

San José State University
Humanities & Arts/English & Comparative Literature

English 117B: Global Film, Literature and Cultures

Spring 2013

Instructor:	Persis Karim
Office Location:	Faculty Office Building 216
Telephone:	(408) 924-4476
Email:	persis.karim@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tu/Thurs 1:30-2:30 pm
Class Days/Time:	Friday, 10:00 am-12:45 pm
Classroom:	Art Building 133
Prerequisites:	Completion of GE core; Satisfaction of Writing Skills Test; Upper division standing
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	GE Area V: Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding

Course Description

Using films and literary works, students will appreciate and understand the narratives that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time. We also examine how the films utilize the approaches to storytelling differently from print fiction/poetry. We will look at films and read texts that are written in, set in, or depict multiple time periods and world cultures. Some of the common themes we will explore across these widely different texts and cultures will include (but not be limited to) colonialism, occupation, and war, as well as power dynamics, race, gender, class, sexuality, social norms, and narrative form.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

1. Students shall be able to compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S. through the media of film and literature.
2. Students shall be able to identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture.
3. Students shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

4. Students shall hone their reading, writing, researching, and critical thinking skills through the practice of intellectually challenging analyses.

Course objectives 1-3 will be accomplished through the readings, class discussions, presentations and student research, while the various written assignments and the presentation will allow us to accomplish objective 4 and to assess our level of accomplishment in objectives 1-3.

Required Texts/Readings

Sharon and My Mother-in-Law by Suad Amiry

Palestine by Joe Sacco

Miral by Rula Jubreal

The Complete Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi

Women without Men by Shahrnush Parsipur

The Blind Owl by Sadegh Hedayat

Course Packet to be purchased from Maple Press (second week of class).

Films

“Promises”

“Miral”

“The Lemon Tree”

“Paradise Now”

“Persepolis”

“Women Without Men”

“A Separation”

“The House is Black”

Other Readings

You will be expected to also read some supplementary material contained in course packet which will give you some historical background as well as links to electronic sources that I will provide to you via email.

Library Liaison

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.

Classroom Protocol

Being on time, **participating** in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are necessary for the successful completion of this course. **Cell phones are shut off and put away.**

Unless you periodically need to take notes with your **laptop**, please keep those put away as well; the keyboard noise can be disruptive.

Homework and small in-class and out-of-class assignments are *not* accepted late. In-class work and quizzes cannot be made up. Late papers (the longer assignments) will receive a grade deduction for each class session they are late, and will only be accepted if they are turned in with “LATE [X #] OF CLASS SESSIONS” written at the top. *Papers are turned in only in class* (not by email attachment, in Persis Karim’s office or mailbox, etc.). Please use the **restroom** prior to movie showings; it is distracting when people leave and return to class during the film.

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 and proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman composition classes). 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 is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf.

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.

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 add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Paper #1	3-4 page paper with research	15%
Paper #2	5-7 paper with research	20%
Presentation on book/film		20%
Midterm Exam		15%

Final Exam	15%
Participation, Quizzes, in-class assignments Short writing assignments, etc.	15%

Book Presentation or Film Presentation: With one or more classmates, you will present on one of the following:

- **Book Presentation:** For the given book, you will do the following in any order that works best for your presentation. Each one of these does not have to be given equal weight. Your goal is to give us new, interesting insights into the book:

- *Share about the author: Find interviews (print, online, video, audio) and cull interesting quotes and other information to share. Do not repeat anything Persis has already shared in class. Feel free to include key quotes and/or excerpts of video clips of interviews or talks.

- *Address how several (approximately 3-6) key themes, issues, obsessions, patterns, central conflicts, character development, etc. play out in the book. *Focus on the significance of these themes* (e.g., why they matter). Through the life experiences of the characters, we can often see how they negotiate their lives and the “human experience” in connection to colonialism, power dynamics, race, gender, sexuality, class, sexuality, social norms, technology, immigration, religion, “coming of age,” and more.

- *Direct the class to a minimum of 3 key passages from the book and read them to us (so we can *hear* the language), explaining how they illuminate any of the above. You can incorporate these passages into the discussion of themes or treat them separately. Make sure you are ANALYZING the significance of the passages. You can also address the writing style (e.g., what makes it unique, interesting, compelling, fast, slow, etc.).

- *Share what you appreciated about the book and/or struggled with as you read it. You can talk about likes, dislikes, personal connections, ways your reactions varied, etc. Be specific.

- *Adaptation: What might a screenwriter and director enjoy and /or struggle with in adapting this book, and why? What would be the “good news” of the book the adapters might want to focus upon? What images and sounds (key features of film) would you highlight in an adaptation of this book?

- *Your presentation will be about 15-20 minutes.

- *To prepare for this presentation, you will want to make sure you have read the book thoroughly, have prepped with your group, and have practiced it so that you are focused and don’t ramble. Your goal is to help illuminate several aspects of the book for the class, and to stimulate class discussion. Presentations will be responded to and evaluated by both the professor and the class. (Groups may meet with Persis the week prior to discuss ideas.)

You will turn in a 1-2 page written report of your presentation.

- **Film Presentation:** For the given film, you will address:

- *The Screenwriter and Director: Who are they? Why did they approach this project, and what did they find challenging and satisfying about it? Find interviews (print, online, video, audio) and cull interesting quotes and other information to share. Do not repeat anything Persis has already shared in class. Feel free to include video clips of interviews or talks if you find them. Another good source is the “Extras” on the DVD.

- *Cinematic Effects: Using clips from the film to illustrate your points, show how 3-5 Cinematic effects (as discussed in class; see attached handout) were used in the film to highlight or play out

particular key themes, issues, obsessions, patterns, central conflicts etc. of the film. Be specific about what visually and auditorially is happening and *how that visual style/information expresses meaning*.

*Share what the presenters appreciated about the film and/or struggled with as they viewed it. You can talk about likes, dislikes, personal connections, ways your reactions varied, etc. Be specific.

*Your presentation will be about 15-20 minutes.

*To prepare for this presentation, you will want to make sure you have prepped with your group, and have practiced it so that you are focused and don't ramble—and so that the technology is seamless and effective. Your goal is to help illuminate several aspects of the film for the class, and to stimulate class discussion. (Groups may meet with Persis the week prior to discuss ideas.)

You will turn in a 1-2 page written report of your presentation.

University Policies

Academic integrity

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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.

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. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student

checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. Our staff is here to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our 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. PEER CONNECTIONS is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu/>

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. Our 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/)

English 117B- Spring 2013, Course Schedule

Please note: this schedule is subject to change and you will be notified of changes in schedule via email. It is your responsibility to check in, however, if you miss class and miss assignments, etc.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/25	Introductions; purpose of films and books; create groups; discuss Iran and context of first movie “The House is Black”—discuss in class after screening. Read: <i>The Blind Owl</i> , first 80 pages including introduction.
2	2/1	<u>Due</u> : write a two-page typewritten response to “The House is Black – notice the aesthetics of the movie, what does it say to you about the moment of the film’s making, what point of view does the filmmaker take? Discuss the movie and <i>The Blind Owl</i> reading. Read: Finish <i>The Blind Owl</i> . We will begin presentations next week!
3	2/8	<i>Blind Owl</i> Presentation _____ Read: <i>Persepolis</i>
4	2/15	<i>Persepolis</i> Presentation _____ Watch “Persepolis” in Class
5	2/22	Persepolis discussion Persepolis Presentation _____ Read: <i>Women without Men</i>
6	3/1	<i>Women without Men</i> Presentation _____ Read: <i>Women without Men</i>
7	3/8	Watch in class, “Women Without Mean” Write a one-page response in class to the film
8	3/15	Discussion of film “Women without Men” Presentation _____ If time, watch “A Separation” in class

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	3/22	MIDTERM exam Paper #1 due Read: "Palestine"; watch "Promises"
10	3/29	NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS
11	4/5	Presentation "Palestine" _____ Read: <i>Miral</i>
12	4/12	Watch "Miral" in class
13	4/19	Presentations "Miral" _____ Read: <i>Sharon and My Mother-in Law</i>
14	4/26	Presentation "Sharon and My Mother-in-Law" _____ Watch "Paradise Now"
15	5/3	Presentation "Paradise Now" _____ Watch "The Lemon Tree"
16	5/10	Last day of class Presentations of "The Lemon Tree" _____ Paper #2 due
Final Exam	5/16	Final Exam 7:15-9:30 am