

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
English 71: Introduction to Creative Writing
Section 08 – Spring, 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	David Perez
Office Location:	FOB 222
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Email:	david.perez@sjsu.edu (This is the best way to contact me.)
Office Hours:	Tuesday / Thursday 11:45-1:00 pm
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday / Thursday 1:30-2:45 pm
Classroom:	BBC 221
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Letters area of Humanities & the Arts

Course Format

Classroom-based Course with Required Technology Enhancements Students will need a home computer with dependable Internet connectivity to turn in assignments, participate in occasional online workshops, and to access texts, out of class online updates and enhancements for this mainstream course.

Course Management Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for checking the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

ENGL 71 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. Also note that this course is an elective in the English major and Creative Writing minor. It is a prerequisite for taking upper division Creative Writing workshops.

Section 08

It's easy to think that creative work comes to us fully formed out of inspiration, and sometimes it can, but the vast majority of the time the good stuff, the real truth that your writing is trying to convey comes as something concealed, something buried under words you don't need, words that either need to go away or get replaced with writing that helps to realize your vision. This realization demands that we examine and discuss the things we've written to uncover what's working and give it the attention it deserves. This process of writing, reflecting and rewriting is what this course is all about. This means a lot of writing, discussion and revision. In addition to sharing our work with each other, we will look

at pieces of creative nonfiction, fiction and poetry to describe some techniques that will help make this process productive, illuminating and hopefully more than a little entertaining!

ENGL 71 GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Students enrolled in Introduction to Creative Writing will learn to:

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 an appreciation of literary works as expressions of human intellect and imagination, and as representations of diverse human cultures;
7. Develop the ability to write literary works that express intellect and imagination and that represent diversity in human cultures;
8. Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work;
9. Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
10. Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while also representing matters specific to a particular culture;
11. 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.

ENGL 71 Course Requirements

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, you are expected to 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.

All work must be submitted on time and in the form specific (Canvas, printed, etc). If there is a reason you cannot make a deadline, contact me at least one full day **BEFORE THE DEADLINE** (for more on this see “Absences” below).

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.

Creative writing, though subject to the instructor's individual interpretation, can be evaluated according to general standards used to determine how well a piece of writing “works.” These include: 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) Capacity for mixed feelings and uncertainty. 7) Effective use of grammar, syntax, rhythm; also meter, rhyme, and other elements of

poetic style and form. 8) Naturalness and believability. 9) Appropriateness of style to subject. 10) Compelling audience interest.

A: Creative writing that receives an “A” is likely to: Fulfill all assignment requirements Demonstrate complex, unique and/or insightful approach Function well as a whole Demonstrate engaging voice Incorporate strong word choices Incorporate, where appropriate, striking imagery Lack clichéd or over-used language Incorporate unusual/unique associations that fit the tone of the piece Lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

B: Creative writing that receives a “B” is likely to: Fulfill the assignment requirements Demonstrate insightful approach Function generally well as a whole Demonstrate a generally engaging voice Incorporate some strong word choices Use some concrete imagery Mostly lack clichéd or over-used language Mostly lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

C: Creative writing that receives a “C” is likely to: Meet the assignment requirements Be derivative of other works Not completely function as a whole (some parts may be underdeveloped) Incorporate some strong, and some weaker, word choices Lack concrete imagery Include clichéd or over-used language Have some spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

D: Creative writing that receives a “D” is likely to: Not fulfill the assignment requirements Not function as a whole Be a cursory response that demonstrates lack of motivation and/or poor understanding of the assignment

F: No response.

Course Assignments

English Department Assessment: One poem inspired by a series of works assigned by the professor and written according to specific guidelines.

Creative Nonfiction: Memoir 1 (250 words), Memoir 2 (revise previous and add 250 words), Memoir 3 (revise all)

Poetry: Poetry 1 (one-page poem), Poetry 2 (revise previous and add second poem), Poetry 3 (revise previous and add third poem).

Fiction/Drama: Fiction 1 (250 words), Fiction 2 (revise previous and add 250 words), Fiction 3 (revise all)

Feedback: Written feedback for small group members via Canvas discussion. Verbal and written feedback (submitted on paper in person) for students workshops. Feedback MUST reference specific words, lines, content of student work. Vague or overgeneralized feedback will not receive credit.

Reading Analysis Lead: 10 minutes of commentary in class on a given reading to kick off discussion. 1 questionnaire (submitted on paper in person).

In-Class Writing: Various writing assignments such as creative writing prompts, personal reflections, and responses to course readings or student work. *Note that in-class writing will count toward the “participation” category in terms of grading.

Participation: Quizzes, discussion comments, and in-class writing.

Final Exam: In-class oral presentation of student work.

Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	Length	GELO
English Department Assessment	1 poem	1, 5, 6
Creative Nonfiction	1000 words	4, 5, 6, 7, 11
Poetry	3 revised poems	4, 5, 6, 7, 11
Fiction/Drama	1000 words	4, 5, 6, 7, 11
Feedback	500 words	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Reading Analysis Lead	In-class comments, Questionnaire (300 words)	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10
In-Class Writing	2000 words	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Participation	25 quizzes, daily in-class discussion	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10
Final Exam	In class reading (5 min. per student)	4, 10, 11

Assignment Format

For all written work except for in-class writing, work must be typed. Use 12-point font (Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica). Use standard MLA essay heading format. Double space all work except poetry (poetry can be double or single).

Class Workshop Procedures

For each unit (nonfiction, poetry, fiction) the class will divide into groups of about five students. These will remain your groups for one full unit. Once a unit is complete, you will be assigned new groups. This way you will be able to interact with and read work from most of your other classmates. When you submit work on Canvas to your small group, this will be done via file upload to a discussion board to which everyone in the group has access. Feedback you give to members of your small group will be in the form of a discussion comment and MUST reference specific words, lines, content of student work. Vague or overgeneralized feedback will not receive credit.

Note that small group feedback occurs via Canvas, but feedback you give to students on the day of their in-class workshop is different. This feedback requires you to print out the student work and make comments in the margins that you then hand back to the author in class on the day of their workshop. I will not tolerate arriving late during a student workshop. It is disrespectful to your fellow classmates. If you walk in late during a workshop, you will not receive full participation credit for the day.

Absences

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to check Canvas to find out what is due and to be prepared for the next class meeting. Due this before contacting me with questions. Being absent does not mean you receive any kind of due date extension. If you are absent on the day of an in-class assignment, you cannot be given a make-up assignment. The same thing applies to feedback that is due in person, if you are not in class on the assigned day to hand in the feedback, you will not receive credit for turning it in late. Please do not ask me to do extra things for you, such as summarizing what you missed, if you are absent. I may make certain exceptions to these policies, but only if you contact me and we make arrangements at least one full day before you are absent.

Required Materials

Textbooks (TEXTS MUST BE THE EDITION NOTED)

- “2016 Pushcart Prize XL: Best of the Small Presses” ISBN: 978-1-888889-80-2

Other Readings

All other course readings will be available on Canvas (“Readings” folder from the “Files” menu).

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

1. Access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection
2. An email address that can be checked on a daily basis
3. A Canvas account
4. Writing materials
5. Access to a reliable printer

Grading Policy

Grading for each assignment is based on percentage out of 100%. The different assignment groups are listed below, along with their weight toward your final course grade. Letter grades break down as follows: 100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D, 59-0% = F. Grades available on Canvas for all assignments. All papers submitted through Canvas. Assignment weights break down as follows:

- English Department Assessment – 5% of total grade
- Creative work (memoir, poetry, fiction) – 30% of total grade
- Feedback – 20% of total grade
- Reading Analysis Lead – 20% of total grade
- Participation and In-Class writing – 20% of total grade
- Final Exam – 5% of total grade

Please note that all work must follow all assignment instructions and be submitted on time in order to receive credit. If you do not submit an assignment and do not contact me to ask for an extension at least one full day before an assignment is due, it will not receive credit. Also note that students must receive a C- or higher to pass the course.

Extra Credit

Attending ONE additional approved author reading with written response. Extra credit will not change a grade from failing to passing. 10 points towards “participation” grading category. Also, recitation of a memorized poem at the Final poetry reading, 10 points toward “final exam” category.

RESOURCES FOR LITERARY EVENT SCHEDULES:

- www.litart.org (Center for Literary Arts at SJSU)
- <http://www.pcsj.org/calendar.html> (Poetry Center San Jose)
- <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/events> (English Department Events listed)
- <http://www.livesv.com/categories/index/6/0/LITERATURE>

Bay Area Literary Events

- <http://www.keplers.com/premier-events> Kepler’s Bookstore, Menlo Park
- <http://poetryflash.org/> Northern CA literary events including the Bay AreaActive

Classroom Protocol

Attendance: Students may be dropped if they do not participate during the first day of class without making prior arrangements with the instructor. Students may also be dropped for missing 2 class meetings. If you are not pre-enrolled, be aware that the class may be full or may require you to sign up on a waiting list. If you are enrolled and decide you do not want to stay in the class, **you are responsible for dropping the class. The instructor is not responsible for dropping you if you stop coming to class.** If you stop coming to class and you do not drop yourself, you may receive an F in the course.

Participation: Students are expected to participate in class discussions. This means working with other students and responding to questions from the instructor. It also means completing all in-class assignments.

Electronic devices: Students are asked to avoid the use of cell phones or other electronic devices in class unless otherwise instructed to do so for an in-class assignment. Students who use electronic devices in class may receive a point deduction for lack of class participation. In the case of a legitimate emergency, students are permitted to excuse themselves from class in order to use their devices.

Behavior: Students are asked to communicate in a respectful and courteous manner. While debate and disagreement are part of the learning process, harassment or the use of derogatory language will not be tolerated.

University Policies

Academic integrity: No amount of plagiarism will be tolerated. Assignments that contain plagiarized content will receive a zero and may result in failing the course. 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/>.

The link below contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>.

Please visit this link to the Frosh English webpage for other relevant policies:
http://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program_policies/index.html

Course Schedule: ENGL 71 / Introduction to Creative Writing, Spring 2018

Note that the course schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Notice will be conveyed either in class or via Canvas announcement. **Unless otherwise specified, there will generally be a quiz and/or informal writing on all assigned readings either in class or via Canvas prior to class on the day the reading is due.**

Terms and abbreviations uses in this schedule:

- Printed = Bring hard copy of assignment to class on the date indicated. For example, the assignment “Staring contest poem (printed)” is due on paper in class on Thurs. 1/25.
- Via Canvas = Submit the assignment on Canvas by 11:59pm on the date indicated. For example, the assignment Memoir 1 must be submitted on Canvas by 11:59pm on Thurs. 2/8.
- WWH = What’s Working Handout
- TBD = To Be Determined
- N/A = Not Applicable
- **Bold text**= writing and feedback submitted to small groups
- *Italicized text* = feedback for the students being workshopped in class

Course Schedule

Week	Date	In-Class Activities, discussion on this date	Readings, Assignments, Homework due this date (printed or via Canvas)
1	Tues. 1/23	No class	N/A
1	Thurs. 1/25	Course introduction. Syllabus review. Group assignments. Staring contests.	Purchase course text and all required materials. Bring text and all materials to the next class meeting and every class meeting from now on.
2	Tues. 1/30	Sign-ups for reading analysis. Sign-ups for whole class workshop. Activities to build our workshop environment.	Staring contest poem (printed) and handed back to your partner from the previous class. Partner submits to instructor at end of class.
2	Thurs. 2/1	<u>UNIT 1 INTRO: MEMOIR</u> In-class examples, writing, sharing, discussion.	Reading TBD (instructor selection). Submit reading preferences to instructor.
3	Tues. 2/6	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
3	Thurs. 2/8	Technique lecture and activities TBD.	Submit Memoir 1 to instructor and all members of your small group (via Canvas).
4	Tues. 2/13	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Memoir 1 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
4	Thurs. 2/15	WWH (Memoir 1). Whole class workshop of Memoir 1. Technique	Submit Memoir 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to</i>

Week	Date	In-Class Activities, discussion on this date	Readings, Assignments, Homework due this date (printed or via Canvas)
		lecture TBD.	<i>Memoir 1 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
5	Tues. 2/20	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Memoir 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
5	Thurs. 2/22	WWH (Memoir 2). Whole class workshop of Memoir 2. Technique lecture TBD.	Submit Memoir 3 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to Memoir 2 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
6	Tues. 2/27	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Small group feedback to Memoir 3 optional. Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
6	Thurs. 3/1	WWH (Memoir 3). Whole class workshop of Memoir 3. Technique lecture TBD.	<i>Bring feedback to Memoir 3 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
7	Tues. 3/6	<u>UNIT 2 INTRO: POETRY</u> In-class examples, writing, sharing, discussion.	Reading TBD (instructor selection)
7	Thurs. 3/8	Technique lecture and activities TBD.	Submit Poetry 1 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas).
8	Tues. 3/13	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Poetry 1 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
8	Thurs. 3/15	WWH (Poetry 1). Whole class workshop of Poetry 1. Technique lecture TBD.	Submit Poetry 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to Poetry 1 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
9	Tues. 3/20	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Poetry 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
9	Thurs. 3/22	WWH (Poetry 2). Whole class workshop of Poetry 2. Technique lecture TBD.	Submit Poetry 3 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to Poetry 2 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
10	Tues. 3/27	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	Small group feedback to Poetry 3 optional.
10	Thurs. 3/29	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	Don't forget to do the reading for the in-class analysis on the day you come back after break.
11	Tues. 4/3	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing,	Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).

Week	Date	In-Class Activities, discussion on this date	Readings, Assignments, Homework due this date (printed or via Canvas)
		discussion.	
11	Thurs. 4/5	WWH (Poetry 3). Whole class workshop of Poetry 3. Technique lecture TBD.	<i>Bring feedback to Poetry 3 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
12	Tues. 4/10	<u>UNIT 3 INTRO: FICTION</u> In-class examples, writing, sharing, discussion.	Reading TBD (instructor selection).
12	Thurs. 4/12	Technique lecture and activities TBD.	Submit Fiction 1 to instructor and all members of your small group (via Canvas).
13	Tues. 4/17	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Fiction 1 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
13	Thurs. 4/19	WWH (Fiction 1). Whole class workshop of Fiction 1. Technique lecture TBD.	Submit Fiction 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to Fiction 1 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
14	Tues. 4/24	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Submit feedback to Fiction 2 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
14	Thurs. 4/26	WWH (Fiction 2). Whole class workshop of Memoir 2. Technique lecture TBD.	Submit Fiction 3 to instructor and all small group members (via Canvas). <i>Bring feedback to Fiction 2 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
15	Tues. 5/1	Reading quiz. Student-led reading analysis. In-class writing, sharing, discussion.	Small group feedback to Fiction 3 optional. Reading TBD. Students who led analysis submit questionnaire in class (printed).
15	Thurs. 5/3	WWH (Fiction 3). Whole class workshop of Fiction 3. Technique lecture TBD.	<i>Bring feedback to Fiction 3 for in-class workshop (printed).</i>
16	Tues. 5/8	TBD	TBD.
16	Thurs. 5/10	TBD	TBD
Final Exam	Wed. 5/16	Final “exam” is a required in-class reading where everyone shares some of their revised creative work. Reading will take place on this date from 12:15-2:30.	N/A
Grades Posted	Fri. 5/25	Final grades will be posted on line by 5pm on this date.	N/A

