by the Associated Students of SJSU. The event will be a reading of his work by Rushdie, followed by a conversation and public Q&A, followed by a book-signing session at the Morris Daily Auditorium. Admission to the even is \$10 for students and \$25 for general admission.

The third autor to be featured in this year's Major Author Series is ZZ Packer, who will also be serving as the 2008 Lurie Distinguished Professor in Creative Writing in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at during the spring semester next year. Packer's *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*, a critically acclaimed collection of eight short stories, is the SJSU 2007-2008 Campus Reading Selection and the focus of a variety of book discussions that will be held throughout the academic year across campus. Her stories deal with highly developed characters in scenarios that African-Americans constantly face.

The CLA will host three events with ZZ Packer: a conversation and public Q&A, a reading and book signing, and a visit to Mt. Pleasant High School. The first event will be held on February 27, 2008 at 1:00 p.m., location to be announced. The reading and book-signing session will be held later in the day on February 27, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the SJSU Music Concert Hall. The final event with ZZ Packer will be a visit to Mt. Pleasant High School on March 5, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. All Packer events are free admission.

The fourth author to be featured in this year's Major Authors Series is Kimiko Hahn, winner of the

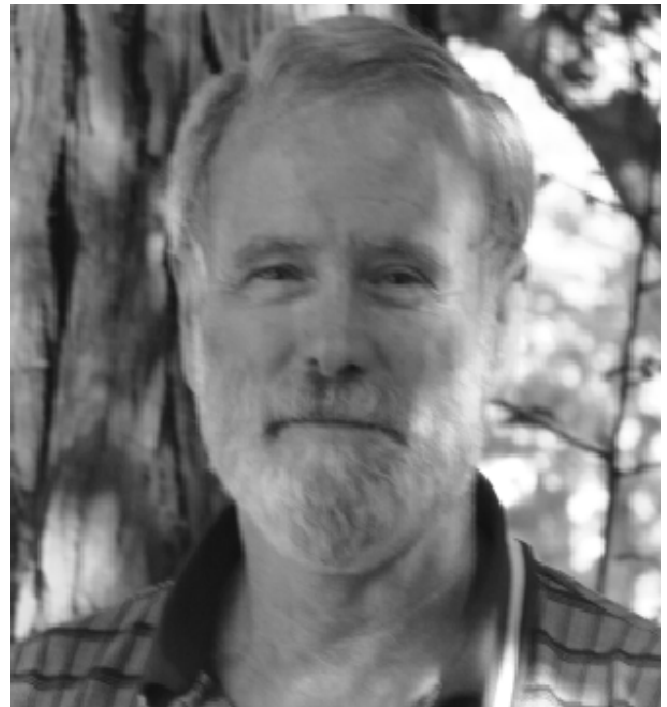
American Book Award and the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize, a prize given out only once every three years. Her most recent work, *The Narrow Road to the Interior*, is a mix of Japanese prose-poetry called *zuihitsu*, which mixes juxtaposition and contradiction to convey a wide variety of scenes, thoughts, and experiences.

The CLA will host three events with Kimiko Hahn: a conversation and public Q&A, a reading and book signing, and a visit to Mt. Pleasant High School. The conversation and public Q&A session will take place on March 12 at 1:00 p.m. The reading and book signing will follow on March 12 at 7:30 p.m. Locations to be announced. Her last session will be a visit to Mt. Pleasant High School on March 13 at 3 p.m.

These events are huge and many people from across the South Bay travel to our campus to meet and learn from and about our great selection of writers. SJSU students should definitely not miss these opportunities to learn first-hand about the craft of writing from the masters themselves.

However, the Major Authors Series events are not the only events students can attend to interact with today's great writers. Many other literary events are featured throughout the year at SJSU, something every month. The list of writers scheduled for these events include the following: Boadiba, Ellen Bass, Victoria Chang, Wanda Coleman, Sam Hamill, Robert Hass, Jane Hirshfield, Michael Govrin, Neli Moody, Tennessee Reed, Harold Schechter, C. Dale Young, SJSU's very own Nick Taylor, and more.

For more information regarding the Center for Literary Arts and the Major Authors Series, please visit the CLA website, located at <http://www.litart.org/>. For other SJSU literary events, please visit the Department of English and Comparative Literature website, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Calendar.htm>.



### **SJSU Says Farewell to John Pollock: Long Time Professor, Advisor, and Colleague**

by Amy Craven

John Pollock, long time English professor and undergraduate advisor, will be retiring at the end of the spring 2008 semester. After receiving his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of California at Davis, Professor Pollock began his career at SJSU as an assistant professor of English in 1971. During the nearly four decades he has taught at SJSU, he has been an eye witness to the institution's growing student enrollment, its physical improvements, and its development from a college into the quality university it is today. Professor Pollock's choice to begin and conclude his professional career at SJSU has given him the opportunity not only to watch it grow as an institution, but also to be a part of its success.

Professor Pollock has taught a variety of English courses over his career, some of which include English 1A and 1B, the survey courses in English literature or English 56A/B, courses in Milton and the later Renaissance, and several graduate seminars. In addition to teaching, he has been an advisor to undergraduate and graduate students in the English major. Currently, he is

the undergraduate advisor for the English major and will continue to fill that position until his retirement at the end of the spring 2008 semester.

Comments from Professor Pollock's former and current students testify to his commitment and dedication to educating young minds. Many comment on his "quick wit and contagious sense of humor." A current student in his English 56A (English Literature to Eighteenth Century) class says that, "When Professor Pollock reads *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, he helps me understand literature; he is truly inspiring to students." Another notes that "his passion for literature is heard in his explication of poetry; he reads Spenser's *Faerie Queene* with such admiration that students are utterly mesmerized by the art and beauty of language." Walk into his English 56A class and you may hear *Beowulf* being read in Old English on a record player, or see a projection video of the life and times of Chaucer, giving students an historical perspective to accompany their readings.

Dr. Paul Douglass, a colleague and fellow English professor, characterizes Professor Pollock as "one of the kindest, most caring faculty members I've known in more than thirty years of teaching. He is quick to laugh, a wonderful listener, and someone who embodies the virtues of the teaching profession for me: patience, empathy, firmness of purpose, and assertion of high standards."

Over the course of Professor Pollock's career he has published books, poetry, and scholarly articles; among these is a book titled *The Black Feet of the Peacock: the Color-Concept Black from the Greeks through the Renaissance*, a publication he compiled and edited with great pride after his dissertation advisor, Linda Van Norden, had passed away. The book is a compilation of Van Norden's "study of alchemy and the color black, exploring how image was used artistically and archetypically." Pollock was asked to "salvage and piece together her work from the papers she had left." His admiration and respect for Ms. Van Norden were clear to me as he sighed briefly and cleared his throat to say, "It was tragic. What an incredible work of scholarship she might have completed."

As Professor Pollock approaches the end of his teaching career, he is beginning to think about the next chapter of his life: retirement. He looks forward to

reading *The New Yorker* cover to cover, quenching his thirst for fiction. In addition to reading, he plans to spend more time composing music and playing the piano and keyboard. Professor Pollock has always had a love for music and an appreciation for harmony. As a child, he played the accordion and later developed an affinity for the piano. He says that "the discovery of harmony is a very satisfying social experience; I just seem to lose myself in music." Since music travels to the heart and soul, he explains that "it's very hard to be self-conscious about yourself when playing music; it just takes me outside of myself."

After retirement, he hopes to travel to Salzburg, where he could enjoy listening to Mozart "performed by the great orchestras in Europe" where the artist's music was composed. When I ask about his wife, he smiles and says, "She loves to travel, but I don't. I hate the process behind traveling: packing a suitcase and rushing to the airport only to wait in lines at the Security Checkpoint." When he is not reading *The New Yorker* or listening to classical music, you may find him sailing with his brother along the East Coast or kayaking with his wife.

When I ask Professor Pollock what he will miss upon leaving San José State, he sighs with regret and says, "I will miss teaching, and of course, I will miss my colleagues. I really admire students on campus for what they are able to accomplish. It has been a pleasure to be here all these years."

We say in response that we will miss him too—his sense of humor, his enriching lectures, and his welcoming smile. We say farewell, Professor Pollock. We express our gratitude, and as he begins the next chapter in his life, we wish him well!



#### Important Reminder

Students should see an advisor once a semester to check their progress toward graduation and to ask any questions. Professor John Pollock is currently the undergraduate advisor for the English major. Stop by Faculty Offices 111 or call (408) 924-4442 to speak with Professor Pollock directly, or make an appointment through the English Department Office in FO 104, (408) 924-4425.

## Nick Taylor: A New Face, A New Direction

by Nick Dinicola



San José State University is proud to welcome Nick Taylor as its newest addition to the English and Comparative Literature Department faculty. Professor Taylor is the only novelist currently on staff, having recently sold his first book to publisher Simon and Schuster for a Spring 2008 release. His novel, *The Disagreement*, set during the Civil War, is about a boy thrown into service as a medical doctor at the University of Virginia, which was transformed into a hospital during the conflict. The story came to him while he was researching the University of Virginia as part of a research grant. Writing a historical novel with such extensive research behind it required dedication and thoroughness, qualities that Nick Taylor now brings to his new professorship at SJSU.

He is currently the editor of *Reed* magazine, and is teaching two fiction writing workshops: A graduate course, English 241; and an undergraduate course, English 130. As a professor, Taylor enjoys teaching his craft, “I find having students to be incredibly inspiring, seeing what other people’s minds are producing, being able to discuss literature with people who care. I prefer that to just sitting in my office at home all day.”

This new face also brings a new direction to SJSU’s writing community. As the editor of *Reed*, Taylor has some big plans for the magazine. He wants to expand its online presence, turning the *Reed* website into a meeting place for everyone interested in writing. As a former web developer and avid researcher, Professor Taylor is well equipped to bring *Reed* to a web-based audience. He believes students are integral to this transfer as well, since they are so immersed in internet culture. “They have a much better sense of where the online world is headed,” he says. Taylor wants to make putting *Reed* online a course objective for English 133, the *Reed Magazine* course, giving students a chance to research other online literary magazines and brainstorm *Reed*’s future web presence. That’s not all he has planned for the magazine, however; even the print copy will grow under his direction, with the current volume looking to be bigger than before, thanks to more non-fiction and more interviews. “We’re going to have some good interviews this year,” he says.

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**“I find having  
students to be  
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inspiring. . . .”**

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Professor Taylor is also a member of the Creative Writing Committee, which is involved in deciding who will be the next visiting writer or Lurie Chair. The biggest issue facing the committee now, however, is a proposed creative writing concentration within the English major. This would mean that students interested in creative writing may finally be able to earn a B.A. in that area, instead of as only a minor, as is currently the case. A new class on contemporary writers, which will focus on living writers, may be added as part of the new concentration as well.

There is no doubt that Nick Taylor, with his wealth of talents, is a valuable new member of the English and Comparative Literature faculty. On behalf of all SJSU students, I am pleased to say: Welcome to campus.



## Room to Lounge

by Ellen-Tara James



Awareness—willingness, step....

Relief—contemplative space, permission of freedom, shattered shackles.

Odyssey—courageous vulnerability,  
listen, question, think, step....

Ongoing—strain, wrestle  
sleep, dream, awaken—live!

\* \* \* \* \*

As I read Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, a line struck me like a rubber band pulled too hard—and snap!

*...But she lives; for great poets do not die; they are continuing presences; they need only the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh.*

What affords this opportunity? Space. A room of our own.

Often, our everyday space is filled with the low humming high speed of busy-ness. Rush here. Go there. Jot a note. Send an e-mail. Quick. Quick. Quick! And then....

As writers (and in particular as English majors) a place where the mind is free to explore the dreams within, the social issues without, the memories leaving behind scars on knees and heart, and the ah-ha's of clarity transforming a once narrow perspective into understanding and enlightenment is crucial. We need a room where our fellows congregate, where they bring input and insight gained through experience, where they share compassionate silence, and where they offer expertise like a hand extended to the fallen.

We have such a room. I have seen it. I have experienced it. FO 113 was once an office. It is now the English Student Lounge: two sofas and a loveseat, an overstuffed chair and books packed into matching bookcases, a collage of famous writers' faces hanging on the wall, a large window, and a small white microwave. A room of our very own, the lounge communicates to students that they are part of a community: a group of kindred spirits who adore words—words of yesterday and words of today.

### Wednesday, late afternoon.

I hope my classmate sitting across from me shows mercy as she edits my article. The purple pen in her hand flails across the second then third and fourth page. Her grammatical sifter is making something of all my words.

"You're getting the usage of the semicolon and colon confused," my chronologically younger classmate states. "The semicolon is only used when...."

Frustrated with grammar, not with its power when used correctly, but with my ignorance on the subject, I think, *stupid semicolon*, as my body recoils, sinking deeper into the cushions of the sofa.

"...that's the difference," she concludes, lounging in the overstuffed chair as though resting from strenuous pontification.

"Can't I eliminate the semicolons and colons?" I ask. "Can't I just...."

"No!" She shoves her textbook into her backpack. "To be a good writer you must know the rules and master them."

The purple-marked pages that were once my article, now lie haphazardly on the coffee table. My classmate leaves the room. Her waving hand disappears beyond the doorway; yet I hear her voice inside my head still, and I know she is correct. Knowledge and application of the rules are imperative. Easier said than done, but who says a forty-four year old can't learn?

**Thursday after History class.**

The English Student Lounge is empty, yet those famous men and women stare at me from behind the framed glass. "I just want to say one thing to all of you," I say to those faces of long ago. "I will learn the technical aspects of this craft, regardless of the struggle."

Instead of concentrating on the interview I am supposed to be preparing, I recall Darryl and Henry, whom I met here last week. Darryl is a poet. At first he was into Fiction, but now he is a poet. Henry is an Industrial Arts major minoring in Computer Science. It was Darryl who brought Henry to the English Student Lounge. Henry told me he enjoys the room for its ambiance and its connection to others who share his passion for writing.

While Henry busied himself with a writing assignment, Darryl confided his love of Japanese poetry and recited a Haiku by his favorite Japanese poet, performing its few words with such tenderness, love, and passion that I knew I had entered a space of trusted disclosure. Later, I admitted my lack of ability in that genre to the two young men. I am not a poet. Iambic pentameter I can handle, but at the very mention of tetrameter I am lost, thrown off the closest cliff of incomprehension. Confession: I am not a talented millipede. Give me creative nonfiction, and I am as pleasantly content as a mother holding her smiling babe in her arms.

**Friday morning.**

I am alone, but as I look around the lounge, I do not feel alone. It whispers, "Come here and dare to dream. Free yourself. Let your mind fly from one topic to the next; find those pearls of thought to share with others. Come here and dream; then test and capture.

Bond with those who love the craft regardless of genre. We all have stories to share, thoughts to explore, and dreams to chase like butterflies."

I think of Henry, Henry who is not an English major but is an integral part of the English community nevertheless—because of his passion. I think of Darryl's taking the time to share a cherished poem. I think of my classmate who exceeds my grammatical abilities but laughs at my quirky personality and has faith that I will someday (sooner than later, we hope) understand semicolons, parallel structure, prepositional phrases, dangling modifiers, and intransitive verbs.

I glance at the collage of famous faces, wondering, if, down the path of time, any of our faces—photos of Fall 2007 SJSU students—will be cut and pasted into a collage used to inspire future SJSU generations.

\* \* \* \* \*

Virginia Woolf's sentiments about a room are as relevant today as they were in 1929 when she wrote her famous essay. Our room—the English Student Lounge—is a space of refuge from the busy-ness of our culture, where more experienced students and quite willing professors encourage the toddling writer to walk and eventually run: run hard, fast, with wild elation, and then rest, think, and live—live to write.

*A Room of One's Own.*  
– Faculty Office 113 –  
A room of our own, and  
Virginia Woolf's picture is in it!





## The Complete History of the Study of English at San José State University (Abridged)

by Lauren Minkel

We've all seen the signs around campus: "Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow." The whole university is celebrating 150 years of education SJSU. As a student, I found myself a little lost in all the history, wondering "what is in this school's past that is so great?" and "what does any of it mean to me, a 2007 English major?" In case you may have wondered the same things, here is the list of my personal Top Ten most fascinating facts in the illustrious history of our English Department.

- In 1862, five years after the school was founded, the Grammar Department was formed for "more advanced pupils." Now, long after its evolving into the English Department, I like to think that it continues to be a magnet for the advanced.
- Since 1867, SJSU has published student work almost continuously, in publications such as *The Acorn*, *The Class Paper*, *The Normal Index*, and *The Normal School Pennant*. In 1925, *The Quill* was founded. In 1932, it was renamed *El Portal*; then in 1948 renamed again as *Reed Magazine*. Still going strong as one of SJSU's many student publications, *Reed* is the oldest continuously published collection of student work west of the Mississippi.
- In 1898, English department faculty and students formed a literary society, Ero Sophian. Meaning "love of knowledge," it was formed to "cultivate a love of good literature." The society later became the sorority Alpha Phi—now the oldest student organization on campus.
- 1927 marked the first of two new department births to come out of the English department as the Department of Speech Arts was born. In 1963, that department split into the Drama Department and the Communications Studies. By 2000, the department that had been Drama and then Theatre Arts was renamed the Department of Television, Radio, Film, and Theatre. The second offshoot began in 1970, when the first interdisciplinary Linguistics degrees were awarded out of English, before the Department of Linguistics and Language Development was formed in 1991.
- In 1964, Luis Valdez graduated with an English degree. Called the Father of Chicano Theater, he formed El Teatro Campesino in 1965 to support Cesar Chavez's movement for migrant workers. The farm workers' troupe gave first voice to the Chicano experience in America. Valdez went on to write and direct *Zoot Suit* and *La Bamba*, among many plays and films. He has won many awards for his work, including an Emmy; was honored by President Reagan's Committee on Arts and Humanities; and earned honorary doctorates from San José State, Columbia College, and the California Institute of the Arts.
- 1972 saw the graduation of another famous writer: Amy Tan. Her novels, *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Kitchen God's Wife*, *The Hundred Secret Senses*, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*, and *Saving Fish from Drowning* have all been *New York Times* bestsellers and have received several awards. She has also written a memoir and two children's books, and was the co-producer and co-screen writer for the film version of *The Joy Luck Club*. She never strayed far from her stomping grounds and still lives in the Bay Area.
- In 1973 the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies was founded by Martha Cox, a professor in the English Department. Now housed in the MLK Library, the Steinbeck Center is internationally recognized as the foremost archive in the country devoted to John Steinbeck and produces the award-winning *Steinbeck Review*. It sponsors the Steinbeck Fellows Program, providing assistance to new writers who are finishing a significant writing project. Two former Fellows and one current Fellow teach in the department. The center also co-presents the John Steinbeck award, which has been awarded to the likes of Bruce Springsteen, Arthur Miller, Joan

Baez, and Sean Penn. It was given this year to author, comedian, and radio host Garrison Keillor.

- 1982 was the first year of the department-sponsored Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. Providing a great way to break through writer's block, the contest calls upon its participants to write badly. Very badly. Writers rising to the challenge must submit the opening sentence to the most terrible novel imaginable. The contest is named after the author of those immortal words: "It was a dark and stormy night...".
- In 1989, the Center for Literary Arts was formed. Bringing prestige to the entire community, the CLA Major Authors Series is the preeminent literary series in the region. It has welcomed to San Jose 28 Pulitzer Prize winning authors, 15 National Book Award winners, and 5 Nobel Prize winners.
- 2000 was the first year of the Lurie Author-in-Residence program. This teaching professorship attracts nationally and internationally known authors to San Jose State, where students have the opportunity to closely interact with them in a classroom environment. Our Lurie chair for 2008 will be ZZ Packer, who will arrive on campus to teach in the department in the spring.

There you have it. Some curious and compelling things have occurred on the campus we call home. The last 150 years have sculpted a rich tradition. The tomorrow is now up to us.



## Looking to the Future: Beyond Graduation

by Jordan Baker

For English majors, the words "Oh, so you want to be a teacher" are commonplace and are often spoken as a statement, not a question. Contrary to this popular assumption, a Bachelor's Degree in English has a broad range of uses for the career-minded writer: those who are passionate about language write our novels, our television and movie scripts, and our technical manuals.

Beyond writing, there is publishing and law and medicine. If you thought these professions were but a distant dream, think again: English majors are evaluated for admission to these programs without prejudice, and much of the time the English major identifies an applicant as a welcome change from the heaps of applications from political science and biological science majors. So fear not, young undergraduates; the tales of English major poverty need not apply to you. Abundant opportunities await you.

After graduation, the aspiring writer has the potential of finding a job with relative ease, assuming he or she has had some previous experience. Having browsed the job sections of both [Craigslist.org](http://Craigslist.org) and [Monster.com](http://Monster.com), two excellent sources for both part- and full-time employment in the Bay Area, I would highly recommend your working through an internship (or two) while an undergraduate. Not only will some experience open more opportunities to you, but "depends on experience" is a common consideration where salary is concerned. Most editing and technical writing positions ask for at least two years experience in a related field, so if that is your goal, the sooner you start an internship, or seek an assistant position, the better.

This does not mean, however, that the inexperienced graduate is doomed to a bleak future: several of the positions I perused required no experience. One of these was a "Report Preparer/Writer" listing from EITC Engineering, and another was a "Copywriter" listing from a Santa Clara "think tank" start-up company. An opening at *San José Magazine* for an Editorial Assistant specifically calls for a "Bachelor's degree in Journalism, English, Creative Writing, [or]

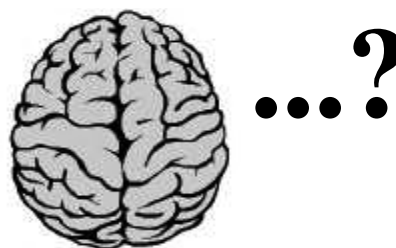
Communications... preferred” and asks for individuals “with excellent telephone, verbal, proofreading, and written skills” and “proficiency in Microsoft Word and Excel,” but does not ask for previous experience.

Aside from job listings posted online, openings come and go within the publishing field. One of the largest and most well known publishers, Random House, has positions that are, according to their website, “for immediate hire.” Browsing their entry-level jobs, I found two of particular interest: Editorial Assistant (involves reading and evaluation of manuscripts and administrative tasks) and Production Assistant (involves reviewing proofs, monitoring prepress, and administrative tasks). Although the editorial positions available ask for experience, “First and foremost, we [Random House] look for college graduates with a strong interest in book publishing. Individuals must be able to take initiative, be team players, and have excellent verbal and written communication skills.” Like *San José Magazine*, Random House asks specifically for a Bachelor’s in English or a related field and desires applicants who possess “very strong grammar, spelling, and organizational skills.” For those interested in gaining some experience before going full-time, Random House also offers internships and an associates program designed to help you find your place in publishing.

Our nation’s Law and Medical Schools are probably among the most competitive, difficult-to-get-into programs there are. Both demand a high GPA and a high score on the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) or the MCAT (Medical School Admissions Test) to compete for the relatively few open spots available each year. The good news is that English majors *have a slight advantage*. The West Virginia University’s Department of English cites the major as “great preparation for law school because it teaches the skills necessary to succeed on the LSAT and in a law school curriculum, skills of textual analysis, reasoning, and argument.” And [MedSchoolHell.com](http://MedSchoolHell.com), a popular website for medical school students and hopefuls, notes that “English majors typically do well in medical school since they have spent the last 4 years reading a lot of information. Thus, they have found ways to digest information more effectively, and oftentimes do incredibly well on the verbal portion of the MCAT,”

which is elsewhere referred to as “often the most difficult section for students.” Further reinforcing the fact that English majors are making it into Medical School is the book *Med School Confidential* by Robert H. Miller and Daniel M. Bissell, M. D., which contains the personal stories of seven doctors’ admission into medical school; two of these doctors were English majors who made it into medical school on their first go-around.

As an English major myself, I often hear the discouraging comments about English being a useless major that will not land me a job after college. But trust me, or if not, trust the sources that I have listed here: an English degree can take you to many places; it all depends on where you want to go. So, get ready undergraduates: there’s a big world out there waiting just for you.



### Reminder!

Students need 40 upper-division units total (including G.E. course work) to graduate.

English 169, 174, and 117 may be used as English electives AND will simultaneously satisfy upper-division G.E. requirements. (Two birds with one stone, so to speak.)

English 7, 10, 22, 78, and 173 A/B do NOT give English-major credit.

Students would be well advised to see the Department of English and comparative Literature Advisor, Professor Pollock, once per semester, just to check on their progress toward graduation. Sign up for an appointment in FO 102.

## Will Write For Food

by Andrea Waldron

If there is one thing English majors can all agree on, it's that we don't study literature in anticipation of making a lot of money. "The poor, starving English student" will be the description used for most of us for the duration of our education.

Thankfully, though, the many Awards the English Department makes available to deserving students in the spring semester renders that description not quite as accurate as some people might think.

The English Department website lists two categories of Student Awards: those for which students apply and those by faculty nomination. The website lists eight awards for which students can apply and provides links to the application forms and procedures, which students can select and print out. Each award has its own eligibility rules and requirements—class level, enrollment status, units completed, etc.—so it's important to check those out before applying.

As I looked through the Awards for which students apply, I found two particularly interesting: The James Phelan Literary Awards and the Bonita M. Cox Award for Creative Nonfiction.

### James Phelan Literary Awards

There are a number of awards under this category, including awards for Metrical and Free Verse poems, the Short Story, the Familiar/Critical Essay, and Humor and Satire. The total amount of money awarded in this category is \$3,000. I liked this award because it offers students lots of options; no one is limited to any single category, and applicants are allowed to submit to all the categories they want. Do you write free verse or patterned poetry? Short Stories? Satirical Essays? Come spring, submit them, and they may earn you some money.

### Bonita M. Cox Award for Creative Nonfiction

This \$300 award is given to the best essay in the following genres: travel or science literature, memoirs, vignettes, profiles, or literary reviews. The essay can be no longer than 2,500 words, and any student who applies must have completed at least 24 semester units at SJSU. Do you have an interesting anecdote or travel story? A profile or a literary review? Turn it into



a prose piece and submit it, and you may find yourself \$300 richer just in time for an end-of-the-semester party.

Twelve of the Student Awards listed on the website are earned by faculty nomination. Of those, I found the Roberta Holloway Undergraduate Award particularly interesting—\$500 for outstanding achievement as an undergraduate major in English. "Outstanding achievement." Hmmmm.... I'll work on that.

Don't be shy. You, the downtrodden English student, deserve some help, and the English Department is at attention, waiting to help you. Check out the English Department Scholarships website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/award.htm>.

Not predisposed to entering contests? Here is some general information on a couple of extra sources for funding your education:

### Fastweb.com

This is an excellent site that helps organize relevant scholarships. Whether you are a struggling English major or a member of the American Dairy Goat Association, Fastweb has a scholarship for you.

### Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

San José State University has over 900 scholarships available, and no one knows more about them than the university's own Scholarship Office. Find out more by walking in and talking to an advisor, or check out their website at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/faso/>.



## Real World Experience: Internships

by Rochelle Jackson-Smarr

Are you tired of editing your friend's essays? Ever catch yourself analyzing the page layout of a document? Are you confident in your editorial skills? If you answered yes to two of these three questions, then you are ready for an internship. Yes, an internship. It is time for you to go out into the workforce and exercise your valuable communication skills. You have sat in English courses long enough analyzing literature and diagramming sentences; it is time to put your skills to work. Although most internships are unpaid, the experience is worth more than any dollar amount. Consider internships as a chance for career preparation and development.

Internship opportunities vary from human resources and recruiting, to editorial assistance and technical marketing. These internships are available in fields such as public relations, engineering, and marketing. The choices for internships can be boundless and overwhelming, so you should look into only those internships that interest you. Seize the opportunity of an internship to explore all of your career interests.

As a way of helping students prepare for life after graduation, the English Department has revived the internship course, English 199, effective Fall 2007. English 199 allows students to participate in both on- and off-campus internships and receive university credit. The three-unit course cannot be used to fulfill English major requirements, but does count as a university elective toward graduation. To receive that credit, students enrolled in the course are required to complete a documented minimum of 160 hours on their internship and write a report explaining how their internship was a productive learning experience in relation to the English major. English majors and minors are encouraged to seek internships that involve writing or editing.

If you are an English major or minor looking for an internship before you graduate, you should start by talking to the Internship Coordinator for the English department, Professor Bonnie Cox. Cox receives many of her internship opportunities from local alumni of the English department and occasionally from other campus departments. As the Career and Professional Writing Coordinator, Cox is a valuable resource for

anyone seeking an internship. Be aware, though, that she recommends only "quality" students, so in addition to reviewing a student's resume and writing samples, she may also require a student to take a writing or editing test, just to make absolutely sure that the student is ready to begin the "transition from college to the real world."

Internship opportunities are also available through the SJSU on-campus Career Center, located near the Student Union. Students are encouraged by the Center's staff to schedule individual appointments with one of their Internship Specialists: Angela Wayfer or Joe Bucher. In addition to reviewing students' resumes, and offering one-on-one help in finding an appropriate internship, Wayfer and Bucher also take students through a mock interview.

The Career Center also offers its own *Job and Internship Guide*, which is filled with information on how to find and apply for internships, how to prepare for the interview, and how to succeed in an internship once it has been secured. Their website allows students to search for internships through a database of companies or by creating a search agent. The search agent will email students with opportunities within their disciplines.

The Career Center also hosts Career and Internship Fairs throughout the academic year. These fairs are geared mostly toward Engineering majors, but they are sure to include opportunities for Liberal Arts majors as well. Their internship database is updated daily, so it is a good idea to register with the Career Center and enable a search agent soon.

For additional information on internships, contact Contact Professor Cox at [Bonnie.Cox@sjsu.edu](mailto:Bonnie.Cox@sjsu.edu); contact the Career Center at (408) 924-6031 or visit their website at [www.careercenter.sjsu.edu](http://www.careercenter.sjsu.edu); contact the Internship Specialists at [Angela.Wayfer@sjsu.edu](mailto:Angela.Wayfer@sjsu.edu) or [Joe.Bucher@email.sjsu.edu](mailto:Joe.Bucher@email.sjsu.edu).



## The Writing Center: A Nexus of Learning and Opportunity

by Larry Chu



Once the home of Clark Library, Clark Hall has been renovated into a sleek and high-tech resource committed to the promotion of student growth and success. That is certainly the mission undertaken in Suite 126, the home of the new University Writing Center. Under the direction and supervision of Dr. Linda C. Mitchell (a professor in the SJSU English Department), the Writing Center is staffed by a group of highly-skilled writing tutors who provide guidance and assistance to currently enrolled students of any major.

As an English major, you may be wondering, "What does the Writing Center have to do with me? I already know how to write and edit my own papers." The common misunderstanding about the Writing Center (due in part to its name) is that the only service it provides is help with writing. This is not the case. In fact, the Writing Center offers numerous workshops that range over an assortment of topics relating to the English language and rhetoric. Workshops being offered during the Fall 2007 semester, for instance, cover such topics as *Speech Writing and Making*, *Resume Writing*, *Latin and Greek Roots*, and even a class on "Netiquette." Of course, this is but a small list of workshops hosted by the Writing Center.

For a complete listing of events, topics, and schedules, please refer to the Writing Center website at [www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter). All Writing Center

workshops are taught by professors from the English Department and/or by SJSU librarians who specialize in linguistic studies. Due to limited seating and the increasing popularity of these workshops, however, registration is mandatory. Those interested in upcoming workshops can register by phone at 408.924.2308 or by email at [writingcenter@sjsu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@sjsu.edu). In the event that a workshop has been filled to capacity, walk-ins will, unfortunately, be turned away.

At this point, you may be wondering what else the Writing Center can offer an English major like yourself. Since opening its doors last February, the Writing Center has continued to expand, as its services are used by students from all of SJSU's seven colleges. As a result, the Writing Center is always actively seeking talented and knowledgeable individuals to become writing tutors. As the old saying goes, individuals truly comprehend knowledge if, and only if, they are able to teach what they have learned to others.

Applying for a job at the Writing Center is the perfect opportunity for English majors to earn an exceptionally handsome rate of pay (depending on skill level and experience) while empowering their fellow SJSU students with much-needed knowledge and skills. The requirements for a Writing Center tutoring position are the following: the individual must be a currently enrolled student with an overall GPA of at least 3.3; have earned a letter grade of B+ or higher in a 100W course; have Junior- or Senior-level standing; be an effective communicator; have a customer-oriented (or in this case, "student-oriented") attitude; and, most importantly, have an exceptional command of English grammar and strong writing skills.

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, a resume, an unofficial transcript, two graded essay assignments containing the instructor's comments, and recommendations from any two SJSU faculty members to Dr. Mitchell at the Writing Center, Suite 126A, Clark Hall. The application can also be downloaded from the Writing Center website at [www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter).



## Spring 2008 Course Descriptions



### English 10: Great Works of Literature

Emphasis on critical appreciation of fiction, drama, and poetry and various literary forms. *No credit in the English major. G.E. Area C 2.*  
TR 1500-1615: Professor Chow; M 1900-2145: Professor Wilson;  
MW 1030-1145: Professor TBA

### English 22: Fantasy and Science Fiction

Students will examine works of literary fantasy and science fiction to understand them as expressions of human intellect and imagination; to comprehend their historical and cultural contexts; and to recognize their diverse cultural traditions. Both contemporary and historical works will be studied. *No credit in the English major. G.E. Area C 2.*  
R 1800-2045: Professor Harris; TR 1200-1315: Professor Strachan;  
MW 0900-1015: Professor TBA

### English 22: Fantasy and Science Fiction

This course will explore utopian and dystopian worlds as they manifest in Science Fiction from Plato's *Republic* to Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta*. Specifically, we will look at the ways in which the creation of fantasy worlds operates as a means for both social critique and as a device to bring about social change. I have selected readings from a range of historical periods, as well as authors from a variety of cultural backgrounds to give us an opportunity to compare diverse perspectives. I also include a unit on graphic novels, which make a significant contribution both to the genre of Science Fiction and Fantasy. I am looking forward to reading and discussing these novels each week, and I welcome students of all levels and backgrounds! *No credit in the English major. G.E. Area C 2.*  
F 0900-1145: Professor Eastwood

### English 56A: Survey of British Literature to 1800

This course is a survey of British Literature from its earliest works through the eighteenth century. The goals of the course are to help students to gain an overview of the major literary periods, genres, authors, and works of English literature. We will discuss these texts from a variety of perspectives, including the dynamic relationship between heroes and villains throughout early English history, considering what these representations reveal about the various societies that produced them.

T 1900-2145: Professor Eastwood

### English 56A. English Literature to the Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century: Beowulf to Burney.

Considering the relationship between that which is "new" and that which is "old" in approaches to poetry, T.S. Eliot once wrote, "we often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of [a good poet's] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously." This course gives you an introduction to the best literature of medieval and early modern England: from *Beowulf*, subject to so many 21<sup>st</sup> Century reimaginings, through Chaucer, Shakespeare, Donne, Milton, Pope, Swift and Johnson. We'll bring a wider perspective to that survey than once prevailed, giving you a chance to hear the voices that might once have gone unheard in such surveys once upon a time: Margery, Queen Elizabeth, Aphra Behn, Ann Radcliffe. Here's your chance to begin laying the groundwork for understanding where the modern literature you love all began!

TR 0900-1015: Professor Fleck

### English 68A: American Literature to 1865

A survey of major and significant texts, movements, and writers exemplifying the literature of the United States of America, covering the period from the Columbian contact to around the end of the Civil War.

TR 1300-1445: Professor Chow

### English 68A: American Literature to 1865

This is a survey course that begins with Native American narrative and proceeds through American literature of the colonial, revolutionary, early national, and romantic periods. Authors are Bradford, Rowlandson, Bradstreet, Kemble Knight, Equiano, Wheatley, Freneau, Tyler, Foster, Emerson, Fuller, Thoreau, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Jacobs, Douglass, Whitman, and Dickinson. Grade is based on participation, 10 in-class writing assignments, midterm, final, one analytical paper (5-6 pages).

MW 0900-1015: Professor English

### English 68B: American Literature from 1865

Survey of American literature, Emily Dickinson to the present.

TR 1030-1145: Professor Karim

### English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing

In this course, we will read, discuss and write poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction. The course will be taught using a combination of discussion and writing workshops. The craft of writing will be analyzed. We will ask: What do writers do? How do poets and story-writers write? In the writing workshops, creative work by class members will be analyzed and critiqued for revision. Students will have the opportunity to hear from and discuss writing with several published writers. Course texts include ZZ Packer's *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*; James Thomas & Robert Shapard (Editors), *Flash Fiction Forward*; Judith Kitchen (Editor), *Short Takes: Brief Encounters with Contemporary Nonfiction*; Neil Astley (Editor), *Staying Alive: Real Poems for Unreal Times*; and Kimiko Hahn's *The Narrow Road to the Interior: English major elective that also satisfies G.E. Area C 2.*

M 1800-2045: Professor Evans

**English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing**

Writing in various literary genres; emphasis on eliciting and developing talent in various kinds of creative writing. *English major elective that also satisfies G.E. Area C 2.*

TR 1200-1315, TR 1330-1445: Professor Maio

TR 1500-1615, R 1800-2045: Professor Miller

MW 1200-1315: Professor Taylor

MW 1330-1445: Professor Harrison

Online: Professor James

**English 78: Introduction to Shakespeare**

What made Shakespeare great in his own time? What makes Shakespeare meaningful today? This course offers an introduction to Shakespeare by giving us a chance to read plays from each of the genres, learning the features of each kind of play and appreciating what made them successful with Elizabethan audiences and continues to make them compelling in our global economy. We'll laugh with Beatrice and Benedick, stand in horror of Macbeth, and weep with Lear. A fun, whirlwind tour through some of Shakespeare's best work. *No credit in the English major. G.E. Area C 2.*

TR 1030-1145: Professor Fleck

**English 100W: Writing Workshop**

English 100W is an integrated writing and literature course designed to provide English majors with a firm foundation for the professional study of literature. Over the course of the semester, students will engage in all phases of those reading, thinking, researching, and writing processes that produce clear and purposeful critical essays that demonstrate an understanding of and illuminate for others how literature contains and conveys its effects and meanings. Approximately one half of the semester will be spent on the study of poetry.

*Prerequisite: Passing score on WST.*

TR 1030-1145: Professor Harris

TR 1330-1445: Professor TBA

**English 100W: Writing Workshop**

We will learn to write eloquently as we analyze poetry, fiction and drama. Extensive study of metrical forms, short fiction, and a drama review of a San Jose State Production: either *The Mummified Deer* or *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*. *Prerequisite: Passing score on WST*

F 0900-1145: Professor Stork

**English 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism**

Students will be exposed to important critical concepts as well as various historical and contemporary approaches to literature, such as formalism, structuralism, cultural studies, new historicism, post-structuralism, Marxism, post-colonialism, feminism, etc. Students will learn to apply these approaches to works of literature through various assignments, including presentations, short essays, and a research paper. *Prerequisite: English 100W*

TR 1030-1145: Professor Chow

**English 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism**

Do you see hidden meanings in literary texts? Billboards? Movies? Advertisements? Can you come up with 3 variant meanings for Ezra Pound's poem, "In a Station of the Metro"? There are many possible readings of all literary and visual texts. Even your own identity governs your interpretation of the material. What kind of critic are you? For this course, we will discover and apply critical models to various literary, visual, and digital texts. Critical models will include

foundational twentieth-century theory as well as contemporary approaches to literature (feminism, Queer theory, Marxism, post-colonialism, and more). Though we will apply these critical models to texts across several historical periods and literary genres, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* will be our ur-text. *Prerequisite: English 100W*

TR 1200-1315: Professor Harris

**English 101: Introduction to Literary Criticism**

Study of various historical and contemporary approaches to literature, such as New Criticism, Structuralism, Cultural Studies, New Historicism, Post-structuralism, Marxism, Feminism, Post-colonialism, etc. An emphasis will be placed on learning to apply these different methods of interpretation through a workshop format.

*Prerequisite: English 100W*

F 0900-1145: Professor Brada

**English 103: Modern English Grammar**

A detailed study of modern English grammar from a transformational grammar perspective. Taught by someone who enjoys grammar!

MW 0900-1015: Professor Stork

**English 103: Modern English Grammar**

Course material covers standard American English sounds, word forms, sentence patterns, regional and social dialects, issues of usage and/or correctness, punctuation, and those aspects of its historical development that are pertinent to its current forms and functions.

MW 1500-1615: Professor Cox

**English 103: Modern English Grammar**

A survey of the growth and structure of modern English, including its phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Attention to social and regional varieties, with implications for language development and literacy among native and non-native speakers.

R 1600-1845: Professor Baer

**English 105: Advanced Composition**

The theme of this course will be exploring our unique personal heritage through writing essays. We will incorporate research methods, from interviewing family members to tapping genealogical databases to visiting libraries, to help us answer the question: where did I come from? *Prerequisites: Six units of lower-division composition and completion of the Written Communication II requirement (100W). Repeatable once for credit.*

TR 1300-1445: Professor Miller

**English 106: Editing for Writers**

Copy editing, substantive editing, and document design. Review of grammar and punctuation to ensure technical mastery and ability to justify editing decision. *Prerequisites: English 1A and 1B.*

MW 1330-1445: Professor Baer

**English 107: Technical Writing**

Research methods, audience analysis and development of reader-based techniques. Writing based on models from scientific and technical discourse. *Prerequisites: English 1A and 1B.*

MW 1200-1315: Professor Harrison



**English 112A: Children's Literature**

Study of literature for elementary and intermediate grades, representing a variety of cultures. Evaluation and selection of texts.

MW 1030-1145: Professor Rice; TR 1500-1615: Professor TBA

**English 112A: Children's Literature**

Have you ever picked up a book you read as a child and were suddenly transported back in time? This course seeks to uncover the brilliance, literary technique, complexity, social relevance, and merit of readings from elementary to intermediate grades. Most readings will be chapter books, but we will also evaluate other styles such as nursery rhymes, picture books, and fairy tales. Papers, projects, and presentations will constitute the majority of your grade. Overall, please note this is a literature course, not a methodology course.

M 1800-2045: Professor Sprugasci

**English 112B: Literature for Young Adults**

The goal of this course is to acquaint students with as many YA books and authors as possible; we will read six novels as a class: *After the First Death*, *Speak*, *Whale Talk*, *Witness*, *Prisoner of Azkaban*, and *First Crossing* (a collection of short stories). The texts for the class, *Literature for Today's Young Adults* and *Adolescents in the Search for Meaning: Tapping the Powerful Resource of Story*, introduce YA literature from several genres and provide author resources. Book Talks and a unit plan or annotated bibliography project are two other course requirements that will further students' knowledge of the expansive range of YA Literature.

W 1600-1845: Professor Browne

**English 115: The Bible as Literature**

In this course we study the Bible from the perspective of literature, reading extensively from this signature work of Western Civilization. We examine key portions of the Bible, exploring its array of subjects, themes, literary styles and genres, and its vast influence on much of Western Literature. Students will write three essays—two connected to TANAK (or the Old Testament) and one related to the Christian Foundational Writings (or the New Testament). In addition to these essays, there will be a midterm, final exam, and weekly Sustained Silent Writing. No "respectable" English major should graduate without familiarity with the Bible!

MW 1500-1615: Professor Warner

**English 117: Film, Literature, and Culture**

An exploration and comparison of narrative in world literature and film, the class will focus on texts that "create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time." *English major elective and single-subject credential requirement that also satisfies upper-division G.E. area V.*

T 1900-2145: Professor Brada

**English 123C: South Pacific Literature**

Writers from the South Pacific (including Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Fiji, and other island nations) have produced one of the most vibrant literatures written in English over the past century or so. This class will survey that literature, focusing mostly on its fiction.

Depending on what is available in print, we will read six or seven novels or story collections by authors such as Miles Franklin, Joseph Furphy, Patrick White, David Malouf, Peter Carey, Witi Ihimaera, Keri Hulme, Albert Wendt, Sia Figiel, and others, as well as some

poetry. *English major elective that also satisfies upper-division G.E. area V.*

TR 1500-1615: Professor Mesher

**English 125A: European Literature, Homer to Dante**

Study of European literature from Homer to Dante. Two critical essays, midterm and a final.

W 1900-2145: Professor Wilson

**English 129: Introduction to Career Writing**

This course provides an introduction to writing as a profession.

Students will practice a variety of written genres for a variety of purposes and audiences. Students will also plan, write, and publish two newsletters.

MW 0900-1015: Professor Cox

**English 130: Writing Fiction**

A workshop for students with experience writing fiction. Each participant will submit two new short stories for consideration by the class and a substantial revision in lieu of a final exam. Other requirements include assigned readings of published stories and thoughtful criticism of classmates' work. *Course may be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: English 71 or instructor permission.*

MW 1330-1445: Professor Taylor

**English 130: Writing Fiction**

The focus of this course is inventing and crafting fiction. Our primary focus will be the short story, but we will also address the novel and flash fiction. Through work-shopping your pieces, as well as discussing the pieces of published writers, we will speak to the observable and the subtle aspects of fiction, for good writing entails both skill and mystery. Students will have the opportunity to discuss writing with several published fiction writers. Course texts include Janet Burroway's *Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft* (7th Edition, 2003) and ZZ Packer's *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*. *Course may be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: English 71 or instructor permission.*

TR 1330-1445: Professor Evans

**English 131: Writing Poetry**

This upper-division course will emphasize the metrical and formal techniques of lyric poetry, particularly the Greek ascending meters and the Italian and French rhyming forms such as the sonnet, villanelle, *terza rima*, *ottava rima*, etc.—although the brief narrative modes will be treated as well, including the ballad form, the sestina, and blank verse. Students will have the opportunity to write well structured vers libre also. Graduate students will do extra work, including the writing and presentation of a paper on the craft of a major modern poet. *Prerequisites: English 71 or English 132, graduate standing, or instructor consent. May be repeated once for credit.*

TR 1030-1145: Professor Maio

**English 133: Reed Magazine**

Established in the 1920s, Reed is one of the oldest student-edited literary magazines west of the Mississippi. In this course we will cover all aspects of the editorial process, from solicitation and selection of material to production and distribution. This year we will also examine the trend toward web publishing of literary journals and the establishment of online literary communities. Open to all majors.

*May be repeated once for credit.*

M 1600-1845: Professor Taylor

**English 135: Writing Nonfiction**

Advanced writing workshop in creative nonfiction. In this class we will experiment with four subgenres of nonfiction: the personal essay, travel writing, profile, and feature article. *Prerequisite: One of the following: English 71, 100W, 105, 129, or instructor consent.*

*Repeatable once for credit.*

T 1800-2045: Professor Miller

**English 142: Chaucer**

An introduction to Chaucer’s Middle English and his major works. Extensive historical and literary backgrounds to the fascinating 14th century. *Prerequisite: Upper-division standing.*

MW 1030-1145: Professor Stork

**English 143: The Age of Elizabeth**

“I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too!” These famous and rousing words, spoken by Queen Elizabeth I on the battlefield at Tilbury, exemplify the deft manner in which the Virgin Queen represented herself to her people—turning her culture’s assumptions about gender to her advantage by linking herself with a tradition of masculine power and monarchal authority. This course provides students with the opportunity to study this fascinating and enduring figure from the early modern period. Students will examine ways the Queen represented herself (in speeches, portraiture, and court entertainments) as well as the variety of ways she was represented by the major poets and playwrights of her day (including Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare).

TR 1500-1615: Professor Eastwood

**English 144. Shakespeare I: Shakespeare, Early and Late.**

What do *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night* have in common? And why is one so much more beloved than the other? “Shakespeare, Early and Late” will explore examples of the great playwright’s early efforts, later high points, and final complications of genre. We’ll get a chance to see a great mind at work, improving on earlier efforts—such as *Comedy of Errors*—to hit a stride in masterpieces—like *Twelfth Night*. We’ll read several comedies, histories, and tragedies, giving us a chance to enjoy some of the classics we’ve come to love and some works we might not know as well..

TR 1200-1315: Professor Fleck

**English 145: Shakespeare in Performance\***

In this course, we will examine in-depth several of Shakespeare’s plays, specifically addressing issues of performance and interpretation. Placing each play in the context of its original performance during Shakespeare’s time, and its life on stage and screen in the ensuing centuries, encourages an engagement with the ways in which re-imagining Shakespeare’s works helps them retain their vitality and cultural relevance. Paying particular attention to modern productions,

we will analyze the ways in which production elements such as setting, casting, staging, costumes, editing, and individual performances shape and create meaning (or fail to do so) for the audiences of today. Placing these plays within this context of performance will raise larger issues about the complex relationships between the Shakespearean canon and its ever changing audiences. Students will respond to each play through both writing and oral interpretation, integrating speech and dramatic performance with an understanding of the complexities of plot, characterization, and dramatic form.

\*Required for the English Single-Subject Credential.

TR 0900-1015: Professor Eastwood

**English 149: TechnoRomanticism (aka Romantic-Era Survey)**

The Romantic-era was perhaps one of the most intellectually and technologically productive eras in all of England: The Industrial Revolution forced citizens to abandon agrarian life and embrace an urban existence that was full of prostitutes, raw sewage, cholera and scientific experimentation. Literature during this time, 1785-1837, reflects the anxiety caused by this shift, but it also reflects an excitement about England’s potentially terrifying future. In Mary Shelley’s novel, *Frankenstein*, our hero(es) embody all of these aspects of British life. For this reason, the course will center around the themes prevalent in *Frankenstein* but with a slight twist. In “TechnoRomanticism,” we’ll create our own modern, annotated version of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (complete with film references and any online links, e.g., YouTube, etc.). We’ll read into the Romantic period through this 1818 text and then read Shelley’s second novel, *The Last Man*, a very futuristic view of the nineteenth century. The course requires that we use wikis, blogs, and forums to create this annotated edition—however, no technology experience is required (several tutorials and unending help will be offered). In the end, we will also be part of the “techno” in TechnoRomanticism.

TR 1500-1615: Professor Harris

**English 151: Twentieth-Century Poetry**

In this course we will read selected works by a diverse group of Modern poets. We will investigate the work of several poets in depth rather than conduct a shallow survey of the entire field. The poets we will study have influenced all the work written since their time, or whose work introduced something new into the canon of Modern and Contemporary poetry. Included on the reading list are: W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, Robinson Jeffers, Hart Crane, Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop, Robert Lowell, Allen Ginsberg, Frank O’Hara, and James Wright. Students are urged to read as widely as possible, beyond the poets and on the required reading list. The class will be conducted in both a lecture/discussion and a seminar format. We will use Smartboard technology and various sites on the World Wide Web as well as other electronic materials to enhance students’ understanding of these poets and their works. The class is open to undergraduate and graduate students. All undergraduate students will give two individual seminar presentations, based on papers two 2,000 word papers that students will write for the class. There will be a take-home mid-term and take-home final exam. This class is particularly recommend for students interested in Creative Writing.

MW 1200-1315: Professor Soldofsky

**English 153A: Eighteenth-Century British Novel**

No persons of lively parts and keen penetration would presume to complete a course of English studies without having conducted at least one stage of their intellectual peregrinations in the company of such worthies as Moll Flanders, Pamela Andrews, Tom Jones, Matthew Bramble, and Catherine Morland. Thus, whether it be your intention to try your fortune in the professions, seek ecclesiastical preferment, secure a commission in the service of King George, or contract a favorable match, such a course of studies cannot fail to enlarge your understanding, improve your heart, steel your constitution, and qualify you for all the duties and enjoyments of life. Reading List: Defoe, *Moll Flanders*; Richardson, *Pamela*; Fielding, *Tom Jones*; Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*; Austen, *Northanger Abbey*. MW 0900-1015: Professor Rice

**English 163: American Literature: 1865-1910**

Rise of realism and the seeds of modernism. Writers may include Twain, James, Howells, Dickens, DuBois, Dunbar, Dreiser, Wharton, Chesnut, and Chopin. MW 1330-1445: Professor Silver

**English 168: The American Novel**

This course explores the genre from 1798 to the latter part of the 20th century. Novels will include *Wieland*, *Little Women*, *Huck Finn*, *The Marrow of Tradition*, *My Antonia*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and *The Optimist's Daughter*. Grade is based on participation, 8 journal entries, midterm, final, one analytical paper (8-10 pages). R 1900-2145: Professor English

**English 169: Ethnicity in American Literature**

This course concentrates on the study of ethnicity as represented and constructed in American literature in relation to the formation of the concept of self, the place of self in society, and issues of equality and structured inequality in the United States; issues to be addressed include race, culture, history, politics, economics, etc., that arise as contexts relevant to the study of literature by and/or about Americans (including immigrants) with Indigenous, African, European, Latino(a)/Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds. *English major elective that also satisfies upper-division G.E. area S*. TR 0900-1015: Professor Chow  
M 1900-2145: Professor TBA

**English 174: Literature, Self, and Society**

This discussion course invites readers who like to write (and vice versa). Readings will be drawn from interesting, well written contemporary American literature, presenting multiple perspectives on significant subjects and events or contemplating the world through prisms of race, religion, class, geography, history, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. Importantly, none will be "about" any of those things in any single-minded or polemical way: they will be "about" what it means to be alive in the world. *G.E. Area S*  
MW 1200-1315: Professor Heisch

**English 177: Twentieth-Century Fiction**

Novels and short stories as works of art and as expressions of intellectual and social movements.  
TR 1200-1315: Professor Packer

**English 193: Capstone Seminar in Literature and Self-Reflection**

A capstone seminar that focuses on the representations of the self from nineteenth-century realism to postmodern fiction. Two critical essays, one seminar project, and one class presentation.  
W 1600-1845: Professor Wilson

**English 193: Capstone Seminar in Literature and Self-Reflection**

As the Capstone Course for English majors, this course allows students to assess and demonstrate how well they have met the department Learning Goals. Students will compile a Portfolio of written work from at least five other courses completed in the major; significantly revise one of those Portfolio selections; write an introduction to the Portfolio that comments on its contents; read and respond regularly to assigned texts; and write a research-informed critical paper. Readings will include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.  
MW 1030-1145: Professor Cox

**English 199: Writing Internship**

Earn three units of elective credit by completing an on- or off-campus writing or editing internship. Units do not count toward the English major, but they do count toward graduation. Contact Professor Cox for specifics.

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## Chair's Message

### Fall 2007



Dear Faculty, Staff, and Students,

My first three and one-half months as Chair have been difficult. The words I've spoken most often are, "I'm sorry, but I don't know." Sometimes (though not always) I've added, "But I'll find out." Other common responses have included, "I don't understand that," "I didn't realize that," "I need help learning how to do that," and "Sorry, but I don't have time." Occasionally my comments have been reduced to, "Really?" or "Oh no," or "Damn."

Still, because of the dedication of our faculty and staff, things have gotten done, and, in most ways, the department has flourished. And thanks to the influx of freshmen into our Composition classes, to increased student interest in other department General Education offerings, to the strength of our English Education and Creative Writing and Graduate programs, to a recent modest increase in Majors, and to our commitment to teach sections of English 100WB, our student numbers are up, dramatically. Enrollments in department courses are approximately 15% higher than in Fall 2006 (university enrollment has increased about 8%), average class size in the department is 25, and all but a few of our 200 classes are full or nearly full.

As the semester progresses, we will be preparing to hire a tenure-line faculty member in Composition and Rhetoric. The Recruitment Committee will inform members of the department about this process. Once candidates have been selected for on-campus interviews, which should take place between late January and late February, I trust many members of the faculty, including those who regularly teach Composition, as well as a number of students will attend the presentations and comment on the candidates. Every hire, tenure-track and non-tenure-track, is important. Since around two-thirds of the students we teach are taking English 1A, 1B, or 100WB, this hire has immediate significance not only for tenure-line faculty but also for Lecturers.

Three days before the beginning of classes, the Center for Literary Arts Director, Mitch Berman, made a final decision to leave the university. That day, Kate Evans and Kelly Harrison agreed to become Co-Directors of the CLA. Working under an incredibly tight and demanding schedule, Kelly and Kate have gotten the CLA finances in order; completed negotiating, booking, and scheduling what was as of late August a very tentative and incomplete program for 2007-08; begun to advertise individual speakers and readers; landed Dorothy Allison as the first Major Author in this year's program; overseen the four events Allison agreed to be involved in during her whirlwind visit; and worked closely with the CLA Board, the Dean, me, the Creative Writing Program, the Research Foundation, the Tower Foundation, and Associated Students, a daunting variety of groups and individuals within and outside the university. Kelly and Kate are doing a terrific job. I thank them.

I write on the morning of 9 October. We continue to operate with no knowledge of the department budget for the 2007-08 academic year. Let's hope, come spring, we have enough money to meet student demand for classes while, at the same time, enriching the life of the department with funds for professional travel, for social and cultural events, and for adequate supplies. And let's hope I won't have to say, "I'm sorry, but I don't know" quite so often.

*John Engell*