

Ethnicity in American Literature Section 01

ENGL 169

Fall 2022 3 Unit(s) 08/19/2022 to 12/06/2022 Modified 08/19/2022

Contact Information

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Class Location and Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 4:30 to 5:45 PM, BBC 121

Office: Faculty Office Building Room 103 (enter through FOB 102) and virtually at <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/5720808744>

Office hours: Virtual appointments can be made in Spartan Connect for meetings Tuesdays and Wednesdays 1-3 PM. I am also available for in-person office hours 3- 3:45 PM Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Course Description and Requisites

Study of expressions of ethnic and racial identity in American literature, with close attention to strategies of representation and resistance. Selected texts primarily arise out of the lived experiences of people of color, including Native Americans, Black Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinx Americans. GE Area: S

Prerequisite(s): Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C- not accepted), completion of Core General Education and upper division standing are prerequisites to all SJSU studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended.

Note(s): All of SJSU Studies courses require completion of the WST and upper division standing.

This section of English 169 examines major issues in American literature that pertain to both the ethnic experience in America as expressed by members of ethnic communities and the way in which American race or ethnicity has been narrated by authors outside those communities. It will examine world-views and strategies of representation by a sampling of Americans with origins in the five different continents that have populated the United States: North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. During the course of the semester, we will explore a variety of literary genres or forms including novels, poetry, critical essay, and short story. You should take heed that the content of this course will not only focus on the difficult subjects of racism and the formation of racial and ethnic identity in the United States for a full semester, but will contain themes related to religion, sexuality and other highly charged issues. Some texts may offer alternative or even antagonistic value systems to your own.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

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; 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 First-year writing classes). Also see the University policy on "Academic Integrity" for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

Program Information

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.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a +(plus) or -(minus) grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of an undergraduate degree program in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will be able 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, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.
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, including structures of power.

Department Information:

Department Name: English and Comparative Literature

Department Office: FO 102

Department Website: www.sjsu.edu/english (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english>)

Department email: english@sjsu.edu (<mailto:english@sjsu.edu>)

Department phone number: 408-924-4425

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area S: Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.

SJSU Studies courses -- Areas R, S, and V -- help students integrate knowledge between and among disciplines. In Area S courses, students study the interrelationships of individuals, racial groups, and cultural groups to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, inclusion, inequalities, and justice in the United States.

GE Area S Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area S course, students should be able to:

1. describe how identities are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality. Examples include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, age, generation, regional origin, national identity, language, and intersectionalities;
2. analyze historical, economic, political, or social processes that shape diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S. and reflect on one's own identities and positions within these structures;
3. evaluate social actions which have or have not led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S.; and
4. engage in constructive interactions about social issues in the U.S. within the framework of equality and inequalities.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 3000 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

Six Required Texts:

- Abraham Cahan, *The Imported Bridegroom and Other Stories*(ISBN:978048622427, text also available free online at <http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/> & Google books)
- Louise Erdrich, *Tracks* (ISBN: 978006097245)
- Tomas Rivera, *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1971/Trans. 1987 (ISBN: 978155 8850835)
- Jean *Cane*. 1923. Norton Critical 2nd Edition. New York, Norton, 2011. (ISBN: 978-0-393- 93168-6
- Chang-rae Lee *Native Speaker*, Riverhead Books; Reprint edition. (ISBN: 978-1573225311).
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved*. Vintage. Reprint Edition. (ISBN: 978-1400033416).

Course Requirements and Assignments

Coursework includes reading assignments (see schedule below); two five to eight-page formal literary analyses (which must include research); a midterm of 3 short “identification” questions/paragraphs; a final exam composed of both essay and identification questions. Late paper policy: keeping in mind the many emergencies and unforeseen events that can occur in the average SJSU student’s life, I have a very generous extension policy. As long as you give me the request in writing—print or email— (complete with a new deadline) *before* the paper’s due date, most requests for an extension will be granted. If the original deadline is passed by a student who has not received an extension or an extended deadline has been passed, 10% of the total points possible will be taken off for lateness up to one week, 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 in this syllabus as well as on Canvas.

Grading Information

Research Paper One	5-8 page analysis w/ research	30%
Research Paper Two	5-8 page analysis w/ research	30%
Midterm Exam	3 “I.D.” paragraphs and an essay	10%
Final Exam	Comparative essay and 5 I.D.’s	20%
Reading Quizzes & other assignments	Class discussions/quizzes/etc. during 30 class meetings	10%

Total	100%
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In written assignments for English 169, 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 which 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.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Week/Lesson/Module	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug. 23	Introduction and Sampling of Native American oral literature (on Canvas)
1	Aug. 25	Additional Discussion of Native American poetry and have read for today: "Inside the Push to Diversify the Book Business" at https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/magazine/inside-the-push-to-diversify-the-book-business.html?smid=url-share and also W.E. B. Du Bois, "Criteria for Negro Art" (on Canvas).

Week/Lesson/Module	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
2	Aug. 30	Read Adrienne Rich, "Split at the Root: An Essay on Jewish Identity," Reginald McKnight, "The Kind of Light That Shines in Texas" (download pdf form canvas)
2	Sept. 1	Read Sherman Alexie, "The Approximate Size of My Favorite Tumor"; and Percival Everett, "The Appropriation of Cultures." (Download pdf form canvas)
3	Sept. 6	Read a sampling of contemporary American poetry (links to be on Canvas)
3	Sept. 8	Read excerpt from Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> .
4	Sept. 13	Read <i>Beloved</i> through page 75
4	Sept. 15	Read <i>Beloved</i> through page 147
5	Sept. 20	Read <i>Beloved</i> through page 235 (part Two)
5	Sept. 22	Finish <i>Beloved</i> .
6	Sept. 27	Read Abraham Cahan, <i>Yekl</i> (to page 89).
6	Sept. 29	No class meeting. Watch <i>Hester Street</i> (89 mins.) on youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s37n9bcZnW0
7	Oct. 4	Discuss film, <i>Hester Street</i> , and review for Midterm.
7	Oct. 6	Paper one due. Midterm.
8	Oct. 11	Read Louise Erdrich, <i>Tracks</i> (to page 61)
8	Oct. 13	<i>Tracks</i> (at least to page 130).
9	Oct. 18	Read <i>Tracks</i> (at least to page 191). [Jacqueline Woodson receives the Steinbeck Award tonight]

Week/Lesson/Module	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	Oct. 20	Conclude Louise Erdrich, <i>Tracks</i> (to end/p. 226).
10	Oct. 25	Read Alain Locke's "The New Negro," and Langston Hughes's "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (in Canvas).
10	Oct. 27	Read all poems by McKay, Hughes & Brown (all in canvas).
11	Nov. 1	Read part 1 of <i>Cane</i> (3-37).
11	Nov. 3	Read part 2 of <i>Cane</i> (41-80). [Part 3, "Kabnis," is optional]
12	Nov. 8	Read Tomas Rivera's <i>And The Earth Did Not Devour Him</i> .
12	Nov. 10	Complete Tomas Rivera's novella. Additional reading may be provided on Canvas.
13	Nov. 15	Read Chang-rae Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i> , first quarter.
13	Nov. 17	Read Chang-rae Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i> , 2 nd quarter
14	Nov. 22	Read Chang-rae Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i> , 3 rd quarter
14	Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Holiday
15	Nov; 29	Finish Chang-rae Lee, <i>Native Speaker</i> .
15	Dec. 1	Read Langston Hughes' "Let America Be America Again"; Lorna Dee Cervantes' "Poem for the Young White Man Who Asked Me How I, An Intelligent, Well-Read Person Could Believe in the War Between Races"; and Aurora Levins Morales' "Child of the Americas" (on Canvas).
16	Dec. 6	Final papers due. Review for Final Exam.
Final Exam	Dec. 8	2:45 to 5 PM BBC 121