

San José State University Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 165: American Women Writers of Color — Voices from the Margins (Section 01) Spring 2018

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Class Days/Time: MW 3:00-4:00PM
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Course Description:

This course is a comprehensive overview of the emergence and development of poetry, fiction, drama, and essays written by women of African American, Asian American, Chicano, Latino, and Native American heritage. ENGL 165 will provide students with opportunities to explore the life histories and writings of selected American women writers of color, and to think and talk critically—and with open minds—about interactions and relationships between, and (mis)perceptions of, dominant and marginalized cultures in the U.S. Students will investigate the relationship between cultural events and literary conventions; intersections of gender, race, class, and nationality; and the ways in which identity is constructed and represented. Some questions we will be considering this semester include: How do these authors and artists represent, perform and analyze interconnections between our country's dominant and marginalized cultures? How do we, as readers and critics working in the setting of an American university, interact with and respond to their work? While students become familiar with the historical, social, cultural, and political context of the literature, they will be writing and analyzing creative works of their own.

English Department Student Learning Objectives (as they are evoked in the English 165 Course Goals)

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of ethnic American literature.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to ethnic American literature, gaining an awareness of the range of cultural experiences and productions that make up women and non-binary writers of color within American literary and cultural history, focusing on the self-representations of these writers and their communities.
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, strengthening their abilities to engage ethnic American literary text and to analyze both its form and content as well as its social and historical contexts.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Coursework includes reading assignments (see attached schedule); class participation; a group presentation (3-4 students each); 3 essays: Response, Analytical, Research Paper; 1 short story; and a Final Exam.

Class participation includes in-class discussion, reading quizzes, and brief written assignments either in class or on our class Canvas site. The final exam will be comprised of both essay and short identification questions.

Late paper policy: NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED ONCE AN ORIGINAL OR EXTENDED DEADLINE HAS PASSED BY MORE THAN A WEEK. Extended or late papers will be graded AFTER on-time student work. Note that doing the reading and being able and willing to respond to the comments and questions of both the professor and your fellow students on a daily basis is a requirement of the course. Reading quizzes and other in-class assignments will be given to ensure that students are indeed completing and understanding the readings. These cannot be made up. Due dates for all papers and the times for all exams are listed on the reading and assignment schedule at the end of the syllabus.

Participation	15%
Group Presentations (SLO 2-5)	10%
Essay #1: Response Paper (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	10%
Essay #2: Analytical Paper (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	10%
Essay #3: Short Story (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	10%
Final Research Paper (SLO 1-5)	30%
Final Exam (SLO 1, 2, 3, &5)	15%

The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi:

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.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the 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.

In written assignments for English 165, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the literary text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A" essay contains a fresh insight that teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

Classroom Protocol

You are required to be courteous and professional to both classmates and the professor. Most people take this as a requirement in their daily lives and this statement does not need to be reiterated here. However, people sometimes forget that the classroom is a professional setting and rules that govern a business meeting apply here. For example, devices such as cell phones need to be turned off; using laptops for email or social media instead of note taking or coming to class late is unacceptable. If an emergency arises that requires your absence from class, please contact the professor. Simply prioritizing your education behind other time commitments does not constitute such an emergency. Participating in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are absolutely necessary for the successful completion of this course. Protocol for written work requires that all quotations must

be enclosed in quotation marks or, when more than three lines, put in an indented block. Full citation of the original author and source must also be included. For all papers, review a writing handbook for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman comp. classes). Also see the University policy on “Academic Integrity” below for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

University Policies

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 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

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/>. February 3rd is the last day to drop classes in Spring 2015. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.
English

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 to record course material. 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/>.

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 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 (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Required Texts/Readings

The majority of the readings in this course will be posted on Canvas. The following three novels, however, are not:

Queen Sugar by Natalie Baszile

Sula by Toni Morrison

Love Medicine by Louise Erdrich

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>.

Attendance at Literary Readings

You are required to attend two readings by a woman or non-binary writer of color presented on the SJSU campus or elsewhere. The Bay Area is one of the world's great literary regions, where seven days a week one can attend a reading by a renowned writer at a bookstore, college, community center, or library. Readings are listed in the Sunday editions of the San Jose Mercury News and San Francisco Chronicle, and in Metro. After attending each reading, you will write a brief response (1-2pp). You may respond to any aspect of the reading, for example the speaker, the venue, the material performed, or the Q&A with the audience. These two assignments will go toward your participation grade; completion of both is a mandatory requirement for passing this course.

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view [University Policy S90-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf> and SJSU current semester's Policies and Procedures at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

Dropping and Adding

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Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) 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), <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](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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' free tutoring and mentoring is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to inspire them to become independent learners. Peer Connections tutors are trained to provide content-based tutoring in many lower division courses (some upper division) as well as writing and study skills assistance. Small group and individual tutoring are available. Peer Connections mentors are trained to provide support and resources in navigating the college experience. This support includes assistance in learning strategies and techniques on how to be a successful student. Peer Connections has a learning commons, desktop computers, and success workshops on a wide variety of topics. For more information on services, hours, locations, or a list of current workshops, please visit the Peer Connections website at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

Course Expectations

We must conduct ourselves with civility, decency, and have a great capacity for tolerating differing points of view. I feel strongly that my classroom can and should be a place where we can ask questions, debate, discuss, and entertain a variety of viewpoints, but we must also do so in a respectful and open way. I also want to clarify here that there are facts and there are facts. We can interpret those facts, and come to our own opinions, but we cannot create alternative "alternative facts." We must maintain an atmosphere of open discussion and academic integrity. Please note, plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated; penalty for plagiarized work will follow university policy.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center Website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

ENGL 165 / American Women Writers of Color (Section 01), Spring 2018, Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Announcements will be made in class and on Canvas.

Week 1

W 1/24 Introduction & Welcome

Week 2

M 1/29 “On Being Brought from Africa to America,” and “His Excellency General Washington” by Phillis Wheatley; “Sunrise, Sunset” by Edwidge Danticat

W 1/31 “Moths,” “Cariboo Café,” “Snapshots,” and “Neighbors” by Helena Maria Viramontes

Week 3

M 2/5 *Queen Sugar* by Natalie Bazile

W 2/7 *Queen Sugar* by Natalie Bazile Cont.

Week 4

M 2/12 “The Danger of the Single Story” and Excerpt from *Americanah* by Chimamanda Adiche

W 2/14 “The ‘F’ Word” by Firoozeh Dumas; “How to Write Iranian American Or the Last Essay” by Porochista Khakpour

Week 5

M 2/19 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” by Gloria Anzaldua

W 2/21 ESSAY #1: Response is DUE

Week 6

M 2/26 Excerpt from *Negroland* by Margo Jefferson; Student Presentations Begin

W 2/28 Excerpt from *Maud Martha*, “We Real Cool,” and “The Mother” by Gwendolyn Brooks

Week 7

M 3/5 Excerpt from *Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston

W 3/7 “Extra,” and “Gold Boy, Emerald Girl” by Yiyun Li

Week 8

M 3/12 Roxanne Gay *Bad Feminist* Selected Essays; Janet Mock, Lena Dunam, and Zinzi Clemmons

W 3/14 “Moving Beyond Pain” by bell hooks, Beyoncé’s *Lemonade*, “The Problem with Bottom Bitch Feminism” by Christa Bell & Mako Fitts Ward

Week 9

M 3/19 Jhumpa Lahiri: “Sexy,” “Hell Heaven”; “Can the Subaltern Speak?” by Guyatri Spivak;

XM Food: “A Conversation on the Bengali-NY Community with Jhal NY”

W 3/21

ZZ Packer: “Gideon,” “Brownies,” “The Ant of the Self”; ESSAY #2: Analytical is DUE

SPRING BREAK

Week 11

- M 4/2 Dialect; Excerpt from *Wild Meat and the Bully Burgers* by Lois Ann Yamanaka;
“Controversial Adventures in 'Paradise': Bully Burgers and Pidgin” by Valerie Takahama
W 4/4 Excerpt *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and “How It Feels to Be Colored Me” by Zora Neale Hurston

Week 12

- M 4/9 *Sula* by Toni Morrison; “White Gaze” Charlie Rose Interview
W 4/11 *Sula* by Toni Morrison Cont.; Clip of *Insecure* Pilot Episode; “The Authentic Black Female Friendship of *Insecure*” by Lovia Gyarkye

Week 13

- M 4/16 *Love Medicine* by Louise Erdrich; “A Healthy Balance: Religion, Identity, and Community in Louise Erdrich’s *Love Medicine*” by Karla Sanders
W 4/18 *Love Medicine* by Louise Erdrich Cont.

Week 14

- M 4/23 “The Husband Stitch” by Carmen Machado; ESSAY #3: Short Story is DUE
W 4/25 *Virgin* by Analicia Sotelo; Meet the Author

Week 15

- M 4/30 *Milk & Honey* by Rupi Kaur; “The Inevitable Backlash Against Instagram’s Favorite Poet” by Priya Khari Hanks; “Meditations on Rupi Kaur’s Critics” by Harriet Staff; “The Problem with Rupi Kaur’s Poetry” by Chiara Giovanni
W 5/2 *There Are Things More Beautiful Than Beyoncé* by Morgan Parker; “Morgan Parker Gets a Tattoo” by Amanda Petrusich

Week 16

- M 5/7 "Successor, Usurper, Replacement" and “Mothers, Lock Up Your Daughters Because They Are Terrifying” by Alice Sola Kim; Alice Sola Kim Interview
W 5/9 Student Conferences
M 5/14 Last Class; Discussion of Final Paper
M 5/21 Final Exam: Monday, May 21, 2:45-5:00; Final Research Paper is DUE