GradLetter

Graduate Newsletter · Department of English · Fall 2006
University of South Alabama
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http://www.southalabama.edu/english

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Welcome, New and Returning Students!

We have a large group of incoming students for summer and fall, including Susan Arnett, Carmen Avritt, Eglasia Prince Barnes, Thomas Leon Bigham, Gloria Ann Brooks, Elizabeth Butt, Colleen Chinn, Charlie Mac Henderson, Patrick Hyndman, Olivia Kimbrough, Alyson Lee Koblas, Matthew Lambert, Jennifer Lee, Vickie Locke, Alissa Murphy, Nicole Schlaudecker, Sara Shanks, Tyler Smith, Christopher Starkey, Tammy Stefanini, Sheila Wilkinson, and Robert Warren. Welcome to our program!

Congratulations to our recent graduates: Libby Jones, Dan Hinton, Damon Marbut, Cody Oliver, and Gary Walker. Libby Jones is entering the Ph.D. program at Auburn University this fall. Gary Walker is entering the low-residency M.F.A. creative writing program at Spaulding University this fall. Dan Hinton and Gary Walker are Instructor-Interns for the English department this academic year.

English Graduate Organization (EGO)

EGO provides a forum for students to socialize, to plan events, and to petition the department to address concerns of graduate students. Among its many activities, EGO sponsors a Graduate Essay Contest each year. Congratulations to last year’s winner, Suzanne Bullock for her essay, “Raptus: Chaucer’s Representation of Rape in The Canterbury Tales.”

Check out the EGO Blog for more information http://egosouth.wordpress.com, and plan to attend some of the meetings or events. This year’s faculty sponsors are Dr. Chris Raczkowski and Dr. John Halbrooks.

Graduate Deadlines:

**Graduation:**
To graduate in Spring 2007, you must register for graduation by 9/9/06.

To graduate in Summer 2007, you must register for graduation by 2/9/07.

To graduate in Fall 2007, you must register for graduation by 6/1/07.

**Thesis:**

**Fall First Submission:**
11/2/06
Therefore you must defend by: 10/26/06

**Spring First Submission:**
3/29/07
Therefore you must defend by: 3/22/07

**Summer First Submission:**
6/29/07
Therefore you must defend by: 6/22/07

**Foreign Language:**
Contact the Foreign Language department in the first four weeks of the semester to take the test anytime that semester.
Graduate & Teaching Assistants

The Graduate and Teaching Assistantships are competitive positions awarded each year by the department. Graduate Assistants for this academic year are Tyler Smith, Tammy Stefanini, Nicole Schlaudecker, and Chris Starkey. GAs work in the Writing Center and for the department. Teaching Assistants for this academic year are Stephanie Al-Khamees, Derek Bagley, Meagan Davis, Karma DeGruy, Deborah Ferguson, Mistica Maples, Meghan McDonald, Melissa Smith, Amber Wingfield, and Kelley Wright. TAs will teach EH 101 classes this fall.

Literature Comprehensive Exam Option Changes

Last year, the English Graduate Faculty voted to change the form of Comprehensive Exam and to eliminate the Writing Portfolio as an option for new students. Students in the Literature Concentration can choose to write a Thesis or to take a Comprehensive Exam to complete the MA. Please contact Dr. Harrington if you have any questions about comprehensive options or procedures.

For the Comprehensive Exam, each student will have two English faculty advisors; each advisor will work with the student on one of the two exam fields. Each field, worth 50% of the exam, is chosen by the student with the approval of the advisor. Each field must be in a different rubric (Period, Genre, Topic) and will cover a list of 15-25 primary and secondary texts, approved by the advisor. More details are available at www.southalabama.edu/english/programs/graduate.htm

Foreign Language Proficiency Requirement

If you have not completed this requirement through recent coursework, you need to contact the Foreign Language department to schedule your test. You must contact the Foreign Language department in the first four weeks of the semester to take the test anytime that semester. You must meet this requirement before your last semester of graduate work; you will not be able to schedule a Thesis or Portfolio Defense or take the Comprehensive Exam until you have completed your proficiency requirement. See our policy on the website. If you have any questions, contact Dr. Harrington.

Mid-Program Reviews

All literature students with 15 or more hours must schedule a Mid-Program Review (MPR). The Review allows you the opportunity to assess your performance so far in the program and to plan how to complete your Master’s degree in English. You will not be permitted to register for the comprehensive exam or thesis or portfolio hours until you have completed your MPR. Please contact Dr. Harrington for more information.

Graduate English Website

The English Department Website has undergone a major redesign. Check out the new look, as well as current information on events, programs, faculty, etc.: http://www.southalabama.edu/english

Follow the links to the Graduate English program’s website, which has current information on policies and requirements:
www.southalabama.edu/english/programs/graduate.htm

Fall Graduate Classes

Please check the English website for the most recent list of graduate classes and descriptions. http://www.southalabama.edu/english/programs/graduate_class.htm

You can get current schedule information and register through the PAWS website: paws.southalabama.edu

New Graduate Classes

EH 506 Composition Theory and Research Methodology, EH 507 Rhetoric and the Postmodern Condition, and EH 508 Professional Writing and Theories were just added to the catalog and will be scheduled in upcoming semesters.

EH 507 Rhetoric and Postmodernity

Scheduled for Dr. Amado Miller, Spring 2007. A review of the most important theories to influence the rhetorical study of texts within the era that Lyotard famously dubbed “postmodernity.” Lyotard defined postmodernity as a way to talk about the
philosophical and political milieu in which the powers of traditional reason are called into question, “nonrational” forces such as sensation and emotion took on heightened importance as epistemological tools, traditional humanism was rejected, and heterogeneity and difference were championed. For rhetoric, as for Lyotard, these pivotal debates in philosophy, politics, social theory, cultural studies, and art and aesthetics, constitute social revolution. In this course, through reviewing the histories and the theories that have come to define contemporary rhetorical studies, we’ll consider how the study of rhetoric fits into and helps define modern, university departments of English and to trace its critical relationship to its twin sub-specialty: composition studies.

NEW Faculty Member: Dr. Christopher Raczkowski
Biography

Born and raised in the arcadian tranquility of central New Jersey (NJ Turnpike Exit 9), Christopher Raczkowski attended Middlebury College where he graduated with honors with a B.A. in English. After refashioning himself from a Victorianist into an Americanist, he received his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 2004. His dissertation, and now book manuscript, theorizes the importance of new theories and practices of vision (in science, philosophy and law enforcement) to the shift from realism and modernism in America literature—a chapter from this manuscript was published in Modern Fiction Studies under the title: “From Modernity's Detection to Modernist Detectives.” As a graduate student and teaching fellow at Indiana, and as a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville in 2005, he successfully taught a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate literature classes including—last spring—an especially fun class that investigated the significance of detective and crime narrative to the formation and continued development of African American literature.

Events & Activities

Eugenia L. Hamner Lecture
Dr. Moira Amado Miller will deliver the fourth annual Eugenia L. Hamner Lecture for the Graduate Program in English at USA on Wednesday, October 18, 2006. The title of Dr. Amado-Miller’s talk will be “Versions of Grandeur (and Defilement): Bodies that Mediate the Body Politic, or How Sex becomes Text.” All students are encouraged to attend!

This lecture recognizes the great intellectual contributions of Dr. Eugenia “Genie” Hamner, retired faculty member, to USA’s English department and to the Mobile community. Each fall, a member of the Graduate Faculty in English will deliver the lecture.

Oracle Fine Arts Review
USA's literary and fine arts magazine publishes student and community work in areas including Fiction, Painting, Creative Non-Fiction, Illustration, Poetry, Photography, Stage/Screenplay, Printmaking, Essay, and Sculpture. Students are needed to serve as editors and editorial board members starting in September. Submissions for the next issue are due in November. Please contact faculty advisor, Ellen Harrington, or see the website for details: http://www.southalabama.edu/oracle/

The Stage and the Quill
The Stage and The Quill will host roundtable discussions in conjunction with the four major theatrical productions staged by the Department of Dramatic Arts each year, and will feature a panel of artists, scholars, and community members with expertise in areas of vital interest to a particular theatrical work and its literary history and tradition.

Moira Amado Miller of the English Department and Leon Van Dyke, chair of the Department of Dramatic Arts, have developed this as a collaborative learning project to advocate for the integration of the arts and provide opportunities to creatively explore and reinterpret the productive tradition between literature and the theatre.
USA Horror Club
Graduate students and faculty are invited to join the new USA Horror Club. Annmarie Guzy is the faculty advisor for the group, which co-sponsored the Kane Hodder (Friday the 13th) program, November 1, 2005, won 2nd place in the Jaguar Productions Spring Fling Sidewalk Chalk contest, and co-sponsored the USA/Red Cross summer blood drive, July 19, 2006. Look for more events this year.

Writing Outreach
The Freshman Composition Program within the Department of English at USA sponsors free-of-charge information sessions for students and others who need additional assistance with particular writing skills. The goal of the Writing Outreach program is to reinforce necessary skills that are often not covered in class discussions due to time constraints. Writing Outreach is open to all university students, staff, and faculty, as well as interested members of the community. English graduate students help organize this series each semester.

Conferences and Contests
USA Gender Studies hosts a series of lectures each spring and a Student Conference and Paper Competition in April. Contact Linda Payne or see the website for more details: http://www.southalabama.edu/genderstudies/

The Association of College English Teachers of Alabama (ACETA) sponsors two academic honors: the Calvert and Woodall Awards. The Calvert prize honors a paper on a scholarly or theoretical topic in English studies; the paper for the Woodall prize must focus on a pedagogical topic in English studies. See the website for more details about these competitions, which are open to college English teachers and graduate students in English: www.samford.edu/groups/aceta

Louisiana State University hosts the Mardi Gras Graduate English Conference in Language and Literature during Mardi Gras week each year. Check for web updates at english.lsu.edu/dept/orgs/egsa

University of Florida English Graduate Organization’s Annual UF-EGO Interdisciplinary Conference, “Contours of Captivity: Resignifying Expressions of Power” will be held from 2-3 November 2006. The keynote speaker will be Marianne Hirsch. Abstract deadline is September 1, 2006.

The South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference will be held November 10-12 in Charlotte. SAMLA is one of the Modern Language Association’s regional conferences. Look at the conference website for more details about the panels (www.samla.org). If you are interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in English, consider joining MLA or SAMLA.

Congratulations to Suzanne Bullock, Winner of the Graduate Essay Contest 2006 for “Raptus: Chaucer’s Representation of Rape in The Canterbury Tales”

This paper examines Geoffrey Chaucer’s inclusion of numerous rapes in The Canterbury Tales, focusing on the Reeve’s Tale, the Physician’s Tale, and the Franklin’s Tale and questioning Chaucer’s representation of these rapes: Does he represent these rapes as crimes against women? As crimes against property? Because Chaucer criticizes other social ills of his time, one might reasonably hope that his representation of these rapes subversively highlights the violence of these crimes and gives voice to the female victims. However, this paper suggests that Chaucer displaces the rapes in the Reeve’s Tale, the Physician’s Tale, and the Franklin’s Tale as acts of violence against men, reducing the women to commodities that have been exchanged without the permission of their owners, thus perpetuating the misogynistic patriarchal system. –S.B.
English Graduate Faculty Activities

Dr. Moira Amado Miller

Publications:


Presentations:


Dr. Nicole Amare

Publications:


“Lynching Mark Twain, the Prophet.” The Mark Twain Annual, 3 (2005): 104-112 (with A. Manning).


Presentations:


In July 2006, Larry Beason's Eyes Before Ease: Unsolved Mysteries and Secret Histories of Spelling was published by McGraw-Hill.

His review of What We Really Value: Beyond Rubrics in Teaching and Assessing Writing appeared in Volume 29 of WPA Journal.


His co-authored book McGraw-Hill Guide to Grammar and Usage was recently translated into Chinese.

Dr. Beason presented two papers at conferences this summer: "Why Spelling Still Matters: Patterns of History, Patterns of Learning," at the national ATEG Conference in Fairfield, CT; "Is Spelling a Rhetorical Matter?" at the Biennial Conference of Rhetoric Society of America in Memphis.

In Fall 2005, Dr. Beason was a member of Fostering Civic Pride Task Force for the City of Mobile. In 2005/06, he served on the editorial board for WPA Journal and ATEG Journal.

Dr. Pat Cesarini

Continuing his study of race, reason and religion in early America, last spring Pat Cesarini presented a paper at the American Society for 18th-Century Studies Conference in Montreal, entitled, "Between Providence and the Probable: Daniel Gookin's History of King Philip's War." In the paper, Cesarini interprets Gookin's remarkable narrative of colonial race war as marking the turn from Puritan to Enlightenment thought in the late 17th century. This summer, Cesarini completed an article, currently under review at William and Mary Quarterly, which will present for the first time in print a lost work by Puritan New England's most
famous missionary, John Eliot. According to Cesarini, Eliot's account of the first "praying Indian" church on Cape Cod in the 1660's sheds new light on the ways in which Native Americans adapted the religion of the Puritans to an indigenous worldview. In addition to teaching courses this semester on early American literature and American poetry before 1900, Cesarini plans to teach the graduate seminar on "American Romanticism" in the Spring. He encourages students interested in American literature to consult with him at any time.

Dr. Annmarie Guzy

Annmarie Guzy’s professional activities from the recent 2005-2006 academic year include:

Published an article, "A History and Context for the Scholarly Study of First-year Honors Composition," in FYHC: First-year Honors Composition, a new refereed journal for scholarship on honors composition.

Completed a National Institutes of Health certification course on Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams.


Accepted an appointment to serve a three-year term on the National Collegiate Honors Council Publications Board, which governs all NCHC publications, including a monograph series, two refereed journals, and a monthly e-newsletter.

Served on the NCHC Grants and Awards Committee

Reviewed undergraduate theses submitted for the 2005 and 2006 Portz Scholars awards

Reviewed faculty and administrator submissions for 2005 and 2006 Portz Grants awards

Served on the NCHC Research Committee

Continued to serve as the University of South Alabama representative for state Articulation Academic Committee on Interdisciplinary/Honors/Innovative programs

Prof. Carolyn Haines

2006 has been a busy year for Assistant Professor Carolyn Haines. Penumbra, a literary thriller, was released by St. Martin's Minotaur in April and Carolyn was invited to speak to the Public Library Association in Boston. Bones to Pick, a Mississippi Delta mystery, was released by Kensington in July and climbed to the top ten bestseller list posted by the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association (IMBA). Carolyn was on book tour for the summer with both books, including trips through the Mississippi Delta and Houston. She was also invited to speak at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings conference in Gainesville.

Fever Moon, another literary thriller is set for release in February by St. Martin's Minotaur, and the seventh bones book, Ham Bones, will be released in July 2007. An untitled newspaper thriller is also set for released September 2007 with MIRA.

Dr. John Halbrooks

Publications:


Under Review:


"The Historiography of Recognition and the Wandering Soul." Under review at The Chaucer Review.

Presentations:


**Dr. Ellen Harrington**

Publications:

Under Review:
“Nation, Identity, and the Fascination with Forensic Science in Sherlock Holmes and *CSI*”
“The Female Offender, the New Woman, and Winnie Verloc in Conrad’s *The Secret Agent*.”

Presentations:
“The Female Offender in *The Secret Agent*.”
“Nation, Identity, and the Fascination with Forensic Science in Sherlock Holmes and *CSI*”
National Popular Culture Association Conference (PCA/ACA), Atlanta, GA. April 15, 2006.

**Dr. Cristopher Hollingsworth**

Publications:

Presentations:


Current research
Cristopher is writing articles on Lewis Carroll’s influence on H. G. Wells, and on Carroll’s use of Victorian photography in the Alice books. He is also working on a collection of scholarly essays on the space of Lewis Carroll’s *Wonderland*.

**Dr. Becky McLaughlin**

Publications:

Presentations:
“Thinking Like a Boa Constrictor, or How to Digest a Text Two Times the Size of Your Head.” Paper presented at the meeting of the West Texas Popular Culture Conference, Albuquerque, NM. (February 2006).
“Not at the Center But on the Periphery, or Even a Genius Can Fail When It Comes to Sexual Rapport.” Talk on independent filmmaker Wayne Wang’s The Center of the World, presented as part of Odyssey’s contemporary film lecture series. (May 2006).

**Dr. Christopher Raczkowski**

Christopher Raczkowski is currently writing a review-essay for *Modern Fiction Studies* (by request of the editors) on three new critical/theoretical volumes on anglophone detective narrative. He is also revising an article on
Howellsian Realism and Gilded Age labor politics for *Studies in the Novel* and has another article on Frantz Fanon and Chester Himes currently on the backburner. In September he is presenting a paper on the competing Literary Noir influences on the Coen Brothers at an academic conference taking place at Lebowski Fest in Louisville, KY. In addition to this, he is working on a book manuscript that theorizes the drift in narrative vision and epistemology from realist to modernist literary cultures.

**Dr. Sue Walker**

Sue Walker has recently returned from Scotland where she was invited to read her poetry at the Poetry and Politics Conference at the University of Stirling, Scotland. Recent publications include: "Wangari Maathai," "Uzuri was Afrik," "Long Journey," and "The Gerenuk," published in the international peer-reviewed journal: *The African Journal of New Poetry*, V. 3, 2006. "Long Journey” is also published in *The Birmingham Arts Journal*, Vol. 3: 2, 2006. "Nasilia Sauti” was published in *Portico*, August 2006. These poems will be part of her forthcoming book on Kenya and are a result of her travels in Kenya in May 2006. Dr. Walker has been invited to read her poetry at the Southern Festival of Books in Memphis, Tennessee, October, 2006. She will give a critical paper on James Dickey at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association at Charlotte, NC. She is the recipient of the Mobile Arts Council Artist's Award for Lifetime Achievement, the award of which will be presented, October 8, 2006.

**More News...**

**Graduates of the English MA Program**

**Chris Brown**

**Teresa Grettano**

**Gary Walker**
(B.A., M.A., University of South Alabama) published his story “Holy Roller High” in Emory University’s Lullwater Review. His short story "The Last Resort" was published in *Aoife's Kiss* this spring, and "Sins of the Father," placed in the top one hundred out of 18,000 entries in the *Writer's Digest* 74th Writing Competition in the Mainstream/Literary Short Story category.

More news about recent MA graduates can be found on our new Alumni Accomplishments web page: http://www.southalabama.edu/english/alumni.html