

**San José State University**  
**English Department**  
**Engl 123C: South Pacific Lit, Section 1, Fall 2016**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	D. Mesher
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00-8:30am, 4:30-5:00pm
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:15pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	Sweeney Hall (SH) Room 238
<b>Prerequisite:</b>	Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C- not accepted), and completion of Core General Education are prerequisite to all SJSU Studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended.
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	Area V

**Course Format**

**Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses**

All literature courses are what are now known as “flipped” courses – that is, students are expected to read and analyze the day’s assignment before coming to class ready to discuss that material. That will certainly be true of this course. In addition, students will submit essays online (and not in printed form), in their Canvas account, and receive them back, marked and graded, through Canvas as pdf files. Essays can only be submitted to Canvas in RTF or Word format, and a recent version of the free software program Adobe Reader may be required to read the marks and grades in the returned pdf files. In addition, students may be required to access the course web page and download files there, as well as to communicate via email. Otherwise, no particular technological devices or knowledge will be needed for the course.

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Links for course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, and readings can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher> . Written assignments for this class will be submitted on the Canvas learning management system course website (<http://sjsu.instructure.com> ). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](http://my.sjsu.edu) at <http://my.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates.

## Course Description

This course focuses on works written in English by writers from islands in the South Pacific, including Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa, and how they use the history and culture of those areas in their fiction. We will be interested in the linguistic and thematic differences in the writings of these “other Englishes,” as well as in their artistic similarities to British, American, and other literatures. Earning a grade of C or better in Engl 123C satisfies Area V of the General Education (SJSU Studies) requirement.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

English Department Course Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Read closely and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature.
- 2) Show familiarity with major critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.
- 3) Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.
- 4) Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.
- 5) Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

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

- 1) offer a close and informed reading of each of the texts covered in the course, and how they relate to national and international contemporary literary trends and techniques;
- 2) utilize major critical approaches to British and world Literature in discussing the themes and techniques of the works read;
- 3) write effectively in an academic style and context about the literature under study;
- 4) point to their written and oral presentations of material connected with the course as evidence of their individual accomplishments in contributing original critical insights to the discussion of this literature;
- 5) discuss with authority some of the background information and historical context necessary to understand fully the settings and themes of modern and contemporary fiction written by authors from Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa.

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbooks

- Murray Bail, *Eucalyptus* (Picador, 978-0312427313)  
Sia Figiel, *Where We Once Belonged* (Kaya, 978-1885030276)  
Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career* (Penguin, 978-0143105053)  
Kate Grenville, *The Secret River* (Canongate/Grove, 978-1841959146)  
Keri Hulme, *The Bone People* (Penguin, 978-0140089226)  
Witi Ihimaera, *The Whale Rider* (Harcourt, 978-0152050160)  
David Malouf, *Remembering Babylon* (Vintage, 978-0679749516)

Most of these books are available at the bookstore or from online sellers. Two exceptions may be *The Secret River* and *The Whale Rider*, both of which are temporarily out of print according to the bookstore (though *The Secret River* shows as in stock at Amazon). There are electronic and used copies of both for purchase at online sites such as Amazon.com, and multiple copies of both on the shelf in the San Jose Public Library system; just be sure you secure a copy of each well before we are due to read it. In addition, in case your copy of the first text, *My Brilliant Career*, does not arrive on time, I have a link on the class web page to the non-profit Gutenberg Project, where you can download

the novel in various electronic formats (including epub, kindle, HTML, and plain txt). **Please note: While it will probably be easier to follow the discussion in class using the editions listed above, you are not required to buy or use those specific editions.**

### **Other technology requirements / equipment / material**

As mentioned above under “Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses,” students will be asked to submit their written work electronically, via Canvas, in either Word or RTF format, and to access their marked and graded work in PDF format. This should be relatively easy for anyone with access to a computer; students having difficulty doing so should contact the IT Help Desk on the ground floor of Clark Hall. There will also be options for students to include Powerpoint or other slide shows in their oral presentations, and to respond on quizzes via iClicker, but only if they choose to do so.

### **Library Liaison**

Toby Matoush, [Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu](mailto:Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu), (408) 808-2096

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that, in order to be successful, students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

**Preparation and Participation:** Students should come to class having read the day’s assignment and prepared to discuss it. Opportunities for such contributions may take the form of 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, or express an opinion.

**Quizzes and Participation:** In order to ensure that you get credit for the hard work you do in reading and reflecting on the works assigned for this course, there will be frequent quizzes (on average, one every two or three class meetings). I think of quizzes as one of the best ways for you to measure how carefully you are reading the texts, and how much of that reading you retain (at least for a day or so). The quizzes will cover significant information from that day’s reading assignment, though that information may not be the sort readily accessible to you in plot summaries, outlines, or synopses, but only through personally experiencing the text for yourself. If you read well ahead of the assigned schedule, be sure to review your notes and come to class with a fresh and detailed impression of the works. A pattern of doing poorly on these quizzes should be taken as an indication that you are not doing the reading, or not reading attentively enough, or not reading with the care and analysis necessary to be successful as an English major and devotee of literature. In addition, students will make one presentation to the class; a list of possible topics will be distributed early in the semester.

**Written Work:** There will be two essays, both about 1500 words and counting 25% of the final mark each, and a final examination counting 20%. There will also be frequent quizzes, which will help determine the remaining 25%, along with participation in class discussions, the timely completion of readings and written work, and the mid-semester group presentations. Both essays will require research beyond the class texts themselves; students will have the option of revising and resubmitting the first essay, and the final grade on that essay will be an average of the grades

received on the original and revised submissions. Grading will be on a 100-point scale for each assignment. For the course mark, 100-97 will be an A+, 96-93 an A, 92-90 an A-, 89-87 a B+, 86-83 a B, 82-80 a B-, 79-77 a C+, 76-73 a C, 72-70 a C-, and so on.

First Essay (Furphy, Franklin, Grenville, Malouf)	
Rough draft	10%
Final draft	15%
Second Essay (Bail, Ihimaera, Hulme)	25%
Participation (quizzes, presentation, class discussions, etc.)	25%
Final Exam (Figiel and comprehensive)	25%

**Submission of written work:** The two essays must be double-spaced (and without a cover page), otherwise follow standard MLA format (except that your name should not appear anywhere), and be submitted online only, through the course Canvas page (at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>), by the beginning of class on the days they are due. Work should be submitted in RTF (Rich Text Format), though Microsoft Word files are also acceptable. Other formats should not be submitted, including PDF and, in particular, Apple's iWork Pages format. Work submitted via Canvas is automatically sent to Turnitin.com, as well, to check for plagiarism. Late work will only be accepted by prior arrangement. Do not email or leave at my office any work for this class, unless I specifically ask you to do so; and please do not leave email or any other messages for me on Canvas. Corrected work will be returned online (in your Canvas account) in PDF format. Please keep a copy of all work submitted on disk, and retain all graded work returned until the end of the semester; English majors should save the graded copies of their essays in all department classes, since these will be required for the portfolio in their senior seminar. Students should anticipate a significant delay in the return of late work. Please note that many people find it harder to proofread work on a computer screen than in printed form and, if that is true in your case, you may want to print out your final draft and make corrections to that, before submitting the finished file online. Also remember that I will also be keeping a copy of your marked work during the semester so that, when you submit your second essay, I will begin by reviewing the technical mistakes you made in the first one, and looking to see if you have made any progress in those areas on the second. You, too, should take the time to review those errors, and use that review to improve your writing.

### Final Examination or Evaluation

Students will have an opportunity to write about each of the novels we cover. The first essay will deal with two of the first four works (*Such Is Life*, *My Brilliant Career*, *The Secret River*, and *Remembering Babylon*); the second essay will deal with the next three (*Eucalyptus*, *The Whale Rider*, and *The Bone People*); and the final exam will deal with the last novel (*Where We Once Belonged*) in part in terms of the impact of American misconceptions of Polynesian culture both here and there.

### Grading Information

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" composition 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, which teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" composition 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" composition 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 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" composition is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

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

### **English Department Statements on Grading**

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 by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

### **Course Workload**

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week with one of the hours in the classroom) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus. In other words, since this is a three-unit course, you should expect to spend on average about six hours each week working on the course, in addition to the time you spend in class.

### **Classroom Protocol**

Please treat everyone – classmates, guests, and even the instructor – with respect and courtesy at all times, and comport yourself accordingly, in the classroom, and while entering or leaving it. During class, electronic devices, including phones, tablets, and laptops, may only be used for purposes related to class work at that moment, such as note-taking; please remember that University policy recognizes any unauthorized use of a cell phone or other technological device during an examination as grounds for failing the examination. Even during breaks, please refrain from eating in the classroom, and avoid other activities and behavior that might distract or upset others. After class, please try not to stop in the doorway to check your phone, preventing others from getting out.

## 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/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

## Engl 123C: South Pacific Lit, Fall 2014, Course Schedule

*This schedule is subject to modification. If you miss class, please check for changes to the syllabus on the class web page at [www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher](http://www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher).*

August 25	Thursday	Introduction
August 30	Tuesday	<i>Such Is Life</i> , chapter 3
September 1	Thursday	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , Intro-chapters 10
September 6	Tuesday	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 11-19
September 8	Thursday	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 20-28
September 13	Tuesday	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 29-38
September 15	Thursday	<i>The Secret River</i> , "Strangers" - Part I
September 20	Tuesday	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part II
September 22	Thursday	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part III
September 27	Tuesday	<i>The Secret River</i> , Parts IV-V
September 29	Thursday	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part VI
October 4	Tuesday	<b>No class; Remembering Babylon</b> , chapters 1-4
October 6	Thursday	<b>First essay rough draft due; Remembering Babylon</b> , chapters 5-9
October 11	Tuesday	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 10-16
October 13	Thursday	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 17-20
October 18	Tuesday	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 1-4
October 20	Thursday	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 5-9
October 25	Tuesday	<b>First essay, final draft due; Eucalyptus</b> , chapters 10-26
October 27	Thursday	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 27-39
November 1	Tuesday	"Encounters with Polynesia"
November 3	Thursday	<i>The Whale Rider</i> , Prologue-chapters 11
November 8	Tuesday	<i>The Whale Rider</i> , chapters 12-21
November 10	Thursday	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 3-92
November 15	Tuesday	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 93-153
November 17	Thursday	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 157-261
November 22	Tuesday	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 261-331
November 24	Thursday	<b>Thanksgiving--No class</b>
November 29	Tuesday	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 335-445
December 1	Thursday	<i>Where We Once Belonged</i> , pages 1-91
December 6	Tuesday	<b>Second Essay Due; Where We Once Belonged</b> , pages 92-164
December 8	Thursday	<i>Where We Once Belonged</i> , pages 165-239
<b>December 20</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Engl 123C Final, 2:45 - 5:00 pm</b>