

EDEN

MA NOTES FOR NEW AND CONTINUING STUDENTS FROM RUSSELL PRATHER

1. Plans of Study. Anyone who has not yet submitted a plan of study should do so by the end of the current, fall semester. The easiest way to create your plan is to work on it together with the program director. If you've already had a plan of study approved you do not need to do another one, unless you've made a major change—like changing your track(s) or your capstone.

Forms available at: <http://webb.nmu.edu/Departments/English/SiteSections/Students/StudentForms.shtml>.

2. Thesis Proposal, Application and Thesis Credits. If you plan on writing an MA thesis, this is a reminder that you need to have a thesis proposal submitted *a year before you plan to graduate*. Submitting your thesis proposal on time is a program requirement.

Here, in order, are the steps in the process:

1. Select a thesis director and, in consultation with your director, one thesis reader.
2. Consult the MA Thesis Proposal Guidelines and, working with your thesis director, prepare your 500-word proposal and reading list.
3. Have your thesis director sign the Thesis Application form, indicating that s/he has formally approved the proposal. (Proposals that have not been approved will not be accepted.)
4. Submit the proposal with reading list, along with the Thesis Application Form and Thesis Credit Registration Form to the main English office, which will pass this material on to the Thesis Application Committee.
5. The Thesis Application Committee then accepts the proposal or, in some cases, might ask for further clarification/revision.

You can find the MA Thesis Application Form, Guidelines for Thesis Proposals and Thesis Credit Registration Form at: <http://webb.nmu.edu/Departments/English/SiteSections/Students/StudentForms.shtml>.

3. Thesis Submission Deadlines. Remember that MA theses must be completed, approved by your committee, properly formatted and submitted 30 days prior to graduation. For this *fall semester 2014 that means Friday, November 14; for winter 2015 the submission deadline is Friday, April 3; for summer the deadline is Friday, July 10*. For more information: <http://webb.nmu.edu/Colleges/GraduateStudies/SiteSections/Students/ThesisGuidelines.shtml>.

4. Excellence in Education Awards. From the NMU web site: "The Excellence in Education Program is a \$1500 award established to support graduate student research in the summer. The awards are intended to assist graduate students in the conduct of scholarly research and creative works that will enhance their academic experience and professional growth." The *deadline* for this academic year is *Monday, February 2*, shortly after the start of winter semester. Read (carefully) the application requirements and procedures at: <http://www.nmu.edu/grantsandresearch/node/85>.

Final reports: For those who received EinE grants last year, the *deadline for your final report is October 15*. Don't miss it, especially if you want to be considered for a second award.

5. Teaching and Graduate Assistantship Applications. If you want to apply for a teaching assistantship for the next academic year (2014/15), the *deadline is February 2, 2015*. Information on application procedures is available at these links: <http://webb.nmu.edu/Departments/English/SiteSections/Students/GraduateAssistantship.shtml>; <http://webb.nmu.edu/Departments/English/SiteSections/Programs/GraduateChecklist.shtml>

NOTE: If you are in your first year of the MA program and already have an assistantship, you do not need to reapply.

6. Graduate Professional Development Conference. A Professional Development Conference—covering issues of vital interest to grad students, such as teaching, the job market, getting a Ph.D., and grant writing—is scheduled for Oct 18th. For more information [click here](#).

If you have any questions that these websites don't address email Russell Prather at rprather@nmu.edu or visit him during his office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:40 to 3:40 pm at Jamrich 3250.

ATTENTION: Steps #4: Excellence in Education and #6: Professional Development Conference also applies to the MFA Program



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HAPPY FALL





MFA NOTES FROM JEN HOWARD

First-year MFAs: When the Winter schedule goes up, come see me before you register and we'll work together to build your plan of study.

Second-year MFAs: This is the semester you build your thesis committee (meaning you choose a thesis director and two readers) and write your *thesis proposal*, which is *due by November 15th*. Here's a [link](#) to some information about the thesis and the prospectus, as well as the Thesis Application Form you'll submit along with it.

Third-year MFAs: Your *thesis is due* (finished, formatted, and submitted) a month before graduation, which means *April 3, 2015*. Here's a link to the grad office thesis info page for more details about submission: <http://www.nmu.edu/graduatestudies/node/32>. As well, you'll need a 10+ introductory essay which orients your readers to your thesis. Talk to your directors about the best approach in your particular case.

If you have any questions that these websites don't address email Jen Howard at jenhowar@nmu.edu or visit her during office hours on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 12-2 at Jamrich 3208.

"Good luck to our faculty members with upcoming events."

PRESENTATIONS

Heidi Stevenson, Mike Jacoby, Amy Hansen, and Molly Fox will be presenting a panel titled "The Spaces and Places of Writing in Higher Education: How the Environment of the Writing Center Alters All of Us" at the 2014 **Writing Across the Peninsula Conference** here on the campus of NMU. They will also be presenting related scholarship in a panel titled "The Spaces and Places of Writing in Higher Education: Helping Administration, Faculty, and Students Re-imagine Writing Centers" at the 2014 International Writing Centers Association/National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing Joint Conference in Orlando, Florida on October 30.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

DR. RUSSELL PRATHER

Russell Prather is showing visual art in four exhibitions that open this fall semester, 2014: the Accreted Terrane group show at the Museum of Northwest Art in Washington State, The 60th Arrowhead Biennial at the Duluth Art Institute, a two-person show at Anchor Arts Space in LaConner, WA, and the Fifth International Conference and Exhibition on the Image at the Freie Universität in Berlin, Germany. Prather will also be delivering a paper at the Berlin Image conference.

DR. JASPAL SINGH

Jaspal Singh presented "Narrating the New Nation: South African Indian Fiction" at the English Academy of Southern Africa, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban, South Africa on 26th September, 2014. She was also invited to read from her short story, "Eternal Moments" which was published in South Asian Review at the conference.

DR. GABRIEL BRAHM

Gabriel Brahm's newest book, *The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel*, co-edited with Cary Nelson, will be released November 3, 2014 (published by MLA Members for Scholars' Rights and distributed by Wayne State University Press). For more information visit:

<http://wsupress.wayne.edu/books/detail/case-against-academic-boycotts-israel>

DR. KIA JANE RICHMOND

Dr. Kia Jane Richmond was recently elected to the Conference on English Education (CEE) National Nominating Committee. She will be taking nominations for CEE at the annual conference in Washington D.C.

Dr. Richmond coordinated the Creative Writing Program for the Michigan Council of Teachers of English at the annual Michigan Youth Arts Festival in Kalamazoo, Michigan in May 2014. NMU graduate student Sofie Harsha also attended, helping chaperone 30 high school students and working with the creative writing scholars Telaina Erickson and Dan Scanlon.

Dr. Richmond will be presenting the following papers this fall:

October 11: "Writing/Responding to Literature in a Digital Environment: New Media, Student Engagement, and *Thirteen Reasons Why*" with University of Michigan doctoral student Joey Lynn Selling (NMU alumna and doctoral intern from my summer 2014 Young Adult Literature class) at NMU in Marquette for the Writers Across the Peninsula Conference.

October 16: "*Reflective Journaling and the Social Network*" with NMU faculty Dr. Mitch Klett (Education), Dr. Lori Nelson (Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences), Dr. Maria Arenillas (Modern Languages), and Dr. Tawni Ferrarini (Economics) at the Lilly Conference in Traverse City.

October 31: "Exploring Stereotypes of Race and Place through Examinations of Young Adult Literature" with Joey Lynn Selling. Michigan Council of Teachers of English Fall Conference in Lansing.

November 22: "Using Narratives, Reading, and Media: Professional Knowledges and Frameworks for Development in the Writing Methods Course" with Jonathan Bush (WMU), James Davis (University of Northern Iowa), and Kilian McCurrie (Columbia College-Chicago) at the National Council of Teachers of English Annual Convention in Washington, D.C.

PROF. JAMES MCCOMMONS

Professor James McCommons wrote a feature article for Michigan History magazine on the photography of George Shiras 3rd. The article was a spinoff of McCommons' new non-fiction book, *Shooting Wildlife to Save It: George Shiras 3rd and the Birth of Wildlife Photography*. The book will be published by the University of New Mexico Press.

McCommons also wrote two articles for "Discover" which will appear in the magazine this fall. One article profiles a paleontologist whose work appears to show that dinosaurs were neither cold nor warm blooded. Their metabolism was an in-between state known as mesothermic. Another article examines the history of human-powered flight: from wing suits worn by base jumpers, people flying with mini turbines on their backs to successful attempts by engineering students to build pedal-power helicopters, ornithopters and light-weight airplanes.

In July McCommons attended three days of training at the Poynter Institute in Florida learning to do videography for newspapers and websites. This is in support of the new multimedia journalism major and will be applied in EN406 Advanced News Writing.

2014 UNITED ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Jamie Kuehn and Kristine Granger—*The State of Many Unions: The current and Future State of Contingent, University Faculty throughout the Americas*.

This is an overview of information gleaned from the 2014 Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor's international conference, which addressed current faculty labor conditions throughout America.

Josh Brewer—*Guns, Race and Queerness in Tarantino's Pulp Fiction*

This is an examination of the ways Quentin Tarantino's cult class *Pulp Fiction* replaces traditional views of heterosexuality with a more nuanced queerness.

Hagar Eltarabish—*From Tahrir to Amreeka*

She is a visiting Fulbright Scholar in American Drama from Ain Shams University in Egypt and this is a personal anecdote about the journey of a Muslim Arab woman in the U.S.

Nathaniel Greenberg—*Cairo Station* a Film Screening and Discussion.

This film is set during a day in a busy train station and tells the story of a physically impaired newspaper peddler who becomes obsessed with a woman in love with another man. This film was made in 1958 and has been internationally recognized as a masterpiece that exposes a troubling view of an entire city through the eyes of a single man.

Thank you **Amy Hamilton** for organizing such a great conference.

LB295H SPECIAL TOPICS IN
HUMANITIES: TOLKIEN'S
MIDDLE-EARTH

Instructor: Peter Goodrich

Course Description: With frequency-of-offering limitations on Special Topics courses and Peter Goodrich's upcoming retirement, this popular course will be taught for the last time. Many people have dismissed Tolkien's fiction as simplistic, escapist, sexist, and devoid of serious intellectual content, yet poll after readers' poll pronounces him the major author of the twentieth century. Even more recently, he has inspired major cinema adaptations by Peter Jackson. The course will explore Tolkien's imaginary world of Middle-earth, and evaluate to what extent his achievement (and, to a lesser extent, Jackson's) merits its present popularity. Along the way, you'll acquire the basic tools of textual analysis: an understanding of character, setting, plot, theme, metaphor, allegory, and symbol. You will also explore significant human questions about the nature of language, time, good and evil, courage and self-sacrifice, divinity, ecological systems, technology, cultural difference, and artistic creativity that underlie Tolkien's "legendarium."

WINTER SPECIALTY COURSES

EN311Z: Chinese Lit

Instructor: ZZ Lehmberg; zlehmb@nmu.edu

Course Description: As the course title indicates, this course will focus on Chinese literature in translation, with emphasis on 20th century literature and the three major revolutions/movements that influenced the writers of the period - the May 4th Movement, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution. Through close readings of novels, short stories, and poems, students and the instructor will examine how the Chinese dealt with common human needs and concerns in a specific time and place. Students will be introduced to the period's major works and influential authors, such as Lu Xun, Lao She, and Mo Yan.

EN312: Medieval Lit

Instructor: Peter Goodrich; pgoodric@nmu.edu

Course Description: This course offers a rich sample of literature from the British Isles written in Gaelic, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-French -- all in translation -- and Middle English. Treatments of culturally significant works such as *Beowulf*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Piers Plowman*, *Le Morte Darthur* and more will be included. The course will not incorporate Chaucer, who has his own course, but will focus instead upon the many genres of poetry and prose by other medieval British writers who are less frequently studied. As an added feature, there will be a unit on medievalism -- the influence that the British Middle Ages has had on literature written after the Middle Ages (for example, modern adaptations of Arthurian legend, neo-Celticism, and Tolkien's works). Among other assignments, you'll give independently researched reports on a medieval background topic and a modern medievalist work.

EN313/PY313: Linguistics

Instructor: David Boe; dboe@nmu.edu

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the formal study of language. We will begin by discussing the early 20th-century development of synchronic structuralism, followed by an overview of the various theoretical developments leading up to the appearance of Chomskyan generative grammar in the 1950s. Some current issues in contemporary linguistics will be considered, including the distinction between "language" and "communication". We will then turn to the major subfields of formal linguistics, including examination of the analysis of words (lexicon and morphology), sentences (syntax), and meaning (semantics). Finally, we will examine the relationship between language and the human mind/brain, and we will reconsider the debate between linguistic behaviorism and the innateness hypothesis.

EN382: Brit Lit

Instructor: Caroline Krzakowski; ckrzakow@nmu.edu

Course Description: In this course we will trace developments in British literature—fiction, poetry, and drama—from the late 1950s to the present. We will look at the ways in which postwar and contemporary British writers adapted and transformed the techniques of modernism, and how writers responded to Britain's recovery from World War Two, to the end-of-empire, and to the election of the Labor Government. Along the way, topics for our discussions will include questions of gender, race, national identity, home, immigration, cosmopolitanism, as well as questions of narrative form and experimentation. We will also study the political and social contexts of postwar and contemporary Britain to better understand these novels. Our reading may include works by Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, Angela Carter, John le Carré, Salman Rushdie, Muriel Spark, W.G. Sebald, and Zadie Smith, and Monica Ali, along with some helpful critical and literary theory.

EN410/EN505: God Chronicles

Instructor: Josh MacIvor-Anderson; jmacivor@nmu.edu

Course Description: "All theology is at its heart autobiography," writes Fredrick Buechner in his introduction to *The Sacred Journey*, a beautifully rendered memoir of faith and conversion. Buechner suggests that theologians, at the core of their vocation, are simply interrogating their spiritual lives, the roller coaster of human existence in the shadow of the divine, and expressing the God-truths they find embedded there.

Students of EN410/505 will do similar ruminative work as we read a diversity of spiritual writing from different perspectives and faiths, and practice on our own. To be clear, a student does not need to be religious to take this class, but she or he must be a person willing to explore what faith or God or spirituality or is not, either in the students own life or in the lives of others.

EN411Z: Queer South Asian Literature

Instructor: Jaspal K. Singh; jsingh@nmu.edu

Course Description: The emergence of an international South Asian gay and lesbian community is reflected in many literary text, showcasing coming-out narratives, poetry, fiction, biography and formal essays. How do South Asian gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals construct gender and national identity? How do they define gender and sexuality in cross-cultural and transnational spaces where ideas of identity take on special meaning? How are hybrid identities and sexualities represented and received? This course will explore histories, mythologies, and religious traditions as well as the lived and imagined experiences of South Asians in a postcolonial/transnational setting. How do intersections of ethnicity, migrancy, and postcoloniality impact queer experiences of South Asians? Offering critical thought on identity politics and representation, this course examines South Asian writers negotiating gender and sexual identity in South Asia, the UK, the USA, and the Caribbean, providing insights into a new literary tradition, a tradition of gay, lesbian, transsexual and transgendered writing.

EN 495/595: Islam and the West

Instructor: Nathaniel Greenberg; ngreenbe@nmu.edu

Course Description: Islam and the West: in Mind and Form: Samuel Huntington's glum assessment of world order in his infamous "Clash of Civilizations"

(1993) has not so quietly become the impetus for some of the most heated political jargon of our time. Artists have been largely absent from "clash" discussions, however. The goal of this class is to explore how literature and the arts can be an effective medium for thinking and writing critically about the so-called collision between Islam and the West, the place of the individual in the context of greater geopolitical phenomena, and the role of narrative in the war formally known as the Global War on Terror.

Students will read several key texts by Arab, African and Western authors who have engaged the question of the "clash" through fiction, autobiography, poetry and film. Additional readings by social historians and critics of "clash" discourse will flesh-out the socio-historic context of aesthetic works and provide critical points of departure for intervening in "clash" rhetoric.

The course will progress chronologically and each novel, short story, film, or poem, will be clustered around a central theoretical text. The aim here is to develop both a sense of how literary discourse of the "other" has (d)evolved over time, and how such narratives might enrich or problematize broader theoretical problems within the field of critical theory.



"Make sure to sign up for one of our specialty courses this winter!"

EN 570: American Environmental Literature and Ecocriticism

Instructor: Amy Hamilton; amyhamil@nmu.edu

Course Description: While the study of literature in relation to land and environment has long been integral to literary study, in recent decades the interrelated fields of Literature and Environment, Ecocriticism, and Environmental Justice have grown exponentially. This course considers the relationship between American literature and environmental perspectives, exploring how literary interpretations of the land and animals have reflected and shaped attitudes and values. What is the relation between experience of the land and literary representation of the environment? What is the lure of the "wilderness" that has long inspired American authors? What is at stake in the changing American attitudes towards nature as howling wilderness, divine inspiration, and ecological crisis? How do language and literature transmit values with profound ecological implications? What is the place in these swirling attitudes of Native American and Chicana/o understandings of sovereignty and homeland? The course will include texts by canonical American authors (Thoreau, Emerson), environmental writers (Muir, Austin), Native American authors (Momaday, Silko), and Chicano/a authors (Viramontes, Baca). We will also be reading essays by Ecocritics and Environmental Justice scholars.

LB121: Western Values: The Ancient Greeks and The Bible

Instructor: Mark Smith; masmith@nmu.edu

Course Description: The course is organized around the following questions and individuals.

How can we cope with human suffering? & What should our relationship be to God?

Oedipus & Job.

What qualities should our leaders have? & How best can we form a community?

Odysseus & Moses.

What is worth dying for?

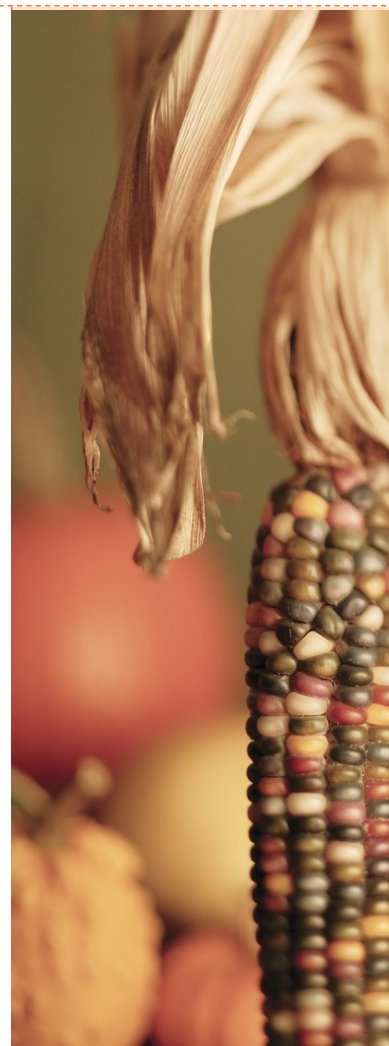
Socrates and Christ.

Works studied: The Bible (Old and New Testaments), Homer's Odyssey, philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle, plays by Sophocles and Aristophanes, and others.

Counts for 4 credits of Humanities in the Liberal Studies Program.

Notes

Other 311Z courses will be offered for Latin America and Turkish.



UPCOMING EVENTS

One Book, One Community for 2014-2015 is [Detroit](#) by Charlie LeDuff with author visit Nov 12, 2014

National Contest Deadlines

Oct. 15, 2014 The Writer's Block Poetry Contest.

Oct. 31, 2014 The Southampton Review: Robert Reeves Price in Comic Fiction.

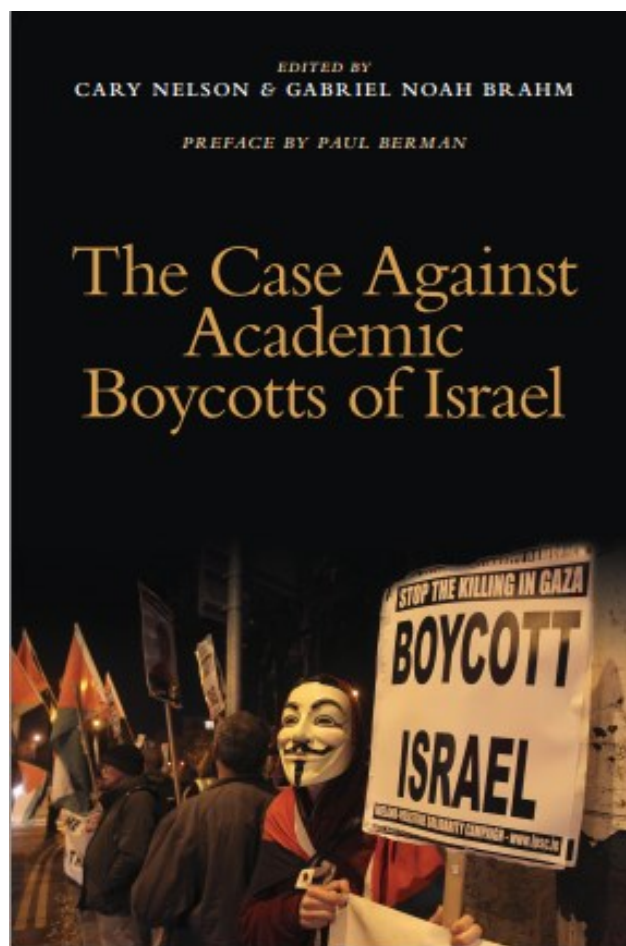
Oct. 31, 2014 The Black River Chapbook Competition.

Nov. 17, 2014 35th Annual College Photo Contest.

[Click here](#) for more information

National Novel Writing Month

is almost upon us. November is just around the corner, so get your pens or computers ready. Check out the website for rules and guidelines and to set up a free account if you haven't already. <http://nanowrimo.org/>



English Department Electronic Newsletter

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Located on the third floor of the new
Jamrich Hall room 3200.
Business hours 8a.m.—5p.m.

JOURNALS

[The Lightkeeper](#) - NMU's Official Undergraduate Literary Journal
<http://nmulightkeeper.com/>

[The North Wind](#) – Northern's independent student newspaper, which publishes every Thursday during the fall and spring semesters. The paper is funded by advertising and the student activity fee. Although independent from the university, the English Department provides a faculty adviser for the newspaper. <http://www.thenorthwindonline.com/>

[Passages North](#) – The annual literary journal sponsored by Northern Michigan University. This publication has published short fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction since 1979. <https://www.facebook.com/passages.north>