

New English class emphasizes studies on women writers

By Debbie Duckworth
Staff Writer

A new English class next semester will emphasize "the importance of writing as a social act, a humanistic exercise in communication," according to English instructor Roxanne Dapper. Although the class is subtitled "Breaking the Silences: Women Writing Ourselves," the course is not a women's studies course but rather a composition course focusing on women's writing, said Dapper.

The class is section 4813 of English 124. It is unusual because most composition classes concentrate on mainstream writers, who are mostly male.

"The best writing comes from who we are and we are women, men Black, Latino, White, Asian, Jew, Gentile, we are parents and non-parents," said Dapper. "I believe women especially seek to revise our understanding of 'universal values' and celebrate diversities." She said the new 124 class is specialized to enrich students' diversities rather than "dilute" them.

The course will be the study and

discussion of models to enhance writing competency. "Choosing prose models with interesting topics can be the most compelling aspect of a writing course, spurring students to write in response to other writers' ideas," Dapper said. Mary Wollstonecraft, Alice Walker, Margaret Fuller, Joyce Carol Oates, Virginia Woolf, and Susan Sontag are just a few of the authors to be studied.

Dapper reiterates that the topics pursued in English 124 have little to do with gender, but are on "the nuts and bolts of audience-based prose," the how of effective writing. "I suspect that those students who are interested in learning more about this historically silenced collective voice in letters, or those who'd like to consider a specifically female tradition of writing, or those students who wish to write in an environment of a community of writers who value women's voices will probably be most tempted to take my course," said Dapper.

English 124 fulfills college G.E. requirements and is transferable as CSU unit credits. For more information about this class, contact Dapper at 465-1700, ext.507.