

**San José State University**  
**Department of English & Comparative Literature**  
**English 297, MA Comprehensives, Fall 2018**

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<b>Office Hours:</b>	M 1:00-3:00 & by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	M 7:00-9:45
<b>Classroom:</b>	BBC 221

### **MYSJSU Messaging**

You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor).

### **Course Description**

This is not a typical lit seminar on a defined, delimited topic with the usual assignments. It is more like a workshop aimed at presenting general guidelines, dispelling myths and misunderstandings, reviewing materials, and offering hands on practice to help you prepare for the comprehensive MA exams. Our goal is to understand how each part of the exam is set up, what is expected, and how best go about preparing so that you can create an effective study plan for yourself. We will review major periods, movements, authors, themes, theoretical approaches and key concepts in class. Class work will emphasize (a) honing close reading and textual analysis skills, (b) using appropriate literary/critical/theoretical terminology, and (c) connecting the text to the historical/literary context. We will also examine sample exam questions and critique answers to get a clearer understanding of what kind of questions to expect, how to plan/prepare your answers, and how to present your response in a timed essay. While this class will definitely give you many useful tips and tools, intensive independent study outside of class is absolutely essential for gaining the kind of in-depth knowledge necessary to do well on the exams. In other words, you should not expect to pass the exams simply because you take this course!

For basic information about the MA exams, please visit the English department website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps.html>

### **Graduate Program Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.

2. Students will demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research.
3. Students will demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
4. Students will demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion, b) formulate and defend original arguments, c) employ effectively the language of their discipline and d) write under time constraints.
5. Students will demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.
6. Students preparing for teaching careers will receive the appropriate instruction.
7. Students will be prepared for further graduate study.

### **Course Student Learning Objectives**

- a. Demonstrate familiarity with major periods/authors/texts covered in the MA exam
- b. Demonstrate ability to analyze literary texts in context
- c. Demonstrate ability to respond to sample exam questions

### **MA Exam Dates for Fall 2018:**

Consecutive Saturdays, **November 10th (part 1) and November 17th (Part 2).**

### **Recommended Texts** (supplement to the reading list of primary texts/authors)

1. The Norton Anthologies (British Lit, American Lit, Theory & Criticism): Focus particularly on intros to periods/literary movements/authors
2. Turco, Lewis Putnam. *The Book of Forms: A Handbook of Poetics* (for poetry analysis required in Part 1 exam, section 3)

### **Assignments:**

- Presentations: You will be make 1-2 group presentations on assigned topics. These presentations will cover major literary periods, movements, concepts, authors, and texts (PLO 1, 2)
- Writing Workshops: You participate in weekly writing workshops in and out of class during which you will draft short responses to questions, provide feedback, and do peer editing. (PLO 3, 4)
- Other Assignments: These will include preparing a reading list for the exam, preparing bibliographies, and responding to sample questions/answers posted on Canvas.

### **Grading:**

- Assignments will be awarded Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory.
- The course will be awarded Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving credit for the course is contingent upon Satisfactory completion of at least 70% of all assigned work.

### **Classroom Protocol**

**Attendance & Participation:** Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are extremely important. Please arrive on time and stay for the entire class. You are responsible for all materials assigned, presented and discussed. You are encouraged to take notes in class, but you should have studied the materials before class begins. Poor attendance/participation will have negative effects on your final grade. Since most classes will be based on group discussions, presentations and workshops it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and take an active as well as thoughtful role in all classroom activities. Your questions, comments, insights, and interpretations are valuable no matter how outlandish they may seem. So do speak up!

**Conferencing:** I encourage you to visit me in my office whenever you need to discuss something, whether it is an assignment or any other difficulty you may be having with the structure and format of the class. I am completely open to criticism and suggestions because the only way I can fix things is if I know what is wrong.

**Submitting work:** All work must be turned exactly as and when indicated in the schedule. All readings are listed against dates they will be discussed in class; so when you come to class you should have already read the materials and be prepared to discuss them

## **Dropping and Adding**

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

## **University Policies**

### **Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\\_affairs/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Policy\\_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require 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 website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

### **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 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

### **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and

Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

**Learning Assistance Resource Center**

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

**Peer Mentor Center**

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/>

**Course Number / Title, Semester, Course Schedule**

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/27	<p>Introduction to course            The MA exam  <a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macoms.html">http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macoms.html</a>            FAQ: Q &amp;A</p> <p>Text and Context: close reading/analysis, literary terminology, historical/literary context.</p> <p>Part 1 Exam: Chronological orientation, close reading of poetry; mostly Brit and early American            3 sections: classical/medieval/early mod, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, close reading/poetry</p> <p>Part 2 Exam: Genre emphasis, ability to use literary theory            3 sections – poetry Brit/American, fiction/drama Brit/American, World lit.</p> <p><b>Form Groups and Sign up for presentations</b></p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Homework: Start preparing/revising your reading list Print and review the sample exams <a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps_samples.html">http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/macomps_samples.html</a>
2	9/3	Labor Day No class
3	9/10	Part 1 Guest Lecture: Professor Nancy Stork Beowulf, Sir Gawain & the Green Knight, Chaucer  Group Presentation: Classical, Medieval, Early Modern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements (poetry, drama, epic)</li> <li>➤ Major authors</li> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> </ul>
4	9/17	Part 1 Group Presentation: 17th-18 <sup>th</sup> C British & early American <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements</li> <li>➤ Major authors</li> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> </ul> Workshop: Analyze sample response Respond to sample question
5	9/24	Part 1 Guest Presentation: Professor Adrienne Eastwood Workshop: Close Reading of Poetry
6	10/1	Part 2 – Poetry (1)  Group Presentation: Romantics/Transcendentalists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements</li> <li>➤ Major poets</li> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> </ul> Workshop: Analyze sample response Close reading poetry analysis Respond to sample question
7	10/8	Part 2 – Poetry (2) Group Presentation: Victorian through Modern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements</li> <li>➤ Major poets</li> </ul>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> <li>➤ Additional readings/resources</li> </ul> <p>Workshop: Close reading poetry analysis Respond to sample question</p>
8	10/15	<p>Part 2: Fiction</p> <p>Group Presentation: (Gothic) Realism, Naturalism, Modernism (19<sup>th</sup> century-early 20<sup>th</sup> century)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements</li> <li>➤ Major authors</li> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> </ul> <p>Workshop: Analyze sample response Respond to sample question</p>
9	10/22	<p>Part 2: World Lit</p> <p>Group Presentation: Postmodernism, (Post)colonialism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Overview of period/lit movements</li> <li>➤ Major authors</li> <li>➤ Main themes</li> <li>➤ Key concepts</li> </ul> <p>Workshop: Analyze sample response Respond to sample question</p>
10	10/29	<b>Final Review for Part 1 Exam</b>
11	11/5	<b>Final Review for Part 2 Exam</b>
12-16		<b>Topics on Demand</b>