

San José State University Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 139: Visiting Authors (Section 01) – Spring 2019

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“Close reading of tough-minded writing is still the best, cheapest, and quickest method known for learning to think for yourself...Reading, and rigorous discussion of that reading in a way that obliges you to formulate a position and support it against objections, is an operational definition of education...the principle way we come to penetrate covert movements behind the façade of public appearances.”

— John Taylor Gatto

COURSE DESCRIPTION: In Visiting Authors have a wonderful opportunity to interact with successful living writers, both through their presentations at the Center for Literary Arts and meeting them. Students will engage in close readings of the works of these authors, which will provide a basis for our class discussions, presentations, and written assignments. Attendance at all CLA events is required, so please plan your schedule accordingly. See www.litart.org for a calendar of events.

Prerequisite: Upper division standing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: 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; 2) show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to American Literature; 3) write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the 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.

Required Texts

Virgin by Analia Sotelo
What Lies Between Us by Nayomi Munaweera
The Incendiaries by R.O. Kwon
A River of Stars by Vanessa Hua
The Sellout by Paul Beatty

Other reading material (criticism and work by T.C. Boyle, Franz Kafka, Harold Pinter, and Asha Sudra) will be uploaded to Canvas or passed out during class. Students are required to check Canvas regularly, print the readings, and bring them to class. Directions on when and where to access specific reading materials will be provided by your professor.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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, or rhetoric.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works and critical approaches.
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.

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

ASSIGNMENT SEQUENCE

Here are the major assignments required for this course:

1. Students will turn in two-page response papers for each reading assignment that demonstrates familiarity with the text. (SLO 1,3,5)
2. In small groups, students will give a 10-15 minute presentation, working in teams to cover the readings. These presentations will include the author's use of literary techniques, background information on the author, particularly his or her professional career; and social and historical factors which influenced the work. (SLO 1,4,5)
3. Our major semester project will be a seven to ten-page critical essay analyzing works from class; in addition, you may discuss outside reading related to the class. Students will choose a theme and create an original exploration of how our texts connect to this theme. (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Determination of Grades

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

20% Two-page Responses

20% Student Presentations

20% Class Participation: Homework, In-Class Assignments, Quizzes, and Event Attendance

40% Final Paper

The Department of English and Comparative Literature reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Departmental Policy on Grading Written Assignments

Grades issued will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

The “ ‘A’ Range ” essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.

The “ ‘B’ Range ” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “ ‘A’ Range” essay. The chief difference is that the “ ‘B’ Range ” essay will show some slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.

The “ ‘C’ Range ” essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the “ ‘B’ Range ” essay.

The “ ‘D’ Range ” essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment – that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

The “ ‘F’ ” essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

Assignment Prep and Procedure

All student work is to be typed (12pt. font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, one-inch margins, with page numbers present in the bottom right corner), stapled, and printed single-sided. Failure to follow directions will negatively impact your grade. Your name, date, and the work’s title (ie. The Incendiaries Quiz) are to always appear on the first page. When in doubt, follow MLA guidelines: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/24/> (links externally)

Late Work

Late or e-mailed work will not be accepted. Papers are due in hard copy, in class, on the dates indicated. In case of a documented emergency, contact me before the assignment is due. If you’re concerned about your grade, do the extra credit: write a Facebook and Twitter Post or attend the CLA Book Club.

Participation and Attendance

Students are required to attend class regularly and to come prepared and ready to work. Although absences are not directly used as a factor for grades, it is impossible to participate in class discussion if you are not present. In addition, since the focus of this seminar is to study and interact with visiting authors, it is mandatory to attend all CLA events. Skipping the class when you’re up for workshop will be an automatic F for that assignment. Make a friend in the class. If you happen to miss a class meeting, get notes from that friend. After you’ve caught up on the reading and consulted your friend’s notes, feel free to ask me specific questions should you need clarification.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are welcome to disagree with one another during class discussions; however, all our dialogue must be conducted with respect for each individual's opinions. No food and no cellphone use.

Workshop is a place for respectful and constructive criticism. It is also a place where students practice articulating what makes creative writing distinctive, interesting, and fun to read. The author should take notes and remain silent as their work is being discussed. Spoken and written commentary from peers must always be directed at the work, not the writer. Personal attacks and offensive or inappropriate language will not be tolerated. Students who cannot follow these guidelines will be dismissed from the course. If you receive any offensive comments on your work, please let me know as soon as possible so I can address the problem.

Student code of conduct (SJSU and classroom policies)

Students are responsible for maintaining a respectful environment in the classroom. San Jose State is committed to maintaining a safe education and working environment free of discrimination, harassment and sexual violence. Policies are available online at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/policies/> http://notalone.sjsu.edu/policy_information/index.html Per Title 9, the university prohibits “[activities] that substantially and materially disrupts the normal operations of the University” and “conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person within or related to the University community, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or sexual misconduct.”

University Policies

The following link contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.: www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/

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/>.

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.

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 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 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 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 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

ENGL 139 / Visiting Authors (Section 01), Spring 2019, Course Schedule

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

- M 1/28 Welcome & Introduction; Course Overview; “Death Wish” and “Bitch Instinct” by Analicia Sotelo
- W 1/30 *Virgin* by Analicia Sotelo; Myth, Religion, Imagery, and Female Identity
- M 2/4 *Virgin* by Analicia Sotelo; Myth, Religion, Imagery, and Female Identity continued; Two Questions from the Author: How do we succeed in the language of a conqueror? How do we find our voice in that conflict?; Sotelo Response Paper DUE
- W 2/6 Selected poems by Asha Sudra; “Dreams” by Nikki Giovanni; “Dear White America” by Danez Smith; “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised” by Gill Scott Heron; Origins of Performance Poetry; What is the Role of Performance Poetry Today?
- TR 2/7 Analicia Sotelo & ASHA Poetry Reading at San Jose Museum of Art 7PM**
- M 2/11 *What Lies Between Us* by Nayomi Munaweera; Student Presentations; Myth, Trauma, Migration, and Memory; Munaweera Response Paper DUE
- W 2/13 *What Lies Between Us* by Nayomi Munaweera; Myth, Trauma, Migration, and Memory continued
- M 2/18 *What Lies Between Us* by Nayomi Munaweera; Childhood and Motherhood
- W 2/20 *What Lies Between Us* concluded
- M 2/25 “The Lie” and “I Walk Between the Rain Drops” by T.C. Boyle; Satire and Unreliable Narrators; Boyle Response DUE
- W 2/27 “Chicxulub” and “Are We Not Men” by T.C. Boyle; “T.C. Boyle’s Fictions of Catastrophe” by Matt Margini
- TR 2/28 Nayomi Munaweera Reading at MLK 255 at 7PM**
- M 3/4 *The Incendiaries* by R.O. Kwon; Student Presentations; Kwon Response Paper DUE; Class, Loss, Cults, and The Male Gaze
- W 3/6 *The Incendiaries* by R.O. Kwon; Class, Loss, Cults, and The Male Gaze continued
- TR 3/7 R.O. Kwon, Vanessa Hua, Kirstin Chen Reading at Steinbeck Center at 7PM**
- M 3/11 *A River of Stars* by Vanessa Hua; Student Presentations; Motherhood, Immigration, and Identity; Student Presentations; Hua Response Paper DUE
- W 3/13 *A River of Stars* by Vanessa Hua; Of Prince Charming and Toxic Masculinity; “What Is Toxic Masculinity” by Maya Salam

M 3/18	Paul Beatty Background & Introduction; Early Work and Influences
T 3/19	Paul Beatty Reading at Hammer Theatre at 7PM
W 3/20	<i>The Sellout</i> by Paul Beatty; Student Presentations; Humor, Language, Race in the Multicultural Era; Beatty Response Paper DUE
M 3/25	<i>The Sellout</i> by Paul Beatty; Subversion and Reappropriation
W 3/27	<i>The Sellout</i> by Paul Beatty; Tragicomedy or Satire
M 4/1	Caesar Chavez Day – NO CLASS
W 4/3	Spring Break – NO CLASS
M 4/8	What’s a Tragicomedy?; “The Hunger Artist” and “The Metamorphosis” by Franz Kafka; Kafkaesque Defined; Kafka Response Paper DUE
W 4/10	“Harold Pinter’s Tragicomic Techniques” by Wojciech Kalaga; <i>The Caretaker</i> by Harold Pinter (Film)
M 4/15	Finish <i>The Caretaker</i> by Harold Pinter; Final Paper Prompt and Q&A
W 4/17	Student Conferences
M 4/22	Student Conferences
W 4/24	Student Conferences
M 4/29	Student Workshop
W 5/1	Student Workshop
M 5/6	Student Workshop
W 5/8	Student Workshop
M 5/13	Student Workshop; Last Day of Instruction
M 5/20	Final Paper Due via e-mail