San José State University  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
ENGL 193, Section 2, Senior Seminar—Fall 2009

Instructor:  Paul Douglass  
Office Location:  MLK Jr. Library Room 590 (Center for Steinbeck Studies)  
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Email:  Paul.Douglass@sjsu.edu  
Office Hours:  W: 3:00 - 4:30 PM  
Class Day/Time:  W: 4:30 - 7:15 PM  
Classroom:  Health Building 405  
Course Code Number:  44281

COURSE DESCRIPTION: LITERATURE AND SELF-REFLECTION

Culminating course for English majors, requiring them to reflect on their experience and their progress toward meeting the Department Learning Goals (attached). Each student will
- participate in reading groups, writing workshops, and other activities
- write a critical essay
- submit a portfolio of writing from previous courses taken in the major
- revise one of those portfolio selections extensively
- write an introduction to and notes for the portfolio
- give feedback on the major and its learning goals

REQUIRED TEXTS

Hellman, Lillian. *The Children’s Hour*.  
Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.  
*MLA Handbook*, seventh ed.  
Prose, Francine. *Reading Like a Writer*.  
Say, Allen. *Stranger in the Mirror*.  

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to articulate the relationship of their personal experiences to the goals of the department for majors, to write more effectively, to
recite from memory a poem of fourteen lines or greater, to articulate their views of the importance of memorization and of the revision process in writing, to evaluate objectively movie adaptations of literary works, and to cite examples from their own experience of effective service learning and research.

LIBRARY LIAISON

Toby Matoush: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, 808-2096

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the Disability Resource Center to establish record of their disability.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University's Policy on Academic Integrity (strictures against cheating, copying, submitting work done in previous courses, and plagiarizing) is summarized in the Catalog and may be viewed online at HTTP://WWW.SA.SJSU.EDU/DOWNLOAD/JUDICIAL_AFFAIRS/ACADEMIC_INTEGRITY_POLICY_S07-2.PDF. The work you present in this course must be your own. I will follow the University's policy by taking specific action myself (lowering grades or turning in a failing grade for the course) and by reporting cheating or plagiarism to the Dean of Student Services.

GRADING

Specific grading criteria for assignments are indicated in the descriptions below. Late papers and make-up exams will normally be lowered one full grade unless you have made prior arrangements or provide evidence of an emergency. The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the 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. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC (No Credit) shall replace D or F. In such classes, NC shall also substitute for W (Withdrawal) because neither grade (NC or W) affects students' GPA. In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course grades will be calculated thus:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Work &amp; Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Me: An Expanding Autobiography</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Book that Changed my Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practicum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revision Essay</td>
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<td>Original Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final/Portfolio</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Class Work and Participation
Come to class having read the day’s assignment and bringing a brief reader’s response or comment in writing. Participate in small-group or full-class discussions; in either situation, individual students may be called upon by the instructor to answer a question, interpret a passage, express an opinion, or make an observation. In class work will include occasional short writing assignments. Grading criteria: 1) knowledge of texts as demonstrated by oral and written comments and questions; 2) demonstrated responsibility in meeting course deadlines and requirements, including written work, readings for class, sharing a picture book, memorizing a poem, and participating in book groups; and 3) participation in small-group discussions as observed by the instructor.

Me: An Expanding Autobiographical Exercise
Who are you—in twenty-five words? How about 200 words? In 500 words? In this twisty little exercise, you will write your autobiography three times, each time at greater length. Submit via email as a Word document or plain text file. Grading criteria: Submission of work by deadlines and within word limits.

The Book that Changed My Life
Write a short personal essay on a book that made a difference in your life. 3-5 pp. Grading criteria: Show knowledge of the text; write clearly; give examples and explanations of how the work made a difference to you.

Practicum (Service Learning)
Take your experience and ability as an English major out there and do something. Volunteer to read poetry or fiction out loud in a school classroom or public library. Help create a brochure for a nonprofit or government organization. Offer to meet with a high school literary or drama club. Help to run an event on campus with the department’s Poets and Writers group or the Center for Literary Arts. Propose what you want to do. Then provide your own and an independent observer’s commentary on your activity (not a friend or relative). Grading criteria: Submitting proposal in writing, performing activity, providing descriptions written by self and an objective other.

Book Group
You will join with three or four other members of the class in selecting a book you have always wanted to read, and meeting to discuss it with your peers and the instructor. Book groups will meet during class time as shown on the calendar. Grading criteria: active participation in group, completion of the reading, submission of clearly-written self-evaluation afterward.

Revision Essay:
Here's your chance at a do-over in five steps:
1. Select a paper written in the major in a previous course.
2. Write a short analysis of that paper (1-2 pp.): evaluate its strengths and its weaknesses based on your objective re-reading of it, not solely on the instructor's comments.
3. Write a plan for revising the paper. Keep in mind that revising means re-imagining the paper, a rethinking of the topic/subject in some significant way—one that goes significantly beyond correcting its "errors." Consider, for instance, how the paper might benefit from looking at the topic/subject through a different theoretical lens; or how it might be profitably expanded to include other texts; or how its conclusions could be strengthened by additional research or
knowledge you have gained since originally writing it, etc.
4. Make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your analysis and plan in the week after submitting it. We can talk on the phone too, if your schedule makes that more amenable.
5. Write the revision and turn it in, with the original and a short (1 page) statement explaining what you did and why.

**Original Essay:**
Open Topic. Propose an essay of 8-10 pp. dealing with a text or issue that engages the theme of the seminar. Essay must have bibliography with at least five items and make use of quotations from research with proper citations. Grading criteria: inclusion of at least five items in your bibliography, specific citation of sources, using the MLA parenthetical note system, knowledge and understanding of the texts discussed as evidenced by clear writing, logical paragraphing, and correctness of English usage. *You must turn in a draft of this essay for feedback.* The final draft will be due when you submit your portfolio. See calendar for due dates.

**Final/Portfolio:**

The English 193 Portfolio should demonstrate the ways in which you have met the Department of English and Comparative Literature’s Learning Goals. It should contain the following:
1. A cover page.
2. A Table of Contents.
3. Tabs or dividers that coordinate the Table of Contents with the portfolio examples. If you decide to submit in electronic form, these can be hyperlinks or some other form of navigation.
4. An overall introduction that comments on the portfolio’s contents and reflects on your experiences within the major
5. Examples of graded written work from at least five other courses taken in the major (with professors’ comments)
6. The significant revision of one of the examples (which is also an English 193 graded assignment).
8. Short introductions to each of the examples (including the revision and the 193 critical paper) that comment on the assignments’ challenges, what you did to meet those challenges, and how meeting those challenges relates to one or more of the department learning goals.
9. A list of courses taken in the major.

Please remove all staples from portfolio examples. Grading criteria: fulfillment of the above list of requirements, effective writing.
ENGLISH 193: FALL 2009 CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>Introductions and Explanations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
<td><em>Stranger in the Mirror</em></td>
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<td>► Bring a Picture Book for Sharing and Discussion.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>► “Me” Version One Due.</td>
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<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td><em>The Book that Changed My Life.</em></td>
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<td>► “Me” Version Two Due.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>► Book Groups Finalized.</td>
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<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td><em>Invention of Hugo Cabret.</em></td>
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<td>► Practicum Proposal Due.</td>
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<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td><em>The Color of the Sea.</em></td>
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<td>► “Me” Version Three Due.</td>
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<td>► John Hamamura speaks in MLK Jr. Library, Rm. 225, at 1:30 and 7:00 PM.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>Book Group Session One.</td>
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<td>► Original Essay Proposal Due.</td>
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<td>Oct. 7</td>
<td><em>Incidents in the Life of A Slave Girl.</em></td>
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<td>► “The Book that Changed My Life” Essay Due.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 14</td>
<td><em>Reading Like a Writer.</em></td>
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<td>► Revision Paper with Analysis and Plan for Workshop.</td>
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<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Book Group Session Two.</td>
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<td>► Poem Memorization Due.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td><em>Reading Like a Writer</em>, conclusion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Book Group Session Three.</td>
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<td>► Revision of Paper from Earlier Coursework Due.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
<td><em>The Children’s Hour.</em></td>
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<td>Nov. 18</td>
<td>► Draft of Original Essay Due.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 25</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 2</td>
<td>Practicum: Sharing and Discussion. Final thoughts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>► Deadline for Practicum Assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 11</td>
<td>► SENIOR SEMINAR PORTFOLIO DUE (INCLUDES ORIGINAL ESSAY)</td>
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STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

I. Skills

- Ability to read texts closely and to articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature and rhetoric.
- Ability to explicate texts written in a wide variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes.
- Ability to recognize and appreciate the importance of major literary genres, subgenres, and periods.
- Ability to respond imaginatively to the content and style of texts.
- Ability to write clearly, effectively, and imaginatively, and to adjust writing style appropriately to the content and nature of the subject.
- Ability to develop and carry out research projects and to articulate them within appropriate conceptual and methodological frameworks, including the ability to recognize when information is needed, and to locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.
- Ability to analyze texts other than literary or rhetorical: for example, political, journalistic, commercial, technical, etc.
- Ability to read and speak a language other than English in order to understand the structure of English, gain access to other literatures for comparative purposes, and satisfy requirements for a post-baccalaureate or credential school.

II. Knowledge

- Understanding of the historical development of the English language and of literature written in English from Old English to the present.
- Understanding of the relations between culture, history and texts, including ideological and political aspects of representation, economic processes of textual production, dissemination and reception, and cross-fertilization with other arts: architecture, sculpture, music, film, painting, dance, and theatre.
- Understanding of the twofold nature of textual analysis: 1) objective study from varied analytical perspectives; 2) subjective experience of the aesthetic reality of the text.
- Familiarity with a wide range of works of British, American, and World literature, including folk and popular forms.
- Familiarity with a wide range of literary terms and categories relating to literary history, theory, and criticism, including figurative language and prosody.
- Familiarity with the nature of the canon and of canon-formation, including issues of culture, history, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

III. Experiences

- Participation in face-to-face exchanges of ideas with faculty and peers, including discussion groups and collaborative writing activities, making use of the cultural resources of the department and the broader university as appropriate.
- Engagement in independently-conceived projects, including the stating of a problem or issue and all the steps involved in organizing, synthesizing, summarizing, and analyzing information in order to communicate conclusions effectively to a larger audience.

IV. Long-Term Goals

- An enduring interest in language and literature.
- A sense of the presence of the literary and rhetorical past.
- An increasing awareness of the depth and complexity of human existence, perceived across the boundaries of time, place, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
- Long-term interest and involvement in aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual matters as well as in social and political issues.
- A developing understanding of the ability of great literature and of concentrated language study to awaken and challenge readers and auditors to struggle with profound questions of human identity and values.
- A personal critical perspective, and a sense of intellectual independence and momentum.