

San José State University

Department of English and Comparative Literature

English 71: Creative Writing (Section 05) – Spring 2017

Course and Contact Information

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Class Days/Time:	TuTh 1:30-2:45
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"Write. Rewrite. When not writing or rewriting, read. I know of no shortcuts."

– Larry L. King

Course Description

This course will examine works of poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction as expression of human intellect and imagination, to comprehend the historic and cultural contexts, and recognize issues related to writing by men and women of diverse cultural traditions. Students will also write poetry, creative nonfiction, and a short fiction. This is a 3-unit lower-division course designed 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 "C2" Letters area of Humanities & the Arts.

In short we will explore how creative texts work – open them up, understand how they're put together, how they live and breathe. Hopefully that understanding can help us to better create and heal our own writing. Does this make us doctors? Mad scientists? Nurturing parents? I'll let you choose the metaphor. You will be responsible for short written responses to readings, participating in class discussions and activities, reading and responding to each other's work, and creating a portfolio of new work. Above all, I ask that you be respectful of each other and of your own writing.

Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

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

SLO 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, or rhetoric

SLO 2: Show familiarity with major literary works (of poetry), genres (styles), periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.

SLO 3: Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.

Additionally, students enrolled in this class will learn to:

- Decipher and understand the form and content of assigned literary works;
- Comprehend the historical and cultural contexts of assigned literary works;
- Recognize the accomplishments of and issues related to writing by individuals representing diverse cultural traditions;
- 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;
- Communicate such skills with clarity and precision;
- Develop an appreciation of literary works as expressions of human intellect and imagination, and as representations of diverse human cultures;
- Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work;
- Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
- Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while also representing matters specific to a particular culture;
- 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.

What books do I need?

Textbooks

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide & Anthology* (2016) Broadview, ISBN 978-1554812264
Available at San José University Spartan Bookstore

What else do I need?

- Paper for in-class writing
- A binder with dividers for Poetry, Fiction, and Nonfiction for you to organize during the semester
- Regular Internet access and email
- The ability to print and copy manuscripts weekly for workshop
- A binder for your Portfolio at the end of the semester

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that 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>.

How will my attendance and participation be evaluated?

This class is largely composed of workshops and in-class activities, and therefore, attendance and punctuality are extremely important. You should bring required materials to class every day; failure to properly prepare for class, *or texting in class*, will require me to ask you to leave.

If you should miss class, it is *your* responsibility to cover the material from the missed session, acquire handouts distributed in class, and acquaint yourself with any announcements made about assignments. Be sure to get information from someone in class whom you can contact if you are absent: _____

NOTE that [University policy F69-24](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading."

How should I get organized for this class?

Because you will be reflecting on your writing process, it's important that you track the artifacts of your development for each piece, as well as for your development as the whole writer you are. To this end, I suggest that you keep a notebook, which you divide into the following sections: Poetry, Fiction, Nonfiction. As we move through the class, use these sections to keep your drafts, critiques, and reflections. You'll find that this gives you a lot more to develop from when you get to your final portfolio.

What kind of assignments will we do?

Writing Assignments

You will submit the following Writing Assignments over the course of the semester:

Poetry	Sound poem Imagery poem Centio poem Chosen form poem
Fiction	Short Story
Creative Nonfiction	Personal Essay

I will provide instructions for each assignment before it is due. Some assignments will be submitted in hard copy; others will be submitted to Canvas.

Online Responses

Throughout the class you will be required to post a Online Response on Canvas by class time. I will post a prompt and you will write a response to it. You will post these under **Discussions** on our Canvas site. (Please enter them in the text box rather than as attachments.) We will use these responses in various ways to analyze the works of others and to try out techniques for our own

writing. **No late work will be accepted for Online Responses. Responses must meet posted word count requirements to receive any credit.**

In-class Activities

These activities will vary from class to class, and I will give individual instructions on them during class time. Some you will turn in to me; some you will not. **No late work will be accepted for In-class Activities.**

Workshop Submissions

The ability to give and receive constructive criticism is crucial to your development as a writer. We will do it with the tact and decorum that such work demands, especially in the workshop setting. Your ideas may be challenged, but we will strive to ensure that such challenges are neither personal nor malicious. My guidelines for workshop conduct are best summed up by the lovely Liam Clancy: **“No fear. No envy. No meanness.”**

You will submit all **4 poems** for our Small Group Workshops and **one longer work** (Short Story or Personal Essay) for our Large Group workshops. Short stories and Personal Essays not workshopped in Large Group will be workshopped later in Small Groups.

Small Group

During the Poetry unit we will have Small Group Workshop. **Everyone** will bring 7 copies of their poem to class (1 for you, 1 for me, 1 for each member of your group.) I will assign you to groups, with whom you will workshop your poems. We will also have Small Group Workshops for longer works not already workshopped by the larger group, as well as for Revision Activities.

Large Group

For the longer genres, we will workshop 2-3 writers per class. We will sign up for slots during class. You will be required to workshop one longer piece (Short Story or Personal Essay). You will need to post your work to Canvas **one week before you are scheduled to be workshopped**. This will give your peers time to thoroughly read and comment on your work.

After your Large Group workshop, I will give you a **Revision Activity** to complete before the next Small Group Workshop. These are meant to help you to experiment and re+vision your work. You'll try the activity and reflect on how it affected the way you think about your piece.

While we are workshopping:

- Listen to your classmates and be careful not to interrupt. It is frequently difficult to formulate responses in front of peers, and even slight interruptions can derail the thoughts of the person speaking.
- Focus your comments on the work and never on the author. It should be as if we're discussing a manuscript that arrived with no name on it.
- It is not acceptable to issue insults or to praise sarcastically. Likely, some of the work we read will not meet your exact taste. That should not prevent you from delivering a sound analysis of its strengths and weaknesses.

If your manuscript is being workshopped:

- Remain silent until the conclusion of the discussion. Do not nod or shake your head to questions raised about your piece. If we cannot determine what was intended by a particular passage, this should alert you to something that's not yet being communicated in the writing. Let this feedback guide your revision.
- Take notes. Even if what we're saying does not sound useful in the moment, later on you may read through our comments and discover one or two to be of value.

Workshop Critiques

You will submit a critique letter for each of your classmates for the Large Group critiques. (Small Group critiques will be done in class.) For each manuscript that you critique, you'll need to make comments on the manuscript itself and to submit a **single-spaced critique letter** addressed to the author. **This must be printed out to give to the author and uploaded to Canvas for me to see.**

When critiquing a manuscript:

- Read it twice, thoroughly, while asking yourself what the author is trying to accomplish, and how the piece might improve and become what it seeks to be.
- List the elements of the manuscript that are working well. Compliment parts that are effective or that elicit a particular emotional reaction from you.
- Question the way in which the work proceeds. What isn't quite clear? What needs more development?

Attending a Bay Area Literary Reading

You will attend at least one literary reading over the course of the semester. I'll post a list of possibilities on Canvas, but feel free to scour the San Jose and San Francisco papers/websites for others. You'll attend the reading and write a short response (1-2 pages). Your response should include a description of the event, a summary of what was read, and your reflection on the experience. If you anticipate any difficulty in meeting this course requirement, please consult with me in the first two weeks of the semester.

Class poem

Throughout the semester you will collaborate with your peers to write a poem as a class. What will it be about? How will it be structured? What will be the universal truth that it attempts to reveal? These will be decisions for you all to make together. At the end of the semester, we'll write a cover letter and send out the poem to literary journals. Who knows? You may end up getting something published!

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a portfolio of substantially revised work. The Final Portfolio must include:

- Critical introduction
- 4 revised Poems + earlier drafts
- 1 revised Short Story + earlier drafts
- 1 revised Personal Essay + earlier drafts

Note: A revision is a reworking of an earlier draft. The correction of spelling or grammatical errors does not constitute a revision. Rather, revision requires considering the whole, re-imagining events or sequences, and rewriting what can be improved.

Assignments

Type	Number of Words	Learning Outcome
Online Responses	100-200 each	SLO 1/2
In-class Writing Activities	Varies	SLO 1/2/3
Sound poem	Varies	SLO 2/3
Imagery poem	Varies	SLO 2/3
Centio poem	Varies	SLO 2/3
Chosen form poem	Varies	SLO 2/3
Short story	1500-2000	SLO 2/3
Personal Essay	1000-2000	SLO 2/3
Large Group Workshop Submission	1500-2000	SLO 3
Workshop Submission Revision Activity	Varies	SLO 3
Large Group Workshop Critiques	300 each	SLO 1
Response to literary reading	500	SLO 1/2
Class poem participation	Varies	SLO 1/3
Final Portfolio	Varies	SLO 3
End-of-Semester Reading	N/A	SLO 3

Grading Policy

The point breakdown for the class is as follows:

Assignment	Points Possible	My score
Online Responses	5 x 12	
In-class Writing Activities	5 x 28	
Sound poem	20	
Imagery poem	20	
Centio poem	20	
Chosen form poem	20	
Short story	20	

Assignment	Points Possible	My score
Personal Essay	20	
Large Group Workshop Submission	20	
Workshop Submission Revision Activity	10	
Large Group Workshop Critiques	5 x 23	
Response to literary reading	15	
Class poem participation	10	
Final Portfolio	200	
End of Semester Reading	10	
Total Points	700	

Grading Scale:

A = 93-100%	B+ = 87-89%	C+ = 77-79%	D+ = 67-69%
A- = 90-92%	B = 83-86%	C = 73-76%	D = 63-66%
	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	D- = 60-62%

This course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

If you do not understand the reason you received a specific grade, please ask for clarification *at least 24 hours after receiving it, and at most one week after.*

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Is late work accepted?

Any work not turned in by the assigned time/date will be lowered 10% per day up to 3 days. **I will not accept late work for Online Responses or In-Class Writing Activities.**

What is expected of me in this class and what can I expect?

Your task as a student will be to take advantage of the readings and class instruction, and to embrace the processes of writing and reading. To help foster a positive classroom community, I expect that students will treat each other and me with respect and dignity at all times, and that you will attend class regularly and give your full attention to the activities.

You can expect that I will treat you as an individual, and that I will challenge you to think, experiment, and create. I am happy to talk to you about any concerns or questions by email or during my office hours.

University Policies

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](#) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](#) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
 - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
 - 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.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

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/>.

Note: In this policy you will notice that it is considered “cheating” to submit previously graded work for a grade in another class, as well as to submit the same work simultaneously in two or more classes. This means that you cannot submit a poem, short story, or personal essay for this class that you have also submitted for another class. Any such submissions will receive a “0” and I will take the appropriate administrative actions.

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab 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 DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their 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.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

Course Schedule*

English 71: Creative Writing (Section 05) – Spring 2017

*Like any working draft, this schedule is subject to revision. I will alert you to changes through class announcements and email.

+All reading is to be done before class. Page numbers are from *Write Moves*.

+All online responses must be posted before class in order to receive credit.

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
1	Th 1/26	Introductions Characters in Your Class
2	Tu 1/31	Sign up for workshops Self-Portrait Poem
2	Th 2/2	Read: "Why Write" (19-24) Due: Online Response 1 (Why we write) Discuss Defamiliarization In-Class Activity 1 (The Writing Process, Guided Lines)
3	Tu 2/7	Read: "Revision" (48-61) Due: Online Response 2 (Revision process) Discuss drafts of published poem In-Class Activity 2 (Cut-up) Discuss Poetry Revision Checklist
3	Th 2/9	Read: "Image, Detail, and Figurative Language" (67-79) Due: Online Response 3 (Discuss and imitate) In-Class Activity 3 (Imagery in Poetry) Discuss Imagery Poem assignment Discuss class poem
4	Tu 2/14	Read: "Sound" (80-92) Due: Online Response 4 (Discuss and imitate) In-Class Activity 4 (Playing with Sound) Discuss poetry critiques Discuss Sound Poem assignment

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
4	Th 2/15	<p>Read: "Writing Poems" (139-155) Due: Online Response 5 (Find a poem) Due (in class): Imagery poem In-Class Activity 5: Small Group Workshop Discuss Poetry Revision Checklist Discuss Cento poem assignment</p>
5	Tu 2/21	<p>Due (in class): Sound poem In-Class Activity 6: Small Group Workshop Discuss Chosen Form Poem assignment</p>
5	Th 2/23	<p>Due (in class): Cento poem In-Class Activity 7: Small Group Workshop</p>
6	Tu 2/28	<p>Due (in class): Chosen Form poem In-Class Activity 8: Small Group Workshop Discuss Poetry packets</p>
6	Th 3/2	<p>Due (in class): Poetry packet with revisions In-Class Activity 9: Reflection and Annotation Work on Class Poem</p>
7	Tu 3/7	<p>Read: "Writing Stories" (156-172) Due: Online Response 6 (Find a story) In-Class Activity 10 (The 5 Plots, Complete the Story) Discuss short story assignment and workshop critiques</p>
7	Th 3/9	<p>Due: Online Response 7 (Discuss and imitate) Read: "Character and Setting" (93-105) In-Class Activity 11 (Craigslist Ad, Turning Place into a Character) Discuss Dialogue handout</p>
8	Tu 3/14	<p>Read: "Scene, Exposition, and Reflection" (106-118) Due: Online Response 8 (Discuss and imitate) In-Class Activity 12 (Quentin Tarantino, Writing Scenes Driven by Dilemma and Conflict)</p>
8	Th 3/16	<p>Read: "Voice and Perspective" (119-132) Due: Online Response 9 (Discuss and imitate) In-Class Activity 13 (Dating Site Profile, Lobster Dinner) Discuss POV Chart</p>

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
9	Tu 3/21	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 14: Large Group Workshop Writers 1, 2, 3
9	Th 3/23	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 15: Large Group Workshop Writers 4, 5, 6
	Tu 3/28	SPRING BREAK
	Th 3/30	SPRING BREAK
10	Tu 4/4	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 16: Large Group Workshop Writers 7, 8, 9
10	Th 4/6	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 17: Large Group Workshop Writers 10, 11, 12
11	Tu 4/11	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 18: Large Group Workshop Writers 13, 14, 15
11	Th 4/12	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 19: Large Group Workshop Writers 16, 17
12	Tu 4/18	Due (online and in class): Short Story Revision Activity (for those who have already workshopped) Due (online and in class): Short Story (for those who have not yet workshopped) In-Class Activity 20: Small Group Workshop
12	Th 4/20	Read: "Writing Personal Essays" (173-186) Due: Online Response 10 (Find an essay) In-Class Activity 21 (Bad Decision, Personal Archaeology) Discuss Personal Essay Assignment
13	Tu 4/25	Due: Online Response 11 (Discuss and imitate form) In-Class Activity 22 (Haunting Memories, Building a Structure)
13	Th 4/27	Due: Online Response 12 (Discuss and imitate style) In-Class Activity 23 (Choosing Details, Ex-Loves: Specificity vs. Stereotype)

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
14	Tu 5/2	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 24: Large Group Workshop Writers 18, 19, 20
14	Th 5/4	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 25: Large Group Workshop Writers 21, 22, 23
15	Tu 5/9	Due (online and in class): Workshop Critiques In-Class Activity 26: Large Group Workshop Writers 24, 25 Work on class poem
15	Th 5/11	Due (online and in class): Personal Essay Revision Activity (for those who have already workshopped) Due (online and in class): Personal Essay (for those who have not yet workshopped) In-Class Activity 27: Small Group Workshop Discuss Portfolio
16	Tu 5/16	Due (online): Review of literary event In-Class Activity 28 (Portfolio workshop) Finish class poem and cover letter
Final	Tu 5/23 12:15-2:30	Due (in class): Final Portfolio End-of-Semester Reading