

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 168, The American Novel, Sec. 1, Spring 2017

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Class Days/Time: TR 10:30:00-11:45 AM
Office Hours: TR 8:00-9:00 AM
Classroom: Sweeney Hall 348
Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/sjsu.edu/english-168/>
Section Code: 27088

Course Description

This course follows the development of the American novel from romance through realism and naturalism to modernism and post-modernism, helping you enlarge your understanding of what the genre is, or might be—and to whom.

Course Texts

Anderson, Sherwood. *Winesburg, Ohio*. (1919) ISBN-13: 978-0486282695
Díaz, Junot. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. (2007) ISBN-13: 978-1594483295
Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*. (1929) ISBN-13: 978-0679732242 (Corrected Text)
Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The House of the Seven Gables*. (1851) ISBN-13: 978-1416534778
Hemingway, Ernest. *The Sun Also Rises*. (1926) ISBN-13: 978-0743297332
Malae, Peter Nathaniel. *Our Frail Blood*. (2013) ISBN-13: 978-0802120786
Nabokov, Vladimir. *Pale Fire*. (1962) ISBN-13: 978-0679723424
Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. (1852) ISBN-13: 978-0486440286
Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. (1982) ISBN-13: 978-0156028356
Wharton, Edith. *House of Mirth*. (1905) ISBN-13: 978-0312062347

Grading and Assignments:

1. Oral Presentation & Handout	10%
2. Graphic Novel Paper	10%
3. Reading Responses & Quizzes	20%
4. Participation	15%
5. Midterm Examination	20%
6. <u>Research Paper Proposal & Final Draft</u>	25%
	100%

1. Oral Presentation: You must work with the instructor to prepare an oral presentation of five to ten minutes synthesizing an article or book chapter by a scholar about the work being discussed on that day, including a handout. **Sign up for your date to present and consult the instructor on your choice of academic article.**

2. Graphic Novel Paper: Choose a graphic novel:

- 1) Adrian Tomine, *Killing and Dying*.
- 2) Matt Kindt, *Red Handed*.
- 3) David Mazzucchelli, *Asterios Polyp*.
- 4) Art Spiegelman, *Maus: Part 1*.
- 5) Shaun Tan, *The Arrival*.
- 6) Neil Gaiman. *The Sandman: Season of Mists*.

You will meet in class to discuss your reading with other class members, and in the process write a three-page paper, focusing on the interaction of visual and textual elements in a short “passage” from the one you choose.

3. Reading Responses & Quizzes: Written work includes short quizzes and small-group activities, as well as informal responses to the reading. Responses should be 200-300 words (approximately one typewritten standard page in 12-point font with regular margins). Bring legibly handwritten or printed hardcopy to class because it will be used in small-group discussion. Reading responses are due on dates indicated on the course calendar by this symbol: **X**

4. Participation: Lectures provide background, but this course will also rely on discussion. Come to class having read the day’s assignment (**unless otherwise indicated, read the entire work by the beginning of the first day’s session devoted to that book**), and take time to review information about the book and its author online or in the texts’ introductions. Find opportunities to contribute to class discussion and show your engagement with the text.

5. Midterm Examination: In-class essay. Date indicated on the course calendar.

6. Research Paper: 6-8 pp. on an American novel of your choosing, approved by the instructor. You must submit a **proposal** with 1) a brief description (200 words) and 2) a short bibliography of secondary sources (at least five). See course calendar for due dates.

Department Student Learning Goals (linked to assignments):

Students will demonstrate the ability to

- read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric. (Assignments 2, 3, 6)
- show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature. (Assignments 1, 5, 6)
- write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject. (Assignments 1, 2, 3, 5, 6)
- develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively. (Assignment 6)
- articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts. (Assignments 3, 4, 6)

University Policies:

Check [Syllabus information](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>) for university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding classes, the campus writing center, etc.

English Department Grading Policies:

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.

Grades issued will represent a full range of student performance and will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

The **"A"** essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.

The **"B"** essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the "A" essay. The chief difference is that the "B" essay will show some slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.

The **"C"** essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the "B" essay.

The **"D"** essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment--that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

The **"F"** essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

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 shall replace D or F. In such cases, NC shall also substitute for W (or Withdrawal) because neither grade (NC or W) affects students' GPA.

n.b.: When you have a schedule problem, talk with the instructor to avoid lowered grades.

DATE	ENGLISH 168: SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (SPRING 2017) <i>Unless otherwise indicated, read the entire work by the beginning of the first day's session devoted to that book.</i>
Jan. 26	Introduction to the course.
Jan. 31	Hawthorne, Chapters 1-7. ✕
Feb. 2	Hawthorne, Chapters 8-15. Graphic Novel Choices Due.
Feb. 7	Hawthorne, Chapters 16-21.
Feb. 9	Stowe, Chapters 1-9. ✕
Feb. 14	Stowe, Chapters 10-18.
Feb. 16	Stowe Chapters 19-45. Graphic Novel Groups Meet.
Feb. 21	Stowe Chapters 19-45.
Feb. 23	Wharton, Book 1. Research Paper Proposal Due (Description and Bibliography).
Feb. 28	Wharton, Book 2. ✕
Mar. 2	Wharton, Book 2.
Mar. 7	Anderson. ✕
Mar. 9	Anderson. Graphic Novel Groups Meet.
Mar. 14	Hemingway. ✕
Mar. 16	Hemingway.
Mar. 21	Hemingway.
Mar. 23	Midterm Examination.
Mar. 28-30	Spring Recess.
Apr. 4	Faulkner.
Apr. 6	Faulkner. ✕
Apr. 11	Faulkner. Graphic Novel Paper Due.
Apr. 13	Nabokov. ✕
Apr. 18	Nabokov.
Apr. 20	Walker. ✕
Apr. 25	Walker.
Apr. 27	Díaz. ✕
May 2	Díaz.
May 4	Malae, Part 1. ✕
May 9	Malae, Parts 2 and 3.
May 11	Malae, Part 4.
May 16	Malae, Parts 5.
May 19	Research Paper Due.

✕ = Reading Response (200-300 words). Hardcopy due in class.