

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 71, Introduction to Creative Writing (20221), Section 03, Spring 2017

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Office Hours: M/W 10:00-11:30 a.m., T/Th 2:00 – 3:30 and by appointment
Class Days/Time: T/Th noon-1:15 pm.
Classroom Location: Boccardo Business Center 123

Required Texts:

Sellers, Heather. The Practice of Creative writing: A guide for students. 3rd ED
Print ISBN 978 1 319 04016-1

Other Reading Materials: All other reading materials will be made available to you via Canvas or as a handout

Canvas Learning Management System

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly (at least once every other day) checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates. *Also: In lieu of handouts, I will often upload reading materials to Canvas. Functioning technology (hardware), such as computers (desktops, laptops, and tablets) and printers, are necessary for successful completion of this course. Regarding software: all computers must be running on basic Word processing software. On-campus wireless internet connectivity can be accessed by using your SJSU ID and SJSU Password!

Course Description

Introduction to Creative Writing (English 71) is a 3-unit lower-division course designed, adopted, implemented, and administered by the Department of English & Comparative Literature at San Jose State University in accordance with the University's General Education Program Guidelines to fulfill Core General Education requirements in the Letters area of Humanities & the Arts. In this course you are expected to read and write in the genres of poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction. Along with reading and writing, this class is comprised of weekly discussions, multiple presentations, and a number of writing workshops.

Prerequisites: Completion of English 1A or equivalent. You must, however, be willing to show growth in the composition areas of grammar and mechanics, along with an ability to think both creatively and critically.

Department Student Learning Objectives (SLOs):

In the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. 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, and/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 the 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.

English 71 GE Course Goals (GELOs):

1. Decipher and understand the form and content of assigned literary works
2. Comprehend the historical and cultural contexts of assigned literary works
3. Recognize the accomplishments of and issues related to writing by men and women representing diverse cultural traditions
4. **Acquire through both individual and collaborative/workshop efforts of a written and oral nature the skills necessary for reading, discussing, analyzing, interpreting, and—most importantly—emulating and writing works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction;**
5. **Communicate such skills with clarity and precision**
6. Develop the ability to write literary works that express intellect and imagination and that represent diversity in human cultures
7. Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work
8. Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
9. Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while also representing matters specific to a particular culture
10. **Write works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction that are of interest and value to the writer, to other students in the course, and to a diverse reading audience**

In-Class Materials:

- One Journal Notebook/Binder
- Pens and Pencils
- Stapler
- Highlighters

Out-of-class Materials:

- Laptop/Tablet
- Internet access
- Printer access

Classroom Protocol

Attendance/Professionalism: You will arrive on time and be ready to work. Regular attendance is expected of you. If you are not present, you cannot participate. A lack of participation will adversely affect your growth as a writer and your overall grade in this course.

Consider this your workplace: appropriate language, and behavior are expected. Technology excuses regarding the failure to compose/type or print work will not be accepted.

Do not text or make/receive phone calls during class. Laptops/ipads, e-readers, etc. will be used in class occasionally. If you bring one to class, keep it turned over or closed until it is time to use it.

About Participation: Class participation (being present; engaging in class discussions) is expected of you. An unwillingness to participate will more likely than not keep you from growing and enjoying the class.

Diversity Statement: Some assignments (reading and writing) may in fact address issues of race, class, gender, etc. I expect you to have an open mind and respect the views of your peers, as they will respect yours. Insensitivity is not acceptable.

About Office Hours: You should plan on seeing me regularly, especially if you are having a hard time in my class. Make the necessary time to meet with me.

Your final grade will often depend on how well you advocate for yourself.

Assignment Procedures

Poetry, Fiction, and Creative Nonfiction Formatting:

1. All poetry that is to be workshopped and turned in to me is to be typed (12pt. font, Times New Roman, single-spaced, except at stanza breaks, one inch margins, stapled when necessary).

2. All prose/short stories and nonfiction essays are to be typed (12pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, one inch margins, with page numbers present somewhere on the page and stapled) and printed double sided.

Failure to follow directions will negatively impact your grade. Your name and the work's title (even if it is "*untitled*") are to always appear on the first page of the work's final draft.

Workshop Procedures (SLO 1, 3):

In this class we will workshop approximately twice a month.

Initially, you will work in pairs. Then groups will be assigned (approximately 8 groups of three). Each student is responsible for printing out the necessary copies for workshop.

Note: See the course schedule below for Peer Review days. Failure to workshop (without the necessary absence documentation/doctor's excuse) will adversely impact your grade.

Revision (SLO 1, 3, 4, 5): Your ability to go back (after my and your peers' comments have been returned) and very critically look into your work is crucial. Revision and your commitment to doing so is what often sets published and unpublished writers apart. If you fail to revise, your overall grade will suffer.

Reading/Literary Events (SLO 3, 4):

It is your responsibility to keep an ear and an eye out for events as they are posted and bring up these events in class. As a resource, I have provided the links below to help you find literary events.

<http://www.litart.org/> (Center for Literary Arts)

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/community/index.html> (SJSU English Department)

<http://www.sjsu.edu/steinbeck/index.html> (Center for Steinbeck Studies)

<http://www.pcsj.org> (Poetry Center San Jose)

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/community/pwc/> (Poets and Writers Coalition)

Course Assignments/What Are They Worth:

Assignment	%	Details	GELOs	SLOs
Writing is	75	Of grade		
Micro memoir	50	500-1500 words	1, 2, 4-6, 10	1, 3
Flash fiction	50	500-1500 words	1, 2, 4-6, 10	1-3
Prose Poem	50	Up to 250	4, 5, 9, 10	3-5
Formal poem	50	Up to 250	4, 5, 9, 10	3-5
Portfolio (revised)	100	Poem, memoir, fiction	1-10	1-5
Self-reflection	50	500-1000	1-10	1-5
Class work is	15	Of grade		
Peer Reviews	30	3 @ 10 points per	1-5, 7-9	1, 3, 5
quizzes	50	5 @ 10 each	1-5, 7-9	1, 3, 5
Final Class Reading	20	Of chosen piece.	4, 5, 9, 10	3-5
Journal work	25 (2x) each	object writing, Building blocks, reading annotations	1-10	1-5
Class Preparation	10	Of grade		
Literary Event + Write-up	20	2 event write-ups @ 10 points per	1-3, 5,7, 9	3, 4
Extra credit	10	Updated Journal	1-10	1-5

Grading Protocol:

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRADING STATEMENT: In English Department courses, instructors comment on and grade the quality of writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All your writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

Grades given conform to the English Department and university grading policy. The Department of English is committed to the differential grading scale as defined in the official 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.

The following Percentages will apply:

A (100-94%),	A- (93-90%),
B+ (89-87%),	B (86-84%),
B- (83-80%),	C+ (79-77%),
C (76-73%),	C- (73-70%),
D+ (69-67%),	D (66-63%),
D- (63-60%),	F (0-59%)...

Note: I do not, under any circumstances, round up.

[About Absences/Make-up Work/Late Work:](#)

Homework: All out of class work is to be submitted to Canvas on the due date. If you miss an assignment due date—make an appointment with me to submit the work and discuss the issues. If you do not turn in the work during my office hours, it will not be accepted and counted as a “0”.

Also, if any homework is assigned (i.e. an addendum to what is on the syllabus) while you are absent, Check the Canvas home page or plan on contacting a classmate. **Do not contact me.**

Workshop/Peer Review Day: You are expected to be present, having read and commented on your peers’ work, as they will do for your work. If you are absent on a workshop day, you must return your peers’ work, along with the formal peer review write-up. If you do not turn in the peer review write-up on time, you can receive no higher than an 80% on the assignment. The assignment, however, if poorly completed, can in fact receive as low as an 0/F.

Note: Multiple absences on workshop days will result in significant grade reductions on your peer reviews.

Revised Drafts for Grade: turn into Canvas by due date. Failure to turn in the revision on time will result in a grade reduction, typically five percentage points off the final assigned grade.

So, if your poem, story, or essay received a 90% but was late, the grade will drop to an 85%. *Again, meet with me before turning in late work.

Multimodal Presentations: Absences on presentation days will negatively impact your grade. If you are absent the day a presentation is due, the presentation, along with its write-up, must be emailed to me no later than the class period’s start time (i.e. 9:00 a.m.).

Since two days will be allotted for presentations, if you were scheduled to submit the second/final day of presentations and are absent, a 10% grade reduction will occur. If you miss both presentation days and do not submit all presentation materials, you must visit my office hours, where I will make the

necessary decision regarding grading. Note: Multiple absences will result in significant grade reductions.

Class Reading: You must be present. If you are not present, you will fail the class!

Final Exam = self-reflection You must be present. If you are not present, you will fail the class!

“University Policies: Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs maintains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.”

You may find all syllabus related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP’s Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.

Academic integrity: PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires 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 Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Course Schedule

Note: I will teach to your needs. **This schedule is subject to change.** When the need arises, I will make the necessary amendments to this schedule. Updates to due dates will occur at least a class period before the newly revised due date, via in-class verbal notification and via a Canvas reminder message.

The schedule is posted Canvas and updated about three times over the semester—come to class to be sure you have the right due dates

Week	Date	Day	Topic	Activity, Journal work	Homework	Notes
	before first day			get book, journal, equipment	read ch 1	
1	26-Jan	Thurs	object writing	go over expectations, events, object writing	begin object writing in journal	
	-					
2	31	Tues	Ch 1 focus	pg 13 practice--action	rewrite Pg 13 practice-with images, sensory detail (26)	
	2-Feb	Thurs		LISTS=Pg 15: 25 moving images; pg 17, secret worlds; pg 18 25 confusing things;	pg 19 writing commitments list, continue updating lists	
3	7	Tues	Ch 2 reading	pg 37 reading history, pg 38 pick two readings, pg 54 imitation (57)	annotate then (43) pg 59 imitate another poem	
	9	Thurs		groups of 3 discuss elements in poem and present each reading (65-70, 76)	turn in journals (lists, object, annotations, imitation)	notes about a reading/event
4	14	Tues	CH 3 building blocks	Blocks, sentences (85), conflicts (86), scenes (87), words, lines, turns, stanzas, forms,	read cathedrals (119-129), each group look for one of the Elements (44) and the conflicts (89)	conferences
	16	Thurs		next class (90) conflict, crisis, resolution look at Cathedral and identify the 3 parts, also in (93)	Practice (93) plan out narratives with three parts and no details.	
5	21	Tues		3rd class: poems wedding cake (336) words, lines,	list words you love(99), revise original story into poem (100)	

	23	Thurs		in class quiz, conferences	Collect journals (quiz in journal) w/Event notes	
6	28	Tues	Ch 4 images	abecedarius and anaphora	finish poem	
	2-Mar	Thurs		peer review	post poem in canvas	revision notes
7	7	Tues	Ch 5 energy	flash or list story	draft flash or list story	
	9	Thurs		work on story in class		
8	14	Tues		peer review	Post list or flash story in Canvas	revision notes
8	16	Thurs	Ch 6 tension	journey story	draft story	
9	21	Tues		work on story in class		
	23	Thurs		review story	CH 7 pattern, Post journey story in canvas	
	28	Tues		break		
	30	Thurs				
10	4-Apr	Tues	Ch 7 Pattern	ghazal, pantoum, sestina	draft poem	
	6	Thurs		work on poem	post for peer review (Canvas)	revision notes
11	11	Tues	Ch8 insight	sonnet	draft sonnet	
	13	Thurs		work on sonnet in class	post for peer review (canvas)	revision notes
12	18	Tues	Ch 9 revision	revision practice	choose a poem and revise it	conferences (extra credit for updated journal)
	20	Thurs		review revision work	choose a story	
13	25	Tues		work on story in class	revise story	
	27	Thurs		review revision work		
14	2-May	Tues		one more of your choice	revise choice, bring choices to class thurs	

	4	Thurs	Ch 11 Portfolio	how to package	put portfolio together, bring to class	
15	9	Tues	ch 12 further	how to give a reading	collect portfolio	
	11	Thurs		readings	choose what you will read	
16	16	Tues		readings		
final			reflection		return portfolio	

