

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 193, Senior Seminar (Literature & Self-Reflection), Sec. 1, Spring 2017

Instructor: [Paul Douglass](#)
Office Location: Faculty Offices Building, Room 108
Telephone: (408) 924- 4429
Email: paul.douglass@sjsu.edu
Class Days/Time: TR 9:00-10:15 AM
Office Hours: TR 8:00-9:00 AM
Classroom: Sweeney Hall 411
Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/sjsu.edu/english-193/>
Section Code: 20228

Course Description

Culminating course for English majors to reflect on their experiences and their progress toward meeting the Department Learning Goals. Involves reading groups, workshops, seminar sessions, activities, and writing assignments, including a final portfolio.

Course Texts

Arabian Nights, trans. Husain Haddawy. ISBN-13: 978-0393331660
Articles on Literature and the English Major ([download](#)).
Book Group Text (see below).
Calvino, Italo. *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*. ISBN-13: 978-0919630239
Hellman, Lillian. *The Children's Hour*. ISBN-13: 978-0822202059
Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. ISBN-13: 978-0486419312
Saunders, George. *Tenth of December*. ISBN-13: 978-0812984255
Selznick, Brian. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*. ISBN-13: 978-0439813785
Picture Book (your choice).
Poetry Selections (chosen by members of the class—see [online resources](#).)
—Suggested Handbook: *The Everyday Writer* by Andrea Lunsford.

Classroom Protocol

Please turn off cell phones. Turn off laptops unless they are being used in a class activity or presentation by prior arrangement with the instructor. Avoid leaving and returning to the classroom during class sessions.

English Department Learning Objectives

Students shall:

- 1) 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.
- 2) show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and 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.

Course Grade Calculations

Assignment	Learning Objectives	Weight
Autobiography	3	15%
Book Group and Report	1, 2, 5	5%
Book Group Essay	1, 3	10%
Original Essay	1, 3, 4, 5	20%
Participation	1, 2, 3, 5	20%
Portfolio	3, 4	20%
Practicum/Service Learning	3, 4	10%
Totals	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	100%

Assignment Descriptions

Autobiography (5-6 pp.)

Tell a story about yourself. Possible approaches to this assignment include: What early experiences shaped your interests? Who was an inspiration (or impediment), mentor (or nemesis)? Which books and authors influenced you? What obstacles have you overcome? What are your habitual ways of thinking and analyzing? *Grading criteria:* Clear, effective writing. *Note: you may tell this story in first, second, or third person, employing any literary style or mode.*

Book Group Discussions and Research Report (1-2 pp.)

Choose a book you have always wanted to read. Read it. Meet with others to discuss your experience. Book groups will meet during class time as shown on the calendar. *Grading criteria:* active participation in group, completion of the reading, contribution of background research report on the text or author (1-2 pp.).

Book Group Essay (3-4 pp.)

Personal essay on your chosen book, citing sources. *Grading criteria:* Knowledge of the text; clear, effective writing; inclusion of examples from the work and your background research, short bibliography.

Original Essay (8-10 pp.)

Essay (personal or traditional) dealing with a primary text that allows you to engage the seminar theme: Self-reflection. *Grading criteria:* one-page proposal submitted; draft of essay submitted; final draft includes at least six "works cited," with quotations from the texts and specific citation of sources using MLA parenthetical system, showing knowledge and understanding of the texts discussed as evidenced by clear writing, logical paragraphing, and correctness of English usage. **Note: You must give an oral report and turn in a draft of this essay.** See calendar for due dates.

Participation and Class Work

Come to class having read the day's assignment and (when assigned) bring a brief reader's response or comment in writing. Participate in small-group or full-class discussions and answer a question, interpret a passage, express an opinion, or make an

observation. In-class work will include short writing assignments, memorizing a poem, and small group activities. *Grading criteria:*

- 1) knowledge of texts as demonstrated by oral and written comments and questions.
- 2) meeting course deadlines and requirements, including:
 - a) memorizing a poem and copying it out from memory
 - b) completing in-class writings and quizzes
 - c) sharing a picture book from your childhood
- 3) participation in book group and other class activities as observed by the instructor.

Portfolio

The English 193 Portfolio (submitted electronically or in hard-copy) should demonstrate the ways in which you have met the Department of English and Comparative Literature's Learning Goals. If you submit a hard-copy, print single-sided and remove all staples from portfolio examples, with *no* slipcovers or binders. Required:

- 1) Cover page.
- 2) List of courses taken in the major.
- 3) Table of Contents.
- 4) Overall Introduction (2-3 pp.) commenting on the portfolio's contents and reflecting on your experiences in the major.
- 5) Examples of graded and other written work from **at least three courses** taken in the major (not including English 193).
- 6) Short introductions (1 paragraph or more) to each essay or subsection commenting on the assignments' challenges, how you met them, and what you learned.
- 7) Original essay written for English 193.

Grading criteria: fulfillment of the above list of requirements, effective writing, thoughtful reflective introductory pieces, good organizational scheme for materials submitted.

Practicum/Service Learning Exercise (4-5 pp. total)

Propose a project choosing one of two options:

- 1) Volunteer your services in a classroom or library, or help create written materials for a nonprofit or government organization, or participate in something like "Lifelines to Solitary" or Amnesty International letter-writing projects. Submit a short written account of your experience.
- 2) Pick a person whose life and work interests you and earns your admiration. Interview that person and submit the interview transcript.

Grading criteria: Submitting a proposal in writing (1 p.), giving oral progress reports, and clean, effective writing in your final report (3-4 pp.).

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 descriptably 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 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.

University Policies

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

Interesting Thought

Have you ever rightly considered what the mere ability to read means? That it is the key which admits us to the whole world of thought and fancy and imagination? To the company of saint and sage, of the wisest and wittiest at their wisest and wittiest moment? That it enables us to see with the keenest eyes, hear with the finest ears, and listen to the sweetest voices of all time? More than that, it annihilates time and space for us.

— James Russell Lowell, Address at the Opening of the Free Public Library, Chelsea, Massachusetts, December 22, 1885.

DATE	ENGLISH 193: READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (SPRING 2017)
Jan. 26	Introduction to the Course.
Jan. 31	Picture Books Due in Class. Book Group text ideas due.
Feb. 2	<i>Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> . Practicum Proposal Due (1 p.) .
Feb. 7	<i>Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> . Form Book Groups. Discuss Original Essays.
Feb. 9	<i>Invention of Hugo Cabret</i> . Bring hard-copy of reading response.
Feb. 14	<i>Incidents in the Life</i> .
Feb. 16	<i>Incidents in the Life</i> . Original Essay Proposal Due.
Feb. 21	<i>Incidents in the Life</i> . Book Groups Meet.
Feb. 23	Poem memorization due.
Feb. 28	Autobiog. Exercise Due.
Mar. 2	<i>Arabian Nights</i> , pp. 1-79. Bring hard-copy of reading response.
Mar. 7	<i>Arabian Nights</i> , pp. 248-299.
Mar. 9	Practicum Oral Reports. Book Groups Meet.
Mar. 14	<i>Arabian Nights</i> , pp. 300-355. Bring hard-copy of reading response.
Mar. 16	<i>Arabian Nights</i> , pp. 356-415.
Mar. 21	<i>Arabian Nights</i> , pp. 464-518.
Mar. 23	Book Groups Meet. Book Group Research Report Due. Discuss future of the English Major. See articles (Download.)
Mar. 28-30	SPRING BREAK.
Apr. 4	<i>Children's Hour</i> . Book Group Essay Due.
Apr. 6	<i>Children's Hour</i> . Bring hard-copy of reading response.
Apr. 11	<i>Children's Hour</i> . Practicum Oral Reports.
Apr. 13	<i>If On a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> . Bring hard-copy of reading response.
Apr. 18	<i>If On a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> . Oral Reports on Original Essays.
Apr. 20	<i>If On a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> . Oral Reports on Original Essays.
Apr. 25	Oral Reports on Original Essays. Original Essay Draft Due.
Apr. 27	<i>Tenth of December</i> : "Victory Lap," "Sticks," "Puppy."
May 2	<i>Tenth of December</i> : "Escape from Spiderhead," "Exhortation." Draft Intro. & Table of Contents for Portfolio Due in Class: hard-copy.
May 4	<i>Tenth of December</i> : "Al Roosten," "The Semplica Girl Diaries."
May 9	<i>Tenth of December</i> : "Home," "My Chivalric Fiasco." Practicum Final Report Due.
May 11	<i>Tenth of December</i> : "Tenth of December."
May 16	Final Class. Original Essay Due.
May 19	Portfolio Due by 5:00 PM. No Class session on this date.