Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Judith Georges
Office Location: Clark Hall (CL) 414H
Telephone: (408) 924-4780
Email: judith.georges@sjsu.edu (best way to reach me)
Office Hours: M/W/TH 4:00-5:00 or by appointment
Class Days/Time: T/TH 1:30-2:45
Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH) 357

Prerequisites: Completion of core GE, ENGL 2 (with a grade of C or better), satisfaction of Writing Skills Test and upper division standing. HUM 100W must be passed with C or better to satisfy the CSU Graduation Writing Assessment requirement (GWAR).

Course Format

This is not an online class, but you will need a computer to access email and the course website on Canvas. You are responsible for keeping your email address updated in MySJSU and regularly checking email and Canvas to receive course materials and announcements.


Course Description

I describe this course as “serious fun.” It is serious because we will challenge ourselves to become more conscious of the ways in which American popular culture mirrors and shapes the beliefs, values, desires, expectations, and actions of Americans as well as other nations. It is fun because its focus is on aspects of our culture that we enjoy such as music, art, language, celebrations, sports, fashion, popular literature, television, film, and other arts and activities that Americans create.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

CLO 1: Analyze how a diverse range of popular American art forms and ritualistic activities impact American attitudes and actions.
CLO 2: Examine the role that American popular culture plays in a global context.
CLO 3: Evaluate the development and practices of consumerism in relation to American popular culture.

CLO 4: Communicate effectively through written discourse.

CLO 5: Communicate effectively through oral discourse.

Required Texts

3. Occasional sources posted on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Assignment due dates are posted on the Course Schedule below and on Canvas under Assignments. For details regarding SJSU expectations for course requirements and assignments, refer to University Syllabus Policy S16-9 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf.

1. **Essay 1 (15%)**: *The Hunger Games and Civil Disobedience* (2.5-3 pages). Prompt provided.

2. **Essay 2 (15%)**: *Searching for Sugar Man* (2.5-3 pages). Prompt provided.

3. **Research Essay (20%)**: Individual research contribution to group presentation (3.5-4 pages). Prompt provided.

4. **Group Oral Presentation (15%)**: Groups will decide presentation topics under direction. Prompt provided.

5. **Danesi Journals (25%)**: Prompt provided (10 of 12 journals required). No makeups permitted.

6. **Classroom Participation Activities (10%)**: Various in-class written activities and oral participation.

*University Policy S06-4* (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf) states, “There shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless specifically exempted by the college dean who has curricular responsibility for the course. **Class will meet during the final examination period to complete group oral presentations and student assessments.**

Grading Information

Essays will be evaluated according to the following criteria as applicable:

- **Comprehensiveness.** Are all required elements of the assignment fully addressed?
- **Coherence.** Are ideas organized and expressed clearly, smoothly, and logically?
- **Conciseness.** Are ideas and information succinctly presented?
- **Sophistication.** Does the work contain a fully developed, non-trivial argument supported by specific and relevant evidence?
- **Diction.** Are sentence structures and words accurate, complex, formal, and appropriate?
- **Mechanics.** Are spelling, grammar, and punctuation standard and correct?
- **Method.** Has research been conducted properly and as instructed?
- **Formatting.** Has the MLA citation format been correctly applied?
Oral presentations will be assessed by both your instructor and classmates with criteria provided in the prompt. The instructor will assess participation in classroom activities based on the quality and frequency of your contributions.

**Grade Determination**

Journals will be graded on a 10-point scale (see prompt for criteria) and class participation on a 100-pt. scale. Essays and oral presentations will receive both letter and number grades as follows:

- A+ (97-100) A (93-96) A- (90-92)
- B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82)
- C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72)
- F (0-59)

For guidelines concerning SJSU policy on class attendance and grading, refer to [University Syllabus Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) and [University policy F15-12](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf)

**Student Resources**

**Humanities Librarian:** Peggy Cabrera [mailto: peggy.cabrera@student.sjsu.edu](mailto: peggy.cabrera@student.sjsu.edu)

**Internet Grammar Guide:** [http://www.world-english.org/grammar.htm](http://www.world-english.org/grammar.htm)

**Purdue OWL (MLA):** [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/)

**King Library Plagiarism Tutorial and Quiz:** [http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/index.html](http://tutorials.sjlibrary.org/tutorial/index.html)

**Classroom and Assignment Protocols**

Attend class regularly.

Arrive promptly.

Bring loose-leaf notebook paper, pen, highlighter, and assigned texts to each class session unless otherwise instructed.

*Mute cell phones* and place all electronics *out of sight* at the start of each session. Exception: e-readers containing assigned texts.

Alert me if you know in advance that you must arrive late or leave class early. Email me as soon as possible if you are absent from consecutive classes.

If you miss a class session, obtain notes, assignments, and instructions from reliable classmates. Contact me for assistance with academic difficulties.
Contact me if you wish to schedule an appointment to discuss assignments and issues pertaining to the course or in advance of its due date should you require a grade check signature.

_All sources quoted, paraphrased, or summarized must be cited and fully documented._ Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, which is a breach of academic ethics with significant consequences. I am required to report evident transgressions.

Save all graded papers until you receive your final course grade.

There are no extra credit assignments for this course.

Late papers will not be accepted under normal circumstances. Exceptions may be granted for special circumstances after private consultation with me, but not on a continual basis. Late assignments must be submitted within one week of the original due date and the assignment grade ceiling will be lowered in most cases.

Papers may not be electronically submitted under any circumstances without permission. _Never send a paper via email or Canvas unless otherwise directed._

**University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/)

**Additional Student Resources**

_Some course assignments will require access to the Internet and/or a DVD player._

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc) located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

**SJSU Peer Connections**

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space is also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).
Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu for more information.

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

**SJSU Counseling Services**

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling.
AMS 179: American Popular Culture, Section 1, Spring 2017 Course Schedule

The schedule may be modified with timely notice via class announcement, Canvas or email. All assignments are due the day on which they are listed.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Introduction to “Serious Fun”</td>
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</table>
| 2    | 1/31 | **What Is American Pop Culture?**  
Reading: Danesi, 1-20 (to Pop Culture, Material Culture, etc.) |
| 2    | 2/2  | Reading: Danesi, 20-34  
Journal 1 due |
| 3    | 2/7  | **Explaining Pop Culture**  
Reading: Danesi, 35-53 (to Semiotic Approaches) |
| 3    | 2/9  | Reading: Danesi, 53-67  
Journal 2 due |
| 4    | 2/14 | **The Business of Pop Culture**  
Reading: Danesi, 69-83 (to Celebrity Culture) |
| 4    | 2/16 | Reading: Danesi, 84-94  
Journal 3 due |
| 5    | 2/21 | **Popular Print Culture**  
Reading: Danesi, 95-115 (to Magazines) |
| 5    | 2/23 | Reading: Danesi, 115-123  
Journal 4 due |
| 6    | 2/28 | **The Hunger Games** (Collins) |
| 6    | 3/2  | Reading (see Canvas): “Civil Disobedience” (Thoreau) |
| 7    | 3/7  | **Radio Culture**  
Reading: Danesi, 125-135 (to The Radio Stage)  
*The Hunger Games* essay due |
| 7    | 3/9  | Reading: Danesi, 135-144  
Class Activity: Oral Presentation Group Formations  
Journal 5 due |
| 8    | 3/14 | **Pop Music**  
Reading: Danesi, 145-156 (to Social Change) |
| 8    | 3/16 | Reading: Danesi, 156-169  
Class Activity: Oral Presentation Group Planning  
Journal 6 due |
<p>| 9    | 3/21 | <strong>American Pop Culture in the Global Village: Searching for Sugar Man</strong> |
| 9    | 3/23 | <em>Searching for Sugar Man</em> (continued) |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/27 - 3/31</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td><strong>Cinema and Video</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Danesi, 171-189 (to Postmodernism)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><em>Searching For Sugar Man essays due</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Reading: Danesi, 189-200</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 7 due</strong></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>4/11</td>
<td><strong>Television</strong></td>
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<td>Reading: Danesi, 201-216 (to Television as Social Text)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Reading: Danesi, 216-225</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 8 due</strong></td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4/18</td>
<td><strong>Advertising and Branding</strong></td>
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<td>Reading: Danesi, 227-237 (to Branding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Reading: Danesi, 237-246</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 9 due</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/25</td>
<td><strong>Pop Language</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading: Danesi (entire chapter)</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 10 due</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td><strong>Online Pop Culture</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading: Danesi (entire chapter)</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 11 due</strong></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td><strong>Forever Pop</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reading: Danesi (entire chapter)</td>
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<td><strong>Journal 12 due</strong></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td><strong>Pop Culture, Baseball, and Civil Religion</strong></td>
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<td>Reading (see Canvas): “The Green Fields of the Mind” (Giamatti)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>5/9</td>
<td><strong>Pop Culture and Fashion</strong></td>
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<td>Reading (see Canvas): “A Law More Nice Than Just” (Fern/Parton)</td>
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<td>Class Activity: Funky Fashion Show</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>5/11</td>
<td><strong>Group Meetings</strong></td>
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<td>Presentation Research papers due</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/16</td>
<td>**Group Presentations: “Pop Culture and ____”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>5/23</td>
<td>**Group Presentations: “Pop Culture and ____”</td>
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<td>12:15-2:30</td>
<td>“Serious Fun” Forever!</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><em>Bring a bag lunch and a drink! (I’ll bring dessert.)</em></td>
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