

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing, Section 06, Spring 2021

Instructor: Kristin FitzPatrick Ezell

Office Location: Zoom

Email: Kristin.fitzpatrickezell@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00-12:50 p.m. and Thursday 1:30-2:20 p.m.

Class Days/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Class Location: Zoom

Ge/SJSU Studies Category: Letters C2

Zoom link: Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/85836584206>

[See the end of this document for more information about joining Zoom meetings.]

Welcome to Creative Writing!

English 71 Course Description:

Examinations of works of poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction as expression of human intellect and imagination, to comprehend the historic and cultural contexts, and recognize issues related to writing by men and women of diverse cultural traditions. Students will also write poetry, creative nonfiction, and a short fiction.

Introduction to Creative Writing (English 71) is a 3-unit lower-division course designed 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 "C2" Letters area of Humanities & the Arts.

English Learning Outcomes:

We'll work toward collective understandings of our reading and writing and the ways they explore historical, interpersonal, racial, gender-related, economic, and artistic issues on the page. The reading and writing projects are designed to challenge our perspectives and help us understand the views of others. I hope to create an inclusive and collaborative environment that will allow you to grow as critical and creative readers and writers.

Expectations:

Every student is expected to actively participate in every class meeting, and to complete all reading and writing assignments on time. Active participation means giving your full attention, listening to others, and offering thoughtful comments and questions. It is especially important that you ask

questions when you do not understand an assignment. Writing should be complete, proofread, edited, and focused.

How to Prepare for Class Sessions:

Online Learning and Access to Canvas and Zoom:

This semester, our course will consist of 100% online instruction. This means we will not meet in person at all.

We will use Canvas and Zoom a lot in this course. Canvas is where you will find course materials, turn in assignments, and communicate via email. Zoom is where we will have live virtual meetings. Please keep audio muted when you are not speaking, but keep video unmuted as much as possible so that we can see each other.

Most instruction will be *synchronous*, which means that we will meet via Zoom during our scheduled class meeting time on many class days. You will receive advance notice about days when instruction will be asynchronous, which means instruction is done on your own time rather than during the scheduled class meeting time.

Office hours will be conducted via Zoom, at a different link than the regular class meeting link. All links will be posted on Canvas in the Zoom Links Module. Appointments are recommended but not required for office hour meetings.

Email

Communication will be sent via Canvas email. You are responsible for checking your Canvas Inbox to learn of any updates. You can choose to have these messages forwarded from Canvas to another email address.

Requirements:

Please bring a laptop to our virtual class meeting every day. You may be able to check one out on campus.

Please *save all work—with every draft as a separate file—to a portable storage disk* that is not part of your computer and does not require an Internet connection.

Method for Student Evaluation:

Creative work is difficult to produce and difficult to evaluate. When grading your creative assignments, I will not make value judgments about their quality, but rather evaluations of the level of effort evident in the work. Pieces that make great strides in aspects such as character development or use of figurative language, for example, from one draft to the next are more likely to receive high grades than pieces that don't grow much over time. As well, work that shows evidence of applying some concepts and techniques discussed in class are also more likely to receive high grades. Work should always be edited and proofread in order to receive passing grades.

Grade Breakdown:

Engagement and Participation: 20%
Workshop feedback (written and verbal): 20%
Short homework assignments/reading responses: 10%
Portfolio: 50%

Assignments will include:

In-class writing exercises
Reading responses to published works (and other homework)
Discussion board postings (and replies)
Manuscripts for peer review
Peer response letters
Peer review workshop journals
Project 1: fiction -- 5-15 pgs (one full short story, two short-short stories, or the beginning of novel/novella)
Project 2: poetry -- 3-7 pgs
Project 3: creative nonfiction -- 5-15 pages

Portfolio is all 3 projects revised for a total of 15-25 pages.

Items/actions that contribute to your portfolio grade:

- manuscripts for peer review (these are the project drafts 1, 2, and 3 that will be workshopped)
- revision letter (written at the end of the course and turned in with portfolio)
- peer review workshop journals
- attendance at and good participation in workshop sessions
- evidence of revision in your project drafts
- all assignments turned in on time
- bonus points for evidence that you submitted at least one assignment for publication.

Conferences and office hours: I am available to talk about your writing during my office hours or by appointment. Please email me to set up an appointment.

Policies**Attendance:**

It is important to attend and participate actively every week. If you must miss class, please let me know ahead of time (if possible) and complete the work on time. In-class assignments cannot be made up.

Academic Honesty:**Where to Find Course Materials:**

You can purchase our required book through the Spartan Bookstore or other booksellers. All other materials will be available on our Canvas course.

Our required text is:

Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief, 3rd Edition by David Starkey.

There are three editions of this book, with minimal difference across the three editions. The third edition is recommended, however the first or second editions are just as useful for our purposes, so those are good to use as well.

Classroom Conduct:

Readings: It is very important that you read the assigned readings and peer manuscripts closely and take notes on them. It will greatly support your learning and your class participation.

Academic freedom must be maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms that show respect even in dissent.

Late work: The only assignments that will be accepted late are the full drafts of your projects 1, 2, and 3, and only one of these will be accepted late per student, at a late penalty of 10% per day past the deadline.

English Department Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Student Learning Objectives:	Skills/Knowledge Acquired:	Activities:
<p>SLO 1: Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of creative writing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify basic elements of creative writing that models of published poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories contain. Identify what these various strategies and techniques contribute to a work's overall quality and success. 2. Identify creative writing strategies and techniques contained in students' original works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction written for this class. 3. Evaluate the level of successful application of various creative writing elements and techniques observed in student works creative writing submitted for this class. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify basic elements and techniques found in poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. 2. Read published models of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. Identify key creative elements and strategies they contain. 3. Write critical comments (positive and negative) on works of student poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction posted on the class Canvas Discussion pages during the semester.

<p>SLO 2: Show familiarity with major literary works (of poetry), genres (styles), periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.</p>	<p>1. Read and understand works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories written by prominent modern and contemporary authors representing a range of American, British, and World literatures.</p>	<p>1. Complete weekly assignments to read examples of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories by prominent published authors.</p> <p>2. Complete weekly short quizzes on the assigned readings from prominent authors of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories.</p> <p>3. Attend two readings by creative writers presented at SJSU, or in the local area,</p>
---	--	--

		or (or that you view online). Write brief detailed reviews describing the work writers presented.
SLO 3: Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.	1. Write original works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories that demonstrate successful application of key elements and techniques of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories identified as essential for the success of each genre.	1. Complete assignments to write works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories, to be posted on the Canvas Discussion pages for comments and analysis by members of your assigned Writing Group and T.A.s. 2. Complete and revise poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories to be posted on Canvas for weekly Workshop Discussions viewed by all class members and T.A.'s. 3. Revise poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories after receiving comments from Writing Group members, other class members, T.A.'s and the instructor. Submit assigned works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories in final portfolio form to be graded by the instructor.

GE Area C2 Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Student Learning Objectives:	Skills/Knowledge Acquired:	Activities:
SLO 1: Letters courses will enable students to recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns.	1. Identify how basic elements of creative writing in models of published poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories contribute to a work's overall quality	1. Identify basic elements and techniques found in poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. 2. Read published models

	<p>and to its insights into enduring human concerns.</p> <p>2. Evaluate the level of successful application of creative writing elements and techniques in student's work to enable the student's work to illuminate enduring human concerns.</p>	<p>of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. Identify key creative elements and strategies they contain that contribute to specific enduring human concerns.</p> <p>3. Write critical comments (positive and negative) on works of student poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction posted on the class Canvas Discussion pages during the semester.</p>
<p>2. Letters courses will enable students to respond to significant works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses.</p>	<p>1. Understand how works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories by prominent authors are constructed from elements and techniques that are basic to each of these creative writing genres.</p>	<p>1. Write works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories in response to reading works by published authors of these genres which demonstrate basic creative writing elements and techniques being studied.</p> <p>2. Attend and comment on two readings by prominent creative writers presented on the SJSU campus or in the local Silicon Valley area. Or view readings by prominent writers on the Internet.</p>
<p>3. Letters courses will enable students to write clearly and effectively. Writing shall be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness.</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate the ability to meet the standards of correctness, clarity, and conciseness in writing original works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories.</p> <p>2. Demonstrate the ability to improve the correctness, clarity, and conciseness of a creative writing text through</p>	<p>1. Read drafts of peers' creative writing assignments posted in Student Writing Groups and class Workshop Discussions to analyze the correctness, clarity, and conciseness and overall effectiveness of work.</p> <p>2. Regularly post comments and replies to Student</p>

	<p>applying revision techniques and principles discussed in Writing Groups and Workshop Discussions.</p> <p>3. Demonstrate the ability to improve correctness, clarity, conciseness, and overall effectiveness of a creative writing assignment through applying criteria detailed in that assignment's Creative Writing assessment rubric.</p>	<p>Writing Groups and class Workshop Discussions regarding the correctness, clarity, conciseness, and overall effectiveness of peers' creative writing drafts.</p> <p>3. Revise drafts of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories on which students have received comments from peers in Student Writing Groups and class Workshop Discussions.</p>
--	---	--

Creative Writing Course Overview/Schedule

This course will be divided into four units—one for each genre: short fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction—with a unit for revising your final project at the end. The following is a tentative course plan. It may change slightly depending on how much time we may need to spend on a particular genre, set of readings, or individual assignment.

Weeks 1-5:

For approximately the first four-five weeks, we will study and write fiction by:

- reading instructional text and short stories from *Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief**
- warming up with exercises (1-2 page scenes or character sketches)
- building one or two complete short-short stories
- discussing your writing in pairs, small groups, and with the whole class.

Weeks 6-9:

For the second four-week unit, we'll study and write poetry by:

- reading instructional text and poems *
- completing short exercises (building images, lists, perceptions)
- building approximately three complete poems.

Weeks 10-13:

For the third four-week unit, we'll study and write creative nonfiction by:

- reading instructional text and essays*
- doing exercises
- building one complete essay

Weeks 13-Final Exam Week:

For the last unit of the course, you will spend two weeks revising one or more pieces you have written in the genre of your choice. Your final project will consist of the revised story, set of poems, or essay that you believe represents your best writing.

*There may be additional short readings posted on Canvas (assigned or suggested as optional outside reading that may guide your individual creative projects).

Course Schedule (Week-by-Week):

Please Note: Details are subject to change. See each week's assignment instructions in Canvas for details about homework. Some class meetings will begin with a short writing exercise.

Week One: January 28 (Course Introduction/Fiction Unit Begins)

Homework: None

Week Two: February 2-4 (Description and Dialogue)

Homework due before class: read instructional text and short stories, write response and short fiction exercise (Authors: Stuart Dybek, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, John Cheever, Raymond Carver)

In Class: discuss assigned readings, peer review of short writing exercises

Week Three: February 9-11 (Character and Conflict)

Homework due before class: read published stories and instructional text, write short fiction exercise (Authors: ZZ Packer, Sherman Alexie, others)

Week Four: February 16-18 (Plot/Structure)

Homework due before class: read published stories and instructional text, write short fiction exercise (Authors: Flannery O'Connor, Donald Barthelme, others)

In Class: discuss assigned readings, workshop short pieces in small groups

Week Five: February 23-25 (Point of View and Revising Fiction)

Homework due before class: complete first draft of full project 1 (fiction project) (Authors: Daniel Orozco, Gish Jen, Anton Chekhov)

In Class: workshop draft of full project 1 (fiction project) in small groups

Week Six: March 2-4 – Poetry Unit Begins (Image and Sound)

Homework due before class: read published poems and instructional text, write response to published poems (Poets: Billy Collins, Naomi Shihab Nye, Alexi Pappas, Ezra Pound)

In Class: read aloud published poems, discuss all elements of poetry, in-class poetry exercise

Week Seven: March 9-11 (Meter and Verse Form)

Homework due before class: read published poems and instructional text; write short poetry exercise (3 pages of poetry) (Aimee Nezhukumathatil, Gail White)

In Class: read published poems in class, workshop short poetry exercise in pairs

Week Eight: March 16-18 (Language Use/Style and Tone)

Homework due before class: Write response to assigned poems, write 3 more pages of poetry (Poets: Li-Young Lee, Allen Ginsberg, William Carlos Williams, Allison Joseph)

In Class: Discussion about assigned poems; read poems of small group and post feedback, discuss with small group.

Week Nine: March 23-25 (Revising Poetry)

Homework due before class: finish draft of project 2

In Class: workshop project 2 in small groups; Creative Nonfiction unit begins– read 1 short essay in class and discuss CNF genre(s)

Spring Break: March 29-April 2

Week Ten: April 6-8 – Creative Nonfiction Unit begins (Lyrical and Narrative Approaches)

Homework due before class: Read assigned essays and instructional text, write a short nonfiction exercise (a 3-page essay draft); post reading response to discussion board and reply to two people. (Authors: Brian Doyle, Rebecca McClanahan, Scott Russell Sanders)

In Class: Discussion about comparing genres (using reading responses); peer review of short nonfiction exercise

Week Eleven: April 13-15 (“Truth” in Creative Nonfiction)

Homework due before class: Read instructional text; write response; write 3 more pages of creative nonfiction

In Class: Workshop cnf pages in pairs

Week Twelve: April 20-22 (Structure)

Homework due before class: Read instructional text; write full project 3 (cnf project)

In Class: Workshop project 3 in small groups

Week Thirteen: April 27-29 (Portfolio Revision Unit Begins)

Homework due before class: Pairs workshop all three projects online

In Class: All-class Discussion: What are your goals for your portfolio revision process?

Week Fourteen: May 4-6 (Portfolio Revision Continued)

Homework due before class: Turn in portfolio draft; read peers’ portfolio drafts, write feedback

In Class: All-class workshop of one selected passage from your portfolio

Week Fifteen: May 11-13 (Portfolio Revision Continued): Optional conferences

Exam week: May 19: Final portfolio due

To call in to class meetings:

Zoom link: Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/85836584206>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +16699006833,,85836584206# or +12532158782,,85836584206#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location) :

US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 646 876 9923 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 858 3658 4206

International numbers available: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/u/krcrcis9fyQ>