

San José State University
English and Comparative Literature
English 117A: American Film, Literature and Culture
Migrations
Fall 2013

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Instructor: | Dr. Noelle Brada-Williams |
| Website: | http://www2.sjsu.edu/faculty/awilliams/index.html |
| Office Hours: | Mondays 1 to 2 PM, Tuesdays 1-3 PM, and Fridays 1-3 PM. I am also available many other times during the week by appointment in Faculty Office Building (FOB) 102. |
| Email: | Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu |
| Telephone: | (408) 924-4439 |
| Class: | Fridays 9:30-12:15 AM in BBC 205 |
| Prerequisites: | Writing Skills Test (WST), completion of Core General Education, and completion of, or co-registration in, 100W |
| GE/SJSU Studies Category: | Area S: "Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S." Note: Courses used to satisfy Areas R, S, and V, must be taken from three separate SJSU departments, or other distinct academic units. |

Course Description

From epics to road movies, narratives, whether oral, written or visual, are often inspired by movement. How has movement shaped American culture as a whole? How has movement changed Americans and reshaped America? By analyzing films and literary works, and by researching their historical and cultural contexts, students will study the interrelationship of individuals, as well as racial and cultural groups to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, equality, and structured inequality in the U.S., its institutions, and its cultures. Films and literary texts have been paired topically but sometimes from very different historical periods so that we can analyze both historical continuity and change over time. The class will also emphasize critical thinking and writing skills. Please keep in mind that the class texts focus on issues such as race, class, gender, religion, and sexuality, and may offer alternative or even antagonistic value systems to your own.

GE Area S Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives ("GE" in syllabus)

After successfully completing the course, students shall be able to:

GE 1. describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality;

GE 2. describe historical, social, political, and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S.;

GE 3. describe social actions which have led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age).; and

GE 4. recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

Departmental Learning Objectives ("E" in syllabus)

English 117A serves four of the five learning objectives of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, by having students demonstrate the ability to

E 1. read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of "close reading" or close analysis in both the study of literature and the study of film;

- E 3. write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;
- E 4. develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;
- E 5. articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Coursework includes reading assignments (see schedule below); two five to seven-page formal textual analyses (which must include research and be put on turnitin.com); five one-page analyses, and a final exam composed of both short identification and longer comparative essay questions. By “informal” I mean no works cited or research is required. Detailed descriptions of the assignments are in the reader. **Late paper policy:** keeping in mind the many emergencies and unforeseen events that can occur in the average SJSU student’s life, I have a very generous extension policy. As long as you give me the request in writing—print or email— (complete with a new deadline) *before* the paper’s due date, most requests for an extension will be granted. **If the original deadline is passed by a student who has not received an extension or an extended deadline has been passed, 10% of the total points possible will be taken off for lateness up to one week. Extended or late papers will be graded AFTER on-time student work.** Note that *doing the reading and being able and willing to respond* to the comments and questions of both the professor and your fellow students on a daily basis is a requirement of the course. Reading quizzes and other in-class assignments will be given to ensure that students are indeed completing and understanding the readings. These cannot be made up. Due dates for all papers and the time for the final exam are listed on the reading and assignment schedule at the end of the syllabus. The Student Learning Objectives for each assignment are listed to the left in following table. In-class pop quizzes, discussions and assignments will perform a variety of tasks and will focus on whatever learning goals the class is perceived to need extra help with—thus no single SLO is designated for that category. Most of our GE goals will actually be met in the process of doing the course reading, and attending our weekly lectures and discussions.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------|
| Research Paper One (GE 1, 2, E 1, 3, 4 & 5) | 5-7 page analysis w/ research 1,750-2,450 words | 25% |
| Research Paper Two (GE 3 & 4, E 1, 3, 4 & 5) | 5-7 page analysis w/ research 1,750-2,450 words | 25% |
| Midterm (GE 1, 2, , E 1 & 3) | 5 I.D.’s and one comparative essay | 20% |
| Final Exam (GE 3 &4; E 1 & 3) | 5 I.D.’s & 1 comparative essay | 20% |
| Reading Quizzes & other in-class assignments (various SLO’s) | 15 class discussions, quizzes, etc. | 10% |
| Total | | 100% |

The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi:

In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

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.

In written assignments for English 117A, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the literary text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A"

essay contains a fresh insight that teaches the reader something new about the subject matter. B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

Classroom Protocol

You are required to be courteous and professional to both classmates and the professor. Most people take this as a requirement in their daily lives and this statement does not need to be reiterated here. However, people sometimes forget that the classroom is a professional setting and rules that govern a business meeting apply here. For example, devices such as cell phones need to be turned off; coming to class late is unacceptable. While you may use a laptop to take notes in class, you may not waste class time by texting or performing non-course related activities on a phone or computer. If an emergency arises that requires your absence from class, please contact the professor. Simply prioritizing your education behind other time commitments does not constitute such an emergency. Participating in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are absolutely necessary for the successful completion of this course. Protocol for written work requires that all quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks or, when more than three lines, put in an indented block. Full citation of the original author and source must also be included. For all papers, review a writing handbook for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman composition classes). There is also information on this in your 117A reader and the Professor will be happy to discuss issues related to writing and composition in office hours. Also see the University policy on "Academic Integrity" below for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

University Policy on Academic Integrity

Students should know that the University's Academic Integrity Policy available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm> Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on these policies can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/Students> should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes. Note that

September 3, 2013 is the last day to drop without a "W." **The instructor of this course will not automatically drop you if you do not show up. Dropping is your responsibility.**

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make 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 requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Library Liaison for English & Comparative Literature:

Contact Toby Matoush via email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, or phone: (408) 808-2096 if you have library research questions that have not been answered in class.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and 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.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. The writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

Eight Required Texts:

- ❖ A reader available at Maple Press (located on West San Carlos between 10th and 11 streets)
- ❖ Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, *The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca* (ISBN-10: 080326416X)
- ❖ Abraham Cahan, *Yekl and The Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories* (ISBN: 486-22427-9)
- ❖ Jean Toomer, *Cane* (ISBN 0-87140-151-7)
- ❖ John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (ISBN 9780143039433)
- ❖ Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart* (ISBN 0-295-95289-X)
- ❖ Tomas Rivera, *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (ISBN 978-1-55885-083-5)
- ❖ Andrew Lam, *Birds of Paradise Lost* (ISBN 978-1-59709-268-5)

You also need to make sure that your MySJSU account has your most accessible and current email address. Since we only meet once a week, expect to occasionally get questions or information emailed to you. The texts (not including the reader) can be purchased at Spartan Books and Roberts Bookstore as well as via internet sellers via <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/donations/>.

English 117A

American Film, Literature and Culture

Fall 2012 Course Schedule

The schedule may vary depending on the needs of the class or scheduling issues. Any changes will be reported in class and via the email you have registered with MySJSU.

| Week | Readings & Assignments |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: August 23 Introduction | Introduction to course and view film, <i>Cabeza de Vaca</i> , in class. |
| 2: August 30 500 years of assimilating in American | Read <i>The Narrative of Cabeza de Vaca</i> and to part one of Cahan's <i>Yekl</i> ("Jake and Yekl"). Bring reader to class. |
| 3: September 6 Gender in immigrant America | Complete Cahan's <i>Yekl</i> for today and watch film, <i>Hester Street</i> , in class. |
| 4: September 13 The Great Migration | Read essays by Du Bois and Locke in reader and first two thirds of <i>Cane</i> (southern and northern sections—"Kabnis" is optional). |
| 5: September 20 Harlem Renaissance | See film, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , in class. Research paper 1 Due (GE 1 & 2, E 3 & 4). |
| 6: September 27 The Dustbowl and migration | Read first half of <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> (through chapter 18/page 230) |
| 7: October 4 Class in the mid 20 th century | Finish <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> |
| 8: October 11 Cinematic images of migration | Watch film, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> , in class. |
| 9: October 18 MIDTERM | Midterm on first eight weeks of reading & viewing (emphasis on GE 1 & 2, E 1 & 3). |
| 10: October 25 Eastward migration | Read first half of <i>America is in the Heart</i> (to page 167/through chapt. XXI) |
| 11: November 1 Migrant labor in the west | Finish <i>America is in the Heart</i> |
| 12: November 8 Migration north | See film <i>El Norte</i> in class. |
| 13: November 15 Faith and Disbelief | Read Tomas Rivera's <i>And the Earth Did Not Devour Him</i> |
| 14: November 22 Exile and Home | Paper 2 due (GE 3 & 4, E 1, 3, 4 & 5). View Bui's <i>Green Dragon</i> in class. Begin reading <i>Birds of Paradise Lost</i> (read through "Hunger"). |
| 15: November 29 | No class-Thanksgiving Holiday |
| 16: December 6 Ambiguous Narratives (Review) | Complete the stories in <i>Birds of Paradise Lost</i> . In addition to discussing Lam's stories, we will also review for the final exam on this day. |
| Final Exam: Friday Dec. 13 | Final Exam (GE 3 & 4, E 1 & 3): 7:15-9:30 AM. Bring "blue books." |