San José State University  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
English 71, Introduction to Creative Writing  
Section 05 Spring 2018

Instructor: 
Sally Ashton, MFA

Office Location: 
FO 222

Telephone: 
924-4491 Please use email ONLY to contact me.

Email: 
Sally.ashton@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: 
Tuesdays/Thursdays 10:30-11:30 and by appt.

Class Days/Time: 
T/Th Noon-1:15pm  FINAL Thursday May 17, 9:45-noon

Classroom: 
BBC 128

GE Category: 
Letters area of Humanities & the Arts

Course Format

Classroom-based Course with Required Technology Enhancements

Students will need a home computer with dependable Internet connectivity to turn in assignments, participate in occasional online workshops, and to access texts, out of class online updates and enhancements for this mainstream course.

Canvas and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as the grammar text, syllabus, handouts, and some assignment instructions can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at http://my.sjsu.edu to learn of any updates and assignments.

Engl 71 Course Description

Introduction to Creative Writing (English 71) is a 3-unit lower-division course designed, adopted, implemented, and administered by the Department of English & Comparative Literature at San Jose State University in accordance with the University’s General Education Program Guidelines to fulfill Core General Education requirements in the Letters area of Humanities & the Arts. Also note that this course is an elective in the English major and Creative Writing minor. It is a pre-requisite for taking upper division Creative Writing workshops.

Section 01: So you want to write? This course will introduce you to techniques writers in all literary genres use to craft works of memorable non-fiction, drama(fiction), and poetry. We will use short form readings, small group workshop, studio assignments, and your own experimental writing—lots of it—to discover strategies common to all three forms.
**Prerequisites:** I recommend at *minimum* the completion of English Composition 1A or equivalent. Excellent composition skills are the basis for any Creative Writing.

**English 71 GE Course Goals (GELO):**

Students enrolled in Introduction to Creative Writing will learn to:

1) Decipher and understand the form and content of assigned literary works;
2) Comprehend the historical and cultural contexts of assigned literary works;
3) Recognize the accomplishments of and issues related to writing by men and women representing diverse cultural traditions;
4) Acquire through both individual and collaborative/workshop efforts of a written and oral nature the skills necessary for reading, discussing, analyzing, interpreting, and—most importantly—emulating and writing works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction;
5) Communicate such skills with clarity and precision;
6) Develop an appreciation of literary works as expressions of human intellect and imagination, and as representations of diverse human cultures;
7) Develop the ability to write literary works that express intellect and imagination and that represent diversity in human cultures;
8) Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work;
9) Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
10) Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while also representing matters specific to a particular culture;
11) Write works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction that are of interest and value to the writer, to other students in the course, and to a diverse reading audience.

**Required Texts and Readings:** **ALL TEXTS MUST BE THE EDITION NOTED.**

**Textbook**

- Course Reader (purchased from Maple Press after first class)
- SJSU Campus Handbook: *The Everyday Writer* by Andrea Lunsford (This is provided through the Writer’s Help tab on Canvas)

**Required Materials**

- 1 Mead Composition Book, College Ruled. (Marble) This course ONLY
- 1 double-pocket folder: This course ONLY
- Stapler: *All work stapled before class*
- Regular internet access
- The ability to print 6 copies of assignments for workshop, often 24 pages/workshop.

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, students are expected to spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in at [http://www.sjsu.edu senate/docs/S12-3.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu senate/docs/S12-3.pdf).
Grading Policy

All work must be submitted on time. Any unexcused late work will be graded down a full letter grade for every day it is late. If there is a reason you cannot make a deadline, contact me BEFORE THE DEADLINE. You must turn in all assignments to pass the class, even though assignments turned in more than 2 days after the due date will earn a “0”.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRADING STATEMENT: In English Department courses, instructors comment on and grade the quality of writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All your writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

Grades given conform to the English Department and university grading policy. The Department of English is committed to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

Creative writing, though subject to the instructor’s individual interpretation, can be evaluated according to general standards used to determine how well a piece of writing “works.” These include: 1) Textual and/or technical competence and eloquence. 2) Imaginative risk. 3) Energy and freshness of language. 4) Effective use of metaphor and other forms of figurative language. 5) Clarity and precision of detail. 6) Capacity for mixed feelings and uncertainty. 7) Naturalness and believability. 8) Appropriateness of style to subject. 10) Compelling audience interest.

A: Creative writing that receives an “A” is likely to:
   - Fulfill all assignment requirements
   - Demonstrate complex, unique and/or insightful approach
   - Function well as a whole
   - Demonstrate engaging voice
   - Incorporate strong word choices
   - Incorporate, where appropriate, striking imagery
   - Lack clichéd or over-used language
   - Incorporate unusual/unique associations that fit the tone of the piece
   Lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

B: Creative writing that receives a “B” is likely to:
   - Fulfill the assignment requirements
   - Demonstrate insightful approach
   - Function generally well as a whole
   - Demonstrate a generally engaging voice
   - Incorporate some strong word choices
   - Use some concrete imagery
   - Mostly lack clichéd or over-used language
   Mostly lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

C: Creative writing that receives a “C” is likely to:
   - Meet the assignment requirements
   - Be derivative of other works
   - Not completely function as a whole (some parts may be underdeveloped)
   - Incorporate some strong, and some weaker, word choices
   - Lack concrete imagery
   - Include clichéd or over-used language
   Have some spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.
D: Creative writing that receives a “D” is likely to:
- Not fulfill the assignment requirements
- Not function as a whole
- Be a cursory response that demonstrates lack of motivation and/or poor understanding of the assignment

F: No response.

**Final grades** in this section will be the product of the above factors based on a 4pt scale where 4=A:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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**Course Assignments**

Assignment descriptions will be distributed and discussed for each major assignment. Assignments will cover informal and formal writing. Each student will revise and submit the following new writing. This includes bringing copies for workshop and participating in workshop. (SLO #3, 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>% of Course Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Department Assessment</td>
<td>One poem Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Nonfiction: Memoir(linked vignettes) and 2 graded two-page sketches</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama: 4 page play and 2 graded two-page sketches</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Poetry Packet: One each Ghazal, Sonnet, Free Verse with 2-page Reflection</td>
<td>3 revised poems</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Points: Class participation*, Quizzes, Conference,** Workshops, Poetry Reading, Self-Portraits, 2 Event Papers, and assorted short assignments typically worth 10-50 pts each</td>
<td>(see below)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal (see below)</td>
<td>2000+ informal</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
*Participation equates to engaging in class discussion, asking questions, and completing work done outside of class, including homework, reader responses, and close reading. In-class exercises and quizzes also make up the participation grade. **Evaluate your own participation:**
A – fully engaged; provides regular and helpful questions and comments
B – active listening; occasional, pertinent questions and comments
C – attentiveness questionable, **little questions or comments** posed
D – unprepared for class, disengaged
F – regularly absent, both physically and mentally. Asleep

**Workshops** will give students the opportunity to perform revision and critique toward final edits in a small group context. (SLO # 4, 5, 7, 11) effects **BOTH** genre grade and participation grade

**Daily Reading:** Selections chosen from our texts, visiting authors, and selected outside material are required not only for your success in this class, but your success as a writer. Regular written responses are required. (SLO # 1, 2, 5)

**Journal:** You are required to keep a well-organized journal/notebook in which you will do assigned creative writing activities inside and outside class. You will also record your responses to the assigned readings here. You are urged to write down quotes from your readings that you may want to share with your classmates. You can also use your journal to develop drafts of new material or simply to react to what is working in your imagination as you respond to ideas and work presented by others in the course. Your notebook is due as indicated on the syllabus. You **will be graded on the quality and quantity of your entries.** (SLO # 1, 2, 3, 5)

2 **Literary Event Response Papers:** (SLO # 1, 3, 5) 50 points each.

Required conference in my office to discuss progress and concerns: Student’s responsibility to set time with me by midterm and to bring in work to review.

**Final Exam:** As part of your final experience in the course, Each student will give an in-class performance/reading from their final poetry packet at the end of the semester. (SLO # 1, 2)

**Extra Credit** Attending ONE additional approved author reading with written response. (LO 2; diversity) Extra credit will **not** change a grade from failing to passing. 20 points. Also, recitation of a memorized poem at the Final poetry reading, 20 points.

**RESOURCES FOR LITERARY EVENT SCHEDULES:**
- [www.litart.org](http://www.litart.org) (Center for Literary Arts at SJSU)
- [http://www.pesj.org/calendar.html](http://www.pesj.org/calendar.html) (Poetry Center San Jose)
- [http://www.sjsu.edu/english/events](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/events) (English Department Events listed)
- [http://www.livesv.com/categories/index/6/0/LITERATURE](http://www.livesv.com/categories/index/6/0/LITERATURE) Bay Area Literary Events
- [http://poetryflash.org/](http://poetryflash.org/) Northern CA literary events including the Bay Area [Active](http://www.keplers.com/premier-events)

**Assignment Format**
(this includes all written work outside the Journal)
* All prose work must be typed, double spaced; final poetry is single spaced
* Use a 12-point Times Roman font
* Use standard MLA essay heading format.
* Papers must be single-sided for the teacher (but copies for classmates for peer revision may be double-sided)
* Staple your papers BEFORE class. I do not accept unstapled work. (no paper clips, bent corners) Please buy a stapler. (LO 3, 5)
**Class Workshop Procedures:** For each unit (poetry, fiction, nonfiction) the class will divide into groups of approximately five students each. These will serve as your workshop groups. Your workshop group will consist of different students each unit, so you will get to read work by all of your classmates. Every time you turn in a piece of your work, you will bring enough copies for everyone in your workshop group and your teacher and yourself (six copies, usually). We will critique the pieces at home (writing directly on the manuscripts) and discuss them in workshop groups during the following class period. At the end of the discussion, you will get to keep the marked-up copies of your work. I have zero tolerance for late arrival to Workshop: you will be asked to leave. (LO 1)

**Attendance and Classroom Policies**

**Your Responsibility If You’re Absent.** If you miss class, contact a classmate to get notes, assignments, etc. It is your responsibility to figure out what’s going on and to show up prepared the next class session. Please do not ask me to do extra things for you if you choose not to come to class.

**No Work by Email. No work in my mailbox. No exceptions.** I do not accept work by email or in my campus mailbox except as prearranged around absences. If you need to miss a class session, ask a classmate to turn in your classwork and to collect handouts and assignments for you. Otherwise, turn in the paper as “late” next class session.

**Always bring your journal and required texts to class.** These are required for participation. If you’re not prepared to contribute to the class, be prepared to be asked to leave for the day.

**Classroom Protocol**

Come to class On Time. Late arrival is irresponsible. This is an INTERNET FREE course. Don’t check or send texts while in class; use common sense and collegial behavior. Please do not eat in class.

**Academic integrity: In a word, PLAGIARISM: DON’T DO IT**

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The **University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2** at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. If you plagiarize, you will fail the assignment and possibly the course.

Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The **Student Conduct and Ethical Development website** is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.

**Be Fully Present No electronic devices are to be on/used/visible during class.** Infractions will result in being dismissed from class.

**University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, recording of class and public sharing of Instructor Material, religious holidays, etc., is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ **Syllabus Information web page** at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/*
The schedule is subject to change with advance notice in class and follow-up email. Check it.

Abbreviations used in Schedule:
“IW”: Imaginative Writing; “CR”: course reader
BRING assigned texts and Journal to EVERY class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Homework Readings, Assignments DUE this date</th>
<th>Topics and Considerations Discussed in Class this date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Th 1/25</td>
<td>Purchase ALL materials: Texts; Required Journal; Pocket Folder Course Reader: Maple Press, 330 So. Tenth St. San Jose Begin reading for Tuesday’s class, below.</td>
<td>Introduction to the course Sound &amp; Sense, Sense &amp; Syntax Review Syllabus Questionnaire Bios, 3X5</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Tu 1/30</td>
<td>Purchase Course Booklet from Maple Press, 330 So. Tenth St. San Jose AND all other required materials: BRING TO CLASS. 3X5 picture ID card Reading: IW Chapter 1 pp. 1-14</td>
<td>IMAGE; Freewriting Assign Daily lines: Observations using 5 senses, 17 syllables. In class writing p. 12 1.7; p. 14 Image Journal instructions: Computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Th 2/1</td>
<td>Reading: IW Chapter 2 pp. 15-27 and Dillard p. 28 Journal: Daily lines per 1/27</td>
<td>IMAGE studio. Journal work &amp; 2.5 Reading discussion, Journal writing, small group work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tu 2/6</td>
<td>Reading: IW pp. 94-109 and Bausch 118 Journal: Daily lines as per 8/27, contd; 4.2 and IW p. 127 Try This 4.13 “Humiliation” RR Bausch: Character traits</td>
<td>CHARACTER: Chapter 4 Conflict and Desire; 4.4 2.8 QUIZ &amp; Supply Check Assign Character Sketch In-Class Assign OVERHEARD LINES (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Th 2/8</td>
<td>Due: Character Sketch draft, 5 copies Reading: Hampl pp. 176-179 and p. 208 The Workshop Journal: Daily Lines: 5 different overheard lines of dialog</td>
<td>CHARACTER: Conflict &amp; Desire, contd. Workshop JOURNAL: Self-check Grade; Reading Responses</td>
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<td>Th 2/8</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENT 7-8:30pm MLK rm 225</td>
<td>Natalie Baszile, author of Queen Sugar. Reading &amp; conversation</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Event/Assignment</td>
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|   2/11 |   | **LITERARY EVENT**  
5-6:30pm Café Stritch 374 S 1st St S.J.  
Valentine’s Reading, Sally Ashton and Nils Peterson, poetry |
|   2/13 | Tu  | Due: **Character Sketch** final copy, stapled.  
Reading: IW pp.135-147.  
Journal: 5.4 and 5.1 **draw map** and write responses in **Journal**  
**SETTING:** Chapter 5  
Assign: Setting Daily Lines: (5 sets)  
Assign **Setting**  
RR Carter |
|   2/15 | Th  | Library Studio-20pts  
Reading: IW Carter 153  
Journal: Daily Lines: Setting  
RR: Carter TYPED, Turned in 10pts.  
**SETTING:**  
LIBRARY studio 20pts |
|   2/20 | Tu  | Due: **Setting**, final copy, stapled.  
Reading: IW pp. 166-175 & CR E.E. Miller; IW Komunyakaa 157; Daniel 168; French 170; (ALL)  
Journal: RR choose one to analyze for craft elements discussed in class to date.  
**STORY:** Chapter 6  
Character, plot, setting  
Assign Daily Lines (5) “Whatever happened to…” |
|   2/22 | Th  | Reading: IW Hass 187  
Journal: RR Hass craft elements  
**Studio**  
Video  
Assign Short-Short (CR) |
|   2/27 | Tu  | Due: **Short-short draft** / 6 copies  
Reading: Hemingway pp. 279  
Journal: RR Hemingway  
**STORY**  
**Workshop**  
Assign daily lines with no Adjectives, adverbs, but Strong Verbs(no counting)  
Nick Flynn |
|   3/1 | Th  | Due: **Short-short**, final copy  
Reading: IW pp. 225-231(setting) and CR Nick Flynn  
Journal: IW p. 225 “Warm-up” AND  
RR: Flynn  
**CREATIVE NONFICTION:** Chapter 8  
Memoir and Personal Essay; Scene and Summary  
8.3; 7.1 “F, N, P”  
Assign Daily Lines (5) one vignette scene due 3/6 |
|   3/6 | Tu  | Due: **Vignette Scene**, typed. (20 pts)  
Reading: IW pp. 195-202 & 263-266 and Percy 112  
Journal: RR compare/contrast Percy/Flynn  
**DEVELOPMENT:** Chapter 7 |
|   3/8 | Th  | NO CLASS to comp for 2 required out of class Literary Events  
NO MEETING |
|   3/13 | Tu  | Reading: IW pp.234-236 and Atwood 245  
Journal: 8.4  
RR: Atwood  
**CREATIVE NONFICTION:**Fact & Truth  
In-class writing: |
|   3/15 | Th  | Due: **Journal 1 Memoir draft** 1 copy stapled to 2 blank sheets.  
Reading: IW 233 and 263-266; CR McDuffie  
**Peer Review/Flash Workshop**  
7.9, 7.10, 7.11, Ta-Nahisi video |
|   3/20 | Tu  | Do all the following: 7.9 and 7.10 and 7.11 on flash draft.  
Due: **Memoir Final with self-critique attached**;  
**VOICE.**  
**Quiz 2** Craft Elements, Readings |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENT 7-8:30pm MLK 225. Reception follows in MLK Steinbeck Center</td>
<td>Don George, author of The Way of Wanderlust and editor at large for National Geographic Traveler</td>
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<td>3/22</td>
<td>Reading: IW pp. 259-266 AND IW 44-45 Journal: RR on narrative elements of “French Fries”</td>
<td>DRAMA vs FICTION: Story and plot In class writing Story Outline/Story Board Assign Email Prompts</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/26-3/30</td>
<td>Spring break</td>
<td>Enjoy! Keep up with assignments due 4/3</td>
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<td>4/2</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENT 4-5pm Steinbeck Center</td>
<td>Javier Zamora poetry reading,</td>
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<td>4/3</td>
<td>Due: Literary Event Paper#1 (50 points) and Monologue, 2 pages Hard copy AND on Canvas Reading: IW pp. 328-352 Journal: plot&amp;character summary freewrite “The Proposal”</td>
<td>DRAMA: assign Play QUIZ: Reading Writing Studio</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENT 7-8pm CL 111</td>
<td>Juan Felipe Herrera poetry reading and conversation</td>
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<td>4/10</td>
<td>Due: Play Draft 1, 4pages. 5 copies My copy on Canvas; mark ONE page to critique. Reading: “Good Morning, Romeo” IW 356-362</td>
<td>Elements of literary prose review Revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>Reading: Careful reading and in-line written critique of each of small group’s drafts AND IW 203-207 Journal: 2 lines of iambic Pentameter</td>
<td>DRAMA Workshop QUIZ 3 Elements of Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENTS (2) Legacy of Poetry Day 1) Hammer Theater Café 5:00 – 6:30 PM AND 2) 7-8:30pm Hammer Theater Center</td>
<td>1.) Legacy of Poetry Day Reading 2) Peter Balakian, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for Ozone Journal. Reading and conversation with SJSU President Mary Papazian. ($10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>Assignment</td>
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<td>4/17</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Due: <strong>Play with self-critique attached.</strong> Reading: Ch.10 IW pp. 297-302 and Stem p. 318 Typed and handed in: IW p. 318-319 “Try this” A replacement poem.</td>
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<td>4/19</td>
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<td>LITERARY EVENT, 4-5pm. Steinbeck Center</td>
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<td>4/23</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>LITERARY EVENT, 4-5pm MLK Library</td>
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<td>4/24</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Due: <strong>Sonnet, 6 copies</strong> Reading: Journal: Daily lines-4 lines in iambic pentameter, one each ending on bed, light, head, night</td>
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<td>5/1</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Due: <strong>Ghazal, 6 copies</strong> Reading: IW pp. 310-313 and IW Poems: p. 320-325: Hoagland, Paley, Belieu, Olds, Laird Journal: RR Choose your favorite poem from above and describe why. Discuss the poem in terms of linebreak, leap, turn, image, sound art.Journal Self-Check</td>
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<td>5/3</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Reading: IW 305-307 The Poetic Line Journal: Complete minimum Email PROMPTS</td>
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<td>5/8</td>
<td>Tu</td>
<td>Due: <strong>Free Verse Poem, 6 copies</strong> Reading: IW pp. 313-316 -Type out fave poem from 5/1. Save. Separate into sentences. Save. Break poem into 3 word lines. Save Break poem into lines of 10-13 syllables. Save. Staple doc into your journal. (continued next page)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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| 5/10      | LAST DAY OF CLASS Due: JOURNAL  
Any extra credit; English Assessment Revision  
Reading: 211-218  
Bring 1 copy of each poem’s current draft. |
| 5/17      | UNIVERSITY FINAL: Poetry Reading  
Due: Revised Poetry Packet with 2 page reflection. Literary Event Paper #2 50pts.  
Thursday, May 17 0945-1200 |

Revision and Reading Studio  
Revising Poetry 10.9  
**Quiz:** Poetry Forms

YOU, on time. Do not be late.  
**Final period** ends when presentations are complete.

Final Exam Schedule [http://info.sjsu.edu/static/policies/final-exam-schedule-spring.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/policies/final-exam-schedule-spring.html)