

**San José State University**  
**College of Humanities and the Arts**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**ENGL 130 (Fiction)-Spring 2018**

**Course and Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Tommy Mouton, MFA  
**Office Location:** Faculty Offices (FOB 112)  
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**Office Hours:** TTH 10:45 a.m.– 11:45 a.m. and by appointment  
**Class Days/Time:** TTH 12:00 p.m.-1:15 p.m.

**Classroom:** (Sweeney Hall 444)

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 71 (Intro to Creative Writing)

**Course Description:**

This class has been designed for you, students, to write and read enduring works of fiction! This class, too, is designed so that you take creative/ artistic risks and have fun. Any unwillingness to wholly participate in this class *can* inhibit your overall personal and academic growth.

In this course, we will read and write in the genre of fiction (i.e. the short story). You are expected to write stories that are character-driven, though not purely in the realm of reality. Although this “realm of reality” can be stretched, especially if you seek to write speculative fiction, your characters and the stories in which they tell, the worlds in which they inhabit, must be “earthly” and ultimately feel real to the reader.

\*Note: Sub-genres such as romance/ erotica, science fiction/ fantasy, and horror/ the Gothic are not acceptable workshop submissions (i.e. cannot fulfill any part of your four-unit grade). If you enjoy writing in these genres, you are very welcome to ask fellow classmates (or Prof. Mouton) to read outside of class. Submitted work (for workshop) that does not meet my genre-specific guidelines will not be accepted for credit and will otherwise adversely impact your grade. Also, please do not seek to excerpt and workshop novel chapters. I can, again, provide feedback outside of class.

## Department Student Learning Outcomes (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.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject.

### Required Texts:

*The Art and Craft of Fiction: A Writer's Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*-Michael Kardos. ISBN-13: 978-1319030421

### Suggested Texts:

*The Best American Short Stories 2016 Junot Diaz, ed.* ISBN-978-0-544-58289-7

*Reed Magazine 150th Anniversary Edition* (Issue 70 - 2017). San Jose State University literary journal.

### In-class Materials:

Composition notebook/ binder/loose-leaf paper

Pens and Pencils

Highlighters

### Out-of-class Materials:

Laptop/Tablet

Printer access

Stapler

## 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, dress, and behavior are expected. Technology excuses regarding the failure to compose/type or print work will not be tolerated. Do not text or make/receive phone calls during class. Laptops/ ipads, e-readers, etc., will remain off/closed during lectures, whole-class and group discussions, unless otherwise told differently. Please eat and drink prior to coming to class. In most instances, however, bottled water is acceptable.

**\*Note:** Because this is a 4-unit course, students, you can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. This course will have integrated into the syllabus the following 1-unit enhancement: International Education / Cultural Enrichment (i.e. You are required to attend two readings by prose writers presented on the SJSU campus or elsewhere).

**\*About Office Hours:** You should plan on seeing me regularly, especially if you are having a hard time in my class. Please, set aside time to meet with me. Your final grade will often depend on how well you advocate for yourself.

## **Assignments/ What Are They Worth:**

*100 points total*

### **Story #1 (Revised SLO 3) = (25%):**

Written from any point of view (4-12 pages). Although I will appreciate your enthusiasm, please do not write more than twelve pages. This is, again, short fiction; less, indeed, can be more.

\*Note: Short Story #1 is to be revised and handed back in (with my initial feedback/ story copy) for a grade a week after you have workshopped and received reviews/ comments (including Prof. Mouton's)

### **Short Story #2 (Revised SLO 3) = (25%):**

Written from any point of view (4-12 pages). Although I will appreciate your enthusiasm, please do not write more than twelve pages. This is, again, short fiction; less, indeed, can be more.

\*Note: Short Story #2 is to be revised and handed back in (with my initial feedback/ story copy) for a grade a week after you have workshopped and received reviews/ comments (including Prof. Mouton's). \*Note: All revisions are "deep" revisions, wherein you have exhausted all creative risks to transform, when necessary, characters, scenes, point of view, etc.

### **Peer Reviews (SLO 1, 3) = (20%):**

You will write four to five (300-500-word) formal peer reviews each week, one for each workshopped peer. Your peer will need a copy, and I will need a copy. \*Note: the double-spaced, single-sided review is in lieu of in-text annotations/ marginal feedback. If you are absent during a workshop, you are still required to electronically scan and email me (and your peer) your reviews. Reviews received late will be severely marked down. \*Note: All revisions are "deep" revisions, wherein you have exhausted all creative risks to transform, when necessary, characters, scenes, point of view, etc.

### **Reading Events (SLO 1, 3) = (15%):**

2 *Required* Reading Events, along with a 1000-word critical reflection. \*Note: I will provide you (via Canvas "Files") comprehensive directions pertaining to the reading event critical reflection (no later than Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>.)

### **Homework/ Reading Quizzes (SLO 1, 3) = (10%):**

When necessary, you may be asked to continue writing in-class sketches/ exercises at home. Also, if I sense that you are not reading or properly participating, I will quiz you!

### **Final in-class reading (SLO 1, 3) = (5%):**

The final in-class reading will be your opportunity to stand before your peers and read. Not only must you physically be present, you must, to receive all five points, provide me a copy of your excerpted story. Yes, you must bring two copies.

## **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* of your writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs, (in, however, the context of your intended style.)

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.

\*Note: Creative writing, though subject to the instructor's (and or peer's) individual interpretation, can be evaluated according to the below general standards/ craft elements: 1) Textual and/or technical competence and eloquence. 2) Imaginative risk. 3) Energy and freshness of language. 4) Effective use of metaphor and other forms of figurative language. 5) Clarity and precision of detail. 6) Effective use of grammar, syntax, rhythm, per the story's overall creative context; 7) Naturalness and believability. 8) Appropriateness of style to subject. 9) Audience considerations

The following grading will apply: A (96-94%), A- (93-90%), B+ (89-87%), B (86-84%), B- (83-80%), C+ (79-77%), C (76-73%), C- (72-70%), D+ (69-67%), D (66-63%), D- (63-60%), F (0-59%) \*Note: I do not, under any circumstances, round up.

## **Assignment Addendums:**

**Short Stories (SLO 1, 3):** All short stories are to be typed (12pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, one-inch margins, with MLA-appropriate page numbers). Also, your name and the story's title (if in fact you have chosen a title) are to appear on the story's first page. We will read a lot this semester, but please do not, as you read and fall in love with the work of other writers, merely emulate that writer's style, where your voice and creative point of view are lost. You are an artist! Have fun crafting *your own* work.

## **Workshop Procedures (SLO 1, 3):**

In this class, you will have the opportunity to workshop twice. A week prior to your “selected” workshop date, you will handout (26 copies, including a copy for yourself) of your story. Your story must be double-spaced, single-sided, one-inch margins, stapled (upper-left), and include page numbers. Your classmates will take home your story, read it, leave in-text/ marginal comments, and type up a 300-500-word (1-2 page) formal review. In-class, on your workshop day, I will facilitate the workshop. Each story will receive approximately 10-12 minutes (\*Students, you will be allowed to read a very brief excerpt of your to-be workshopped work before peer feedback begins). At the end of the workshop, you will hand your workshopped peer your annotated manuscripts, along with the formal typed review. (\*I must also receive a copy of the peer review). Critiques will be graded on the quality and quantity of provided feedback.

\*Note: Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Although I value truth, you will not attempt to demean the work of anyone in this class. Please do not base the bulk of your comments on

grammatical/ mechanical errors, as inconsistencies may very well speak to the author's style/aesthetic. Do know, though, authors, you cannot pass off grammatical and mechanical errors, without being able to justify, per the story's/ works overall creative context.

**Homework and Quizzes (SLO 1, 3):** Any assigned homework is due at the beginning of the class period (including those Canvas "Discussions"). If you are absent, I will accept the work during my office hours, a day *or few* after the absence. If any homework is assigned (i.e. an addendum to what is on the syllabus) while you are absent, plan on contacting a classmate.

Concerning quizzes: If I sense that the class has not read, I will quiz you! If you are late or arrive after the quiz has begun, or if you are absent, you forfeit that day's quiz. Quizzes *cannot* be made up.

### **Reading/Literary Events (SLO 1):**

You are required to attend two literary (fiction) events over the course of the semester. I do, however, encourage you to attend as many literary events as your schedule will allow. Remember, though, that this is a fiction class; although I will applaud your efforts to experience the works of poets and essayists, your "for-grade" literary event write-ups *must* be for a fiction writer.

Events can be found at:

<http://www.litart.org/> (Center for Literary Arts)-(\*Natalie Bazile, Feb. 8, 7 p.m.)

<http://www.sjsu.edu/steinbeck/index.html> (Center for Steinbeck Studies)- (\*Steinbeck Fellows reading)

\*Note: readings are listed in the Sunday edition of the San Jose Mercury News and San Francisco Chronicle, and in Metro. Most local bookstores host author events. Check out Kepler's Books in Menlo Park ([www.keplers.org](http://www.keplers.org)), Books Inc ([www.booksinc.net](http://www.booksinc.net)), Hicklebees in Willow Glen ([www.hicklebees.com](http://www.hicklebees.com)), and your local Barnes and Noble ([www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com)) for listings (above reading suggestions borrowed from Prof. Nicholas Taylor)

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

University Policies Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo...>

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

# English 130: Spring 2018

## 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.*

*TACF*-The Art and Craft of Fiction    *BASS* = Best American Short Stories    *Reed* = *RM*

Week	Date	In-Class Topics and Due Dates	Next Class Period's Readings/Homework and Assigned Essays
1	Th 1/25	<b>Interview Notes Due</b> Go over syllabus/calendar In-Class writing exercise	Read "Tandolfo the Great" ( <i>TACF</i> 204) + Ch. 1 and Ch. 2 and Read ( <i>TACF</i> 3-27) + Post reading notes to Canvas Discussion
2	T 1/30	Begin Reading + Discussion ( <i>TACF</i> ) + Read from "Drinking Coffee Elsewhere" ( <i>TACF</i> 315)	Complete Reading Ch. 3 ( <i>TACF</i> ) + Read "On the Rainy River" ( <i>TACF</i> 299)
2	Th 2/1	Ch. 3 Discussion Ch.4 ( <i>TACF</i> )-Character; Plot; Setting; Point of View; Theme; Tone/Voice	Read "This Blessed House" ( <i>TACF</i> 251) Read "Apollo" ( <i>BASS</i> 1) *Post Reading notes to Canvass Discussion
3	T 2/6	Ch.4 ( <i>TACF</i> )-Character; Plot; Setting; Point of View; Theme; Tone/Voice *Discuss Lahiri and Adichie	Complete character Exercise and (Post to Canvas)
3	Th 2/8	Ch.4 ( <i>TACF</i> )-Character; Plot; Setting; Point of View; Theme; Tone/Voice	Read "Williamsburg Bridge" ( <i>BASS</i> 268) + Choose ( <i>TACF</i> ) story to share (via Canvas Discussion)
4	T 2/13	Begin Reading Ch. 7 ( <i>TACF</i> 118) + Read from "The Suitcase" ( <i>BASS</i> 121)	Read "Indulgence" ( <i>TACF</i> 336)
4	Th 2/15	Continue Reading Ch. 7 ( <i>TACF</i> ) + Read from "Sven" ( <i>RM</i> )	Read "High Stakes" ( <i>TACF</i> 119) + Begin Reading Ch. 5 ( <i>TACF</i> 72)
5	T 2/20	Discuss Ch. 5 ( <i>TACF</i> ) Read from "The Letician Age" ( <i>BASS</i> 86)	Read "The Appropriation of Cultures" ( <i>TACF</i> 224)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>In-Class Topics and Due Dates</b>	<b>Next Class Period's Readings/Homework and Assigned Essays</b>
5	Th 2/22	Read from Ch. 6 + Read "This Is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" ( <i>TACF</i> 191)  *Workshop #1 Stories Due!	Prepare to Workshop!
6-10	T 2/27 thru TH 3/29	Short Story #1 Workshops    *No Class (Spring Break 3/27 and 3/29)	*No Class (Spring Break 3/27 and 3/29)
11	T 4/3	Revision (see Chs. 8, Ch. 9, Ch. 10, and Ch. 11- <i>TACF</i> )  Reading Event Write-ups Due!	Read from <i>TACF</i> : (Chs. 8, 9, 10, 11) + Prepare to Workshop
11-16	TH 4/5 Thru Th 5/10	Begin Short Story #2 Workshops    *Reading Event Write-ups (Due 5/10)	
Final	TBD	Final Class Reading and Potluck!	

## Important Dates: Spring 2018

<b>Monday, January 1</b>	New Year's Day - Campus Closed
<b>Monday, January 8</b>	Excess Units Petition for Spring'18 available on <a href="#">Forms' page</a>
<b>Friday, January 12</b>	Enrollment Unit Cap increase to 19 for Undergraduate students with Good Academic Standing
<b>Monday, January 15</b>	Dr. Martin Luther King Day - Campus Closed
<b>Sunday, January 21</b>	Last day of Advanced Registration
<b>Monday, January 22 - Tuesday, January 23</b>	No Registration Activity
<b>Wednesday, January 24</b>	First day of Instruction for Spring semester
<b>Wednesday, January 24 - Monday, February 12</b>	Late Registration for Spring semester. Registration via MySJSU starting after 7am
<b>Monday, February 5</b>	Last day to Drop a Class without a "W" grade. To Drop a class after this date, Late Drop petition will be required. See <a href="#">AARS's petition page</a> .
<b>Monday, February 12</b>	Last day to Add via <a href="#">MySJSU</a> online and without a Petition & Late fee Last day to submit <a href="#">Audit option(PDF)</a> Last day to submit <a href="#">Credit/No Credit grading option(PDF)</a> Last day to submit <a href="#">Instructor Drops(PDF)</a> To add a class after this date, <a href="#">Late Enrollment Pre-Census petition(PDF)</a> will be required.
<b>Tuesday, February 20</b>	Enrollment Census Date for Spring. To add a class after this date, <a href="#">Late Enrollment Post-Census petition(PDF)</a> will be required.
<b>Monday, March 26 - Friday, March 30</b>	Spring Recess - no classes
<b>Friday, March 30</b>	Cesar Chavez Day - Campus Closed

<b>Wednesday, April 25</b>	Last Day to Withdraw for Spring - <a href="#">Withdrawal from the Semester Request on AARS website</a>
<b>Monday, May 14</b>	Last day of Instruction for Spring
<b>Tuesday, May 15</b>	Faculty Web Access for Spring Grade Posting Opens at 8am
<b>Wednesday-Friday, May 16-18 &amp; Monday-Tuesday, May 21-22</b>	Spring's Final Exams (see <a href="#">Exam Schedule</a> )
<b>Wednesday, May 23 through Friday, May 25</b>	Class of 2018 <a href="#">Commencement</a> Ceremonies
<b>Friday, May 25</b>	Spring 2018 Grades Due from Faculty (Preliminary Deadline)
<b>Saturday, May 26</b>	Initial Spring 2018 <a href="#">Grades Viewable on MySJSU</a>