

The Literature Collaborative's
Very Unofficial Collection
of Helpful Hints
for New Lit Students

Fall 2008



Lit Collab is a friendly club for CCS Lit majors.

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http://litcollaborative.blogspot.com/

Facebook group: The Literature Collaborative at CCS

Introduction

By Britta Gustafson '09 and Carolyn Chiao '11

Literature Collaborative is an independent club where CCS Lit students work together to get the most out of our education and improve the CCS Lit program in the process. Yay!

Last year, we decided to write down what we wish we'd known as brand-new Literature freshmen and transfer students. **This little booklet is what we gathered for you.** It includes the secrets of the UCSB library, suggestions for great classes to take, how to find the copier, and much more.

None of this has been checked over by anyone official, so the text may contain errors or out of date information, but we hope that it's accurate and useful. Edited by Britta Gustafson '09 with help from Stacie Nellor '08 and other members. Come to our meetings and tell us what you think.

So, what does the Literature Collaborative do?

Last year Mitch Shira '08 founded Lit Collab as a student club to help make the CCS Lit program better than it already is. Britta took over during the year and is the current captain of this little boat.

Our members care deeply about the Lit program and work to share information and gossip among a friendly network of Lit students. **We have a casual meeting every Wednesdays at 5:15 pm (after Lit Symp) in Room 143, and everyone is welcome!** Anybody who's interested is automatically a member, especially if you come hang out at meetings. :)

We organize events including Scrabble tournaments and Dictate!, an open reading event in the OLT where students can share their creative writing with a friendly audience.

We discuss core classes, professors, writing projects, and uh, TV shows.

We support *Spectrum*, *Into the Teeth of the Wind*, student theater productions, and other CCS community activities.

Last year we also spent a day cleaning Building 494 and decorating it, and we'll probably do this again. It's surprisingly fun.

People and places

By Ellen Guerrero '10, Britta Gustafson '09, and Stacie Nellor '08

Turn a few pages to find a handy map of the CCS building.

Wonderful staff and administrators

Leslie Campbell, Frank Bauman, Bruce Tiffney, Emily Parsons, Chris Wilderman, Karen Poirier: check out www.ccs.ucsb.edu/admin_staff/ for details.

A few Literature professors and lecturers

Robyn Bell: teaches Emily Dickinson, Milton, poetic forms, graphic novels, and all sorts of other classes about poetry, authors, and genres.

John Wilson: specializes in Japanese poetry and also teaches classes about diary writing, 19th century literature, and more.

Caroline Allen: teaches a variety of fiction; past classes include Chaucer, travel narratives, and D. H. Lawrence. Most quarters she also teaches a writing class with an emphasis on memoir and realistic, narrative prose.

Barry Spacks: sometimes teaches classes on poetry and screenwriting.

You may hear about...

Marvin Mudrick: an English professor who founded CCS in 1967 and died in 1986. He was an interesting guy and the college is based on his ideas. Ask Britta if you want to learn more.

Max Schott: a retired English professor who sometimes sits in on John Wilson's classes.

Jervey Tervalon: CCS Lit alumni, wrote a couple of books, currently a writer for *LA Weekly*, used to teach here.

Richard Corum: an English professor who taught many great CCS Lit classes and retired last year.

A few abbreviations

OLT: The Old Little Theatre. Some classes are held there.

L & S: The College of Letters and Sciences.

DLG: The De La Guerra Dining Commons, which is near CCS.

A few practical tips

Collected from members of Lit Collab by Britta Gustafson '09

Take charge of your academic advising

If you don't like your advisor, or you don't find his or her advising very helpful, you can get advising from somebody else. Every advisor has a different style, so find one who works for you.

If a year or two from now you're not sure which requirements you have fulfilled already, email Leslie Campbell (part of the CCS staff) to set up a "grad check" meeting to go over the details. Everybody feels relieved after meeting with her because they know exactly where they stand.

Register for classes like a pro

You can usually take classes in other departments even if the description says "this major only". Email the professor and ask!

When you're registering for classes, you can only register for 13.5 units during the first pass time. It's helpful to add your CCS classes as 1 unit so that you can add more L & S classes. During later pass times (which don't have unit limits), you can change all those grading options to 4 units.

You can change grading options for an L & S class to pass/no pass, but consider what that pass/no pass class will look like on your transcript when applying to graduate school or MFA programs. You can also drop a class up until the last day of class.

If you need an add code for a CCS class, go to Frank in the office to get one (you'll want to check with your professor to make sure you can get one, but your professor usually can't hand out the codes).

To take a graduate class, go to the office and get a petition form. The people in the office can help you through the process.



Get your work recognized

When you hear about writing contests or magazines asking for submissions, do it! They usually don't get many submissions, and there's no harm in submitting something. CCS holds annual writing contests, usually in the spring: The Most Excellent CCS Writing Contest (aka the Pocket Money Prize), the Brancart Fiction award, and the Richardson Poetry Contest.

Know about special types of classes

You can teach a colloquium (two-unit class) about any subject once you're a junior or senior. You just get a form from the office a quarter or two beforehand and fill it out, including a class description and a signature from a faculty advisor for the class. Past Literature colloquiums include science fiction writing and Aboriginal literature.

There are also forms in the office for doing an independent study class with a professor. An independent study is a self-directed two-unit class about a subject you're interested in – you meet with a professor once or twice a week to go over questions and review your progress.

Freshman seminars are special one-unit L & S classes. They're well-promoted, but the one I took was lame; I should have taken a full-unit class on the subject instead. You get the "seminar" experience in CCS anyway.

Be a polite Lit student

It's best to be quiet during Literature Symposium; talking or listening to your iPod echoes more loudly than you think. If you're late for a class, you don't have to announce why you were late. Just sneak in and sit down.

Find the computer lab and copier

When you walk into CCS through the front doors, you're looking down the hallway straight at the door to the computer lab. This door has a little keypad on it. As soon as you can, go get a "door code" and "copier code" from Frank in the office (or you can email him and ask for that information). Type the door code into the little keypad and then press the star key (*). The door will unlock! Open it!

Inside the computer lab (once you pass the entrance using your magical code), there is a copier. To use it, type your copier code in. You can make up to 1000 copies a year, but if you need more than that, ask Frank.

The printer inside the lab doesn't always work, so it's best not to rely on it when you need to turn something in. And if the copier or printer aren't working and you have a few minutes to spare, go to the office and tell Frank. He can usually fix it.

Five myths debunked

By Carolyn Chiao '11

The CCS building is haunted!

It can be eerie walking alone here at night, but so far there have been no reports of the supernatural.

Your advisor is your advisor for life!

If you are not satisfied with your advisor for whatever reason, you can switch to another Literature advisor. However, make sure you receive approval first from the professor you want, and let your current advisor know.

English professors hate Literature students!

Many English professors aren't aware of CCS in general, and the ones that do know about us CCS Lit students think that we're great (because we are). They will be happy to welcome you into their classes.

Frank doesn't like you!

Frank is part of the office staff, and when you ask for something, he may seem annoyed at you. He really isn't.

CCS students don't have a GPA!

If you take any Letters & Sciences classes for letter grades, you will have a GPA at the end of each quarter based on those classes. Many Letters & Sciences classes offer you the option of changing your grade to Pass/No Pass, but there are some classes that require you to take them for letter grades.

CCS student publications

By Danielle Miller '10

Spectrum is our college literary magazine. It features art, poetry, essays and prose. It was founded in the 1950's by Marvin Mudrick (CCS's founder) and has published works by writers such as Raymond Carver and William Carlos Williams. Students can submit work to *Spectrum* each year. Posters will be up in the CCS building and emails will be sent out with information on how to join the Spectrum staff and/or submit your work.

Into the Teeth of the Wind is our poetry journal that publishes issues from one to three times a year. It was started by CCS students and is run by them. Information will be posted and sent out for those interested in submitting or helping out.

All about the library

By Danielle Miller '10

The library is one of the most confusing buildings on campus. When you enter the library, the orange elevator serves the right wing, which only has four floors. If you turn left after the check-out desk, you'll find three grey elevators that can take you to all eight floors of the left-hand wing.

The eighth floor of the library has beautiful views of campus, the ocean and the Channel Islands, which make its individual cubicles perfect places to study. The right wing has patio areas on the third and fourth floors that can be nice places to study on warm, sunny days.

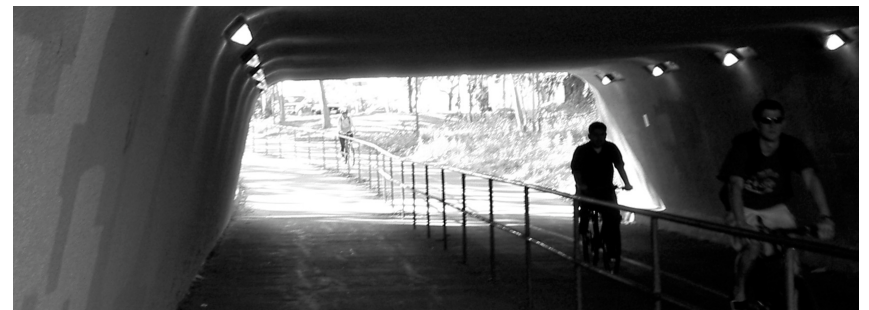
Professors sometimes put books that relate to their courses on reserve. To use these books, go to the front desk and give them the title of the book and the class it is for. You can only use reserve books for a certain number of hours. If you return your reserve books late, the fine is immense.

There is a 24-hour study room at the library. It's on your left just before you enter the automatic doors to the library.

During Dead Week, the week before Finals, the library often gives out free coffee. The free coffee hours will be posted in the library prior to Dead Week. **WARNING:** the library gets intensely crowded during Dead Week and Finals, but it is often the quietest place on campus, or off, during these cram weeks.

There are computers and printers available in the library, but it's often busy, and unlike the CCS printers, these cost money.

To get access to the article databases (a great resource when writing papers) or to use sites such as the Oxford English Dictionary (www.oed.com) off campus, go to the library website and click "Off Campus Login".



Some recommendations for classes

From Britta Gustafson '09

Ling 20A (Intro to Linguistics) and Ling 70 (Language & Society)

Linguistics is the study of language itself, and learning about it can help you understand books at the level of syntax, semantics, and culture along with the usual level of themes, characters, etc. This knowledge has become a useful part of my mental toolbox when reading and writing for Literature classes. Check out the catalog description for Language & Society: “How language defines the relationship of the individual to society; the role language plays in constituting power, hierarchy, ethnicity, gender, ideology, and other aspects of social identity; how speakers use language to display identity and define social context.”

Writing for New Media

Madeleine Sorapure teaches this fun class where you learn some new media theory and do little projects in Photoshop and Flash. It's offered by the Writing Program (separate from the English department), which has a minor in Professional Writing with tracks in Professional Editing, Business Communication, and Technical Communication. If you're interested in this minor, you'll want to look into it early because it has many requirements. Visit the Writing Program office in South Hall and ask about it.

Introduction to Letterpress Printing

CCS Book Arts classes are good breadth choices for Lit majors. When you're setting a poem letter by letter in metal type, the slow process makes you think deeply about the details of the poem! Making prints takes a lot of work, but it's a very word-focused and rewarding type of art.

The Culture of the Copy (Raley), Cross-Disciplinary Models of Literary Interpretation (Liu), Theorizing Adaptation (Ghosh)

These classes in the English department's Literature and Culture of Information specialization are some of the best core classes I've taken at UCSB. They fit very closely to my particular interests, they're taught by great professors who care about helping you think for yourself, and they usually include an option for doing creative work along with traditional essays. If you're interested in nerdy computer things as well as books, I recommend taking as many classes as you can in the LCI specialization.

Evolutionary Medicine and Walking Biology

These CCS Biology classes are great – they're designed for people who don't necessarily have much background knowledge in biology, and they teach how you to think a little bit like a biologist. Evolutionary Medicine is

of general interest because you learn something about why people get sick (and how to think about curing them). The class also helps you develop an understanding of evolution, which is a useful concept to have in your head. Walking Biology is more of a leisurely experience where the class takes a field trip every week to some beautiful and interesting places around Santa Barbara County. You learn about how your surroundings work on an ecological level and generally have a good time adventuring with friends.

From Jordan Young '10

I would recommend to freshmen to not be scared of taking “**specific**” classes. Sometimes it seems strange to take a class in something like “Cuban Women's Writing from 1990-2000,” a class I took in Spring of last year. I had never read any Cuban writing and signed up for the course on a whim. I think that professors who teach specific courses generally know *a lot* about that subject and consequently the classes are *really* interesting. *Don't be afraid of something* just because you think you might not be interested in it. A good teacher can make any topic really interesting, and I learned a lot by taking that particular class.

Letters & Sciences classes: highly recommend **Fradenburg for Chaucer, Hiltner for Milton**. Enjoyed them both — especially Hiltner's environmental approach to Milton.

I like challenging classes and I want freshmen to take them!

From Ellen Guerrero '10

Soc 152A: Human Sexuality. It's a great class that's tailored for the students. If you're at all interested in the subject, continue on to 152B and 152C. There's a possible job opportunity as a grader if you do well.

Diaries into Stories with John Wilson. It's a fun class and a good way to bond with your fellow classmates. Also, it offers a chance to write in a safe environment.

Barry Spacks poetry classes.

Intro to Psychoanalysis. It's a nice introduction to theory. Fradenburg is a kind, considerate, warm professor.

Modern Thought in Narrative. K. Young is a good professor who's really nice. It's an excellent covering of the basics of modernism and has a great reading list.

Narratives of War.

Satan in Literature with Larry Rickels.

Try to take a class with every professor who teaches in CCS.

Secrets of the English department

By Nick Crosby '08

Ah, the English department: the other major that allows you to study literature. The College of Letters & Sciences can seem a vast and scary wilderness, what with its classes in different buildings, midterms, and finals, finals, finals! But not to worry; the English department isn't that intimidating once you get to know it. Here are some of the benefits of taking one or more classes in the English department (and don't forget the Comparative Literature department as well).

Different professors

There is a vast array of professors to choose from in the English department, but they're just as warm and friendly as your local CCS Lit professors. On your first day in class, while professors are going through the normal "Tell us something interesting about yourself" rigmarole, don't hesitate to mention that you're a CCS Lit student — I swear the professor won't ask you to leave. In my experience, most professors are pleasantly surprised to have a CCS student in their class, as we are known to actually do the reading (go figure) and participate in discussion.

Alternative core classes

The consensus among us Lit students seems to be that most English classes will be counted by your advisor for core credit. As long as you assure your advisor that the class will have a sufficient amount of reading and writing (generally at least 15 pages of writing), and that the class is small (not a 200-person lecture class), then it should count. However, different advisors have been known to count classes differently, so be prepared.

Getting a minor in L & S

As a CCS Literature student, you can get a minor or emphasis in a Letters & Sciences program that interests you. In many cases, minors only require 5-6 additional classes in a particular field. Speak to the undergraduate advisor within the particular department to figure out exactly what paperwork you need to fill out (a very nice lady by the name of Ann Wainwright is the undergrad advisor in the English Department, but you probably don't want to try getting a minor in English).

A variety of bonuses

Go forth and reap the benefits of the English Department, and of the

College of Letters and Science in general! There are many pros to taking at least a few, if not many, of your classes in English. Don't forget that CCS's unique grading system can sometimes seem confusing, unusual, or unorthodox to graduate or MFA programs, and it could help to have some kind of GPA from your classes in Letters and Science. Also, you can broaden your horizons by taking as many diverse classes as possible, and CCS is all about broadening your horizons! So go out there, meet a few of your fellow students of English literature, and spread the good word of CCS's brilliance.

An intro to Study Abroad

By Danielle Miller '10

Going abroad for part or all of junior year is a subject that will come up multiple times, and you should take the time to seriously consider the option. There are hundreds of foreign universities you can attend with plenty of Literature classes to entice you.

Many students go abroad to improve foreign language skills. If you have an interest in being fluent in any language, studying abroad is a must. Participate in an immersion program and you'll have the opportunity to take subject classes in your language of choice. For immersion programs, you must complete the lower language classes 1-6.

If immersion programs don't interest you, consider studying in an English-speaking country such as England, Australia, Scotland or Ireland. There are also programs taught in English available in foreign language countries. The UC Center acts as an extension of the University of California abroad and they offer programs taught in English in Spain, Italy, France, China, UK, Sweden and a few others. These programs allow you to take your courses in English and supplementing your studies with lower-level language classes, which also enables students in beginning level language classes at UCSB to go abroad without having completed an entire language sequence.

Wherever you go, immersion program or not, studying abroad will be a valuable experience you cannot get at UCSB. You will not regret it and you will have the time of your life. And a major plus for Literature majors: it gives you something to write about.

The EAP website, www.eap.ucsb.edu, offers more information on programs. You can search programs by your major or subject of interest to find the program and country that might be best for you. Also, the EAP office on the second floor of South Hall is extremely helpful with any questions you have.

