



English Matters

The first English Major Newsletter of the Spring '10 semester should be arriving just as we've finally finished digging ourselves out from under. I'm talking about all that snow, of course—the work of the semester has only just begun!

But the spectacle of all those giant snowdrifts—and the thought of all those stranded commuters—had got us in the English department thinking about a very different form of isolation, one that's so easy to fall into, but just as easy to avoid.

Too many of us just go about our business at John Jay—taking classes, writing papers, and generally muddling through—without taking the time to plan out a coherent and manageable course of study or some concrete and achievable career goals.

Every English Major should be in regular contact with his or her advisor, yet our faculty report that far too many of their advisees are in deep freeze—off hibernating somewhere, perhaps, when they really should be seeking out solid advice about their academics and careers.

So this mid-winter *English Matters* is devoted to English Major advising. If you haven't been in contact with your advisor about your course schedules or your plans post-John Jay, isn't it time you came in from the cold?

Major Notes

WHY YOUR ENGLISH PROFESSORS ARE LONELY

Everybody knows that the 54th Street Annex is out of the way, but it's not so far out of the way that you shouldn't be visiting on a regular basis. Why? To see your faculty advisor. Every English Major has an advisor, and that advisor is there to help you.

How can an academic advisor help you? By sitting down with you and listening to your needs and aspirations, your advisor can:

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Prof. Allison Pease

English Major Advisor

- help you plan the shortest route to graduation
- provide information on pre- and co-requisites for courses
- share strategies for managing course load to improve academic performance
- provide information on careers, scholarships, internships, and post-graduate education
- help you get questions answered and refer you to campus resources

John Jay is a big college and it can be hard to navigate. Let us help you cut through some of the red tape and set you on a path to success.

Don't know who your advisor is? Contact Department Administrator Alicia Zayatz-Kelly, azayatz@jjay.cuny.edu. Then contact your advisor today!

Department News

- As part of the "Justice and Injustice in 1950s America" lecture series, John Jay is hosting an amazing roster of distinguished artists and historians who will be speaking on the efforts to achieve justice in the United States during this transformative decade. Tony Kushner, author of the award-winning play about the AIDS crisis, *Angels in America*, will speak on March 8. Future speakers include the novelist E. L. Doctorow on April 19th and Noam Chomsky on May 3. All talks will be held in the Gerald Lynch Theater at 7pm. For more details, see the series website: <http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/injusticejustice/>

- The Pre-Law Institute organizes events throughout the academic year—way too many to detail here. If you're thinking about a legal career, why not sign up for their listserv and/or Facebook fan page? <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/centersinstitutes/prelaw/>.

The Road Ahead

It's a reasonable question: just what the heck am I going to do with this English degree when I get out of this place? Turns out, the answer is, a whole hell of a lot! "The Road From Here" is a continuing feature of this newsletter, where we explore just some of the many career options that await graduates with English degrees. This issue we speak with Prof. Olivera Jokic, who has been organizing a series of career workshops for English majors that you really ought to know about...

What are the English Major Career Workshops?

English can feel so undefined and broad. The English Department organizes Career Workshops so that our students can meet professionals working in areas for which an English major makes you especially qualified. It is more helpful to learn from the experience of others than to figure everything out on your own. Our speakers continue to tackle the obstacles and make career choices. Workshops are a way for students to gain experience and inspiration from someone whom they otherwise might not have the opportunity to meet.



Prof. Olivera Jokic

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You can also email Prof. Jokic at ojokic@jjay.cuny.edu.

English Matters 2.3 is a more-or-less regular publication of the John Jay English Department for the instruction and delight of students in our major and minor programs. Questions? Comments? Complaints? Want to get involved? Contact the editor, Prof. Al Coppola, acoppola@jjay.cuny.edu.