

**SJSU – Summer 2022**  
**Department of English & Comparative Literature**  
**English 123D: Literature for Global Understanding—Asia**

**Contact Information**

Instructor:	Dr. Avantika Rohatgi
Office Location:	Zoom
Email:	Avantika.rohatgi@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	By appointment – email to set up a Zoom
Class Days/Time:	On Zoom Tues/Thurs 10:00am -2:00 pm.
Classroom:	N/A
Prerequisites:	WST, Core GE, Upper Division Standing, completion of (or co-registration in) 100W
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area V, “Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding”

**Course Format**

This course will be taught online using Canvas and Zoom. All assignments are submitted via Canvas. Lectures and discussions will take place on Zoom, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am-2 pm. Please have reliable and regular access to the Internet and be prepared to share your work with the class.

**Course Description**

“Literature for Global Understanding,” is an upper-division 3-unit course designed, adopted, implemented, and administered by the Department of English and Comparative Literature at San Jose State University in accordance with the University’s General Education Program Guidelines to fulfill SJSU Studies requirements in Area V, “Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding.”

Prerequisites: WST, Core GE, Upper Division Standing, completion of (or co-registration in) 100W.

Amount of writing required: 5000 words (final paper + two shorter essays)

“Literature for Global Understanding” focuses on the study of literature as a form of human expression in different cultures or regions of the world, and how that literary expression has developed in historical, geographical, cultural, political, international, and global contexts. In general, this course will concentrate on a particular region of the world where a body of

literature and the cultures expressed by this literature can be studied coherently. The basic principle in the design of this course is the promotion of global understanding among students in relation to how other literary traditions have developed distinctive features and identities, and how a knowledge and appreciation of other cultural traditions should have an important place in American culture and society.

Four variations of the course are offered in rotation from semester to semester:

English 123A: Literature for Global Understanding—Americas

English 123B: Literature for Global Understanding—Africa

English 123C: Literature for Global Understanding—Oceania

English 123D: Literature for Global Understanding—Asia

As one of these variations, English 123D, as a course in the “Literature for Global Understanding” series, examines the extremely diverse literary production and cultural heritage of various regions of the land mass generally known as “Asia.” In the interest of having a distinct focus, instructors of English 123D are encouraged to concentrate on a clearly defined area of interest, e.g., East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia (The Middle East), and Central Asia. **South Asia (India/Pakistan/Bangladesh/Sri Lanka) has been designated as the focus of the course this summer.** Whichever the focus, this course will provide due attention to the diverse civilizations and cultural traditions of the peoples in any of the regions of Asia, especially with regard to the dynamic nature of their interactions including their influences on and conflicts with one another, as well as their contributions and impact in world history.

Students will be required to play an active role in this course by means of debates, discussions, and research. Quizzes and participation in activities will be part of your course grade.

### **Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives**

#### **SJSU Studies Area V Student Learning Objectives (SLO)/GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)**

The General Education Learning Outcomes for this course and the coursework that link to those outcomes are described below:

GELO 1: Students shall be able to compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S. Close reading, analysis, critique, and discussion of course texts and outside research focused on comparisons between texts, and the final research paper, which synthesizes both primary and secondary texts as well as outside research.

GELO 2: Students shall be able to identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture. Course lectures, particularly those focused on recommended secondary texts, as well as second major paper assignment.

GELO 3: Students shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures. Course lectures, readings, reflections and discussions, as well as contextual analysis and research essays.

The GE writing requirement will be met in this class by means of 3 written assignments with an aggregate word count of 5,000 words, as follows:

1. Writing Reflections-1000 words
2. Textual Analysis —1000 words
3. Creative Essay- 1000 words
4. Final Essay —2000 words

The General Education Learning Outcomes that are fulfilled by the course and the class activities/assignments/experiences linked to those outcomes are described below:

SLO/GELO 1: Upon successful completion of this program, students shall be able to compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S.

*This GELO/GELO will be met through analysis & critique of the texts- both written and visual, throughout the semester. Student success in achieving this objective will be assessed through presentations, discussion and three essays.*

SLO/GELO 2: Upon successful completion of this program, students shall be able to identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture.

*This GELO/GELO will be met by means of extensive cultural activities and involved learning experiences embedded in lectures, presentations, discussions, and other class interactions throughout the semester; student success in achieving this objective will be assessed by means of appropriate writing assignments focusing on*

- (1) *the historical context*
- (2) *culture has been influenced, affected, or impacted by such cultural traditions.*

SLO /GELO 3: Upon successful completion of the course, students shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

*This objective will be met by means of in-depth study of the texts and their contexts as students conduct library research beyond the lectures and other in-class activities. Student success in achieving this objective will be assessed by means of a final paper with a focus on questions of cultural change in a culture outside the U.S.A.*

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Consistent with the goals of courses approved for Advanced GE in Area V, “English 123D: Literature for Global Understanding--Asia” focuses on the literary expressions of Asia in order to:

1. Help students appreciate literature as a form of human expression and understand how that expression has developed over time in different cultures;
2. Increase students’ understanding of how other cultural traditions have influenced American culture and society, and how cultures in general both develop distinctive features and interact with other cultures.

With reference to the artistic texts and literatures of Asia included in this course, students will examine and understand how cultures and peoples of this region interact and interrelate to the rest of the world as a result of the global processes, mechanisms, and forces at work. Students taking the course are expected to:

1. Gain a knowledge and understanding of Asia through the literatures and artistic texts produced by its various cultures and peoples;
2. Learn to contextualize the knowledge and understanding of Asia in terms of its interrelationships and interactions with global processes, mechanisms, and forces beyond Asia;
3. Acquire, through individual as well as collaborative efforts, skills of reading, explicating, discussing, analyzing, interpreting, debating, and writing about texts pertaining to literatures and the other arts produced by cultures and peoples of Asia;
4. Learn to develop, as a habit of mind, a keen interest in the global processes, mechanisms, and forces that have come to shape the affairs in Asia and in the world;
5. Acquire and maintain a personal tolerance and/or appreciation of the different perspectives and values offered in the literatures and artistic texts produced by cultures and peoples of Asia;
6. Develop a sense of commitment to the well-being of the world by sharing cultural tolerance and appreciation with one’s own immediate community.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to achieve the following Course Learning Outcomes (CLO):

1. *Becoming knowledgeable in the subject* by means of exposure to a diverse and representative variety of significant texts of literature and, where appropriate, the other arts, that support an understanding of Asia, and by means of familiarization with prominent writers, key texts, and essential materials in Asia;
2. *Developing expertise in the subject* as evidenced by careful examinations of course / subject materials in both local and global contexts, especially with regard to larger processes, mechanisms, and forces that come into play in shaping Asia in relation to the rest of the world, and through in-depth analysis of key issues affecting Asia in the local and global contexts described above;
3. *Mastering advanced skills* in reading, analysis, critique, research, and writing at levels suited to the study of the course materials as well as the issues implied, and in articulating considered arguments in verbal discussions, oral presentations, writing and/or other appropriate formats.

### **BA Program Learning Outcomes of the Department of English & Comparative Literature**

This course also helps students in the major to achieve the BA Program Learning Outcomes set forth by the Department of English and Comparative Literature in so far as they are required to develop and 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 British, American and World 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.

The principal focus in this course is on understanding how and why literary and visual texts represent political and social events the way they do, as we attempt to examine our texts within their larger cultural and historical contexts. We will study topics such as border tensions and nationalism, issues of language, caste and religion, poverty and inequality, and the status of women. Particular emphasis will be placed on the colonial impact, westernization, IT revolution, regional cultural differences in India, the effects of globalization on popular culture, and the emergence of the ideology of a "new Indian." The ultimate goal is to provide a general exposure to broader questions of India's history and civilization, and its evolving polymorphous identity through carefully selected "literary" entry points and, in the process, explore the "diverse Indias" that lurk beneath the occidental notion of a homogenous India.

### **Required Texts/Readings**

1. Singh, Khushwant, *Train to Pakistan*, Grove, 1994  
ISBN-10: 0802132219
2. Lahiri, Jhumpa, *The Namesake*, Mariner, 2004  
ISBN-10: 97806184852224.
3. Ananthamurthy, U. R. *Samskara*. NYRB Classics; Reprint edition (January 10, 2017)  
ISBN-10: 159017912.
4. Narayan, R. K., *The Guide*. (Available on Leganto)
5. Chatterjee, Saratchandra, *Devdas* (Available on Canvas)
6. Handouts supplied by instructor (via Canvas) and Books on reserve in the library

### **Library Liaison**

Peggy Cabrera. Email: [peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu](mailto:peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu)

### **Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center will be open online this summer (June 1 - August 7). Students can schedule appointments through [their website](#). The Writing Center has also partnered with the MLK Library to offer live chat services for students who have quick writing-related questions

that can be addressed in 10-15 minutes. Live chat is available during select hours--no appointment necessary.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments:**

Essay 1: 20% - Textual Analysis

Essay 2: 20% - Creative Paper

Essay 3 Final: 25% - Research Paper

2 Oral Presentations: 20%

Participation: 15%

### **Determination of Grades**

The Department of English 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**

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. Grades issued will represent a full range of student performance and will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

The “A” 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” essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the “A” essay. The chief difference is that the “B” 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” 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” essay.

The “D” 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.

### **Class Policy on Late Assignments**

Students must turn in all assignments when due, unless they have made prior arrangements with the professor.

### **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](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

**Attendance and Participation:** 20% of your grade is based on your participation in the course. In addition to careful reading, I expect active participation and good attendance from everyone. Some of the most significant learning will happen during our classroom conversations. Thus, I am a firm believer in class attendance. Irregular attendance will hurt your grade; good attendance and active participation in class discussions will improve your grade.

This includes more than merely attending class, as I expect each of you to arrive prepared by having carefully read assigned readings, and to actively participate in full class discussions and smaller group discussions and in class projects and activities. Part of this active engagement in class and participation in the group dynamic of the classroom is to keep computers and cell phones both put away and silent.

1. **Assignments:** Oral Presentations: The class will be divided into small groups and each group will be responsible for leading a class discussion: that is to say, they will (with the help of the instructor, if needed) choose questions raised by the weekly readings to present to the class and moderate the discussion. The group will meet to discuss a teaching plan, and prepare "thought questions" on the assigned reading and visual material the course will cover. These will count as your "oral presentations" and will be graded by the instructor.
2. Students will be required to write two papers of 1000 words each. **Late submissions will be penalized with a lowered grade.**

3. **Research Paper:** In your final paper of 2000 words, you will use the close reading, contextual analysis, and research skills you've practiced in earlier papers to develop an original interpretation of any long text. You may decide to write on only one of the texts or any two texts from Indian and American/ World Literature. You have three broad goals in this paper: (1) to develop an argument about a specific topic in one or two texts; (2) to support this argument with textual evidence; (3) to respond to other scholars' arguments about your topic. Details for all papers will be provided in class and posted under Assignments on Canvas.

In addition, students will write one page every class in the form of a journal they will maintain on all the reading and visual material before coming to class. These will be their first reactions to the subject we shall discuss, and the writing can be relatively informal. These "responses" will not be graded; these are simply aimed to assist students in organizing their thoughts for the class discussion to follow.

**Participation:** Students will be expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss that week's material: that is, they will have read the day's assigned text. Readings will include poems, short-stories, novels, extracts from newspapers and magazines, and films will include documentaries, television clips, and films chosen from mainstream and alternative cinema.

Our emphasis is on class discussion. Assignments will be posted on the syllabus. Any change in the syllabus during the course of the semester will be duly announced in class. If you are absent that day, it is your responsibility to make sure you are aware of what you need to prepare.

**Zoom Meetings:** I will strongly encourage and reward you for having your cameras on during class and group discussions for the following reasons:

- Letting others see what you're doing increases productivity. You are much more likely to pay attention and stay on task when the teacher and peers can see you in person, and it's no different online.
- Having cameras turned on reduces a sense of isolation by creating more personal connections. It is easy to feel alone in a class when all you can see are other peoples' names.
- Being in a breakout group where you can see other people helps make online school feel more real and allows you to get to know each other better.
- Long stretches of silence can feel weird, but if you can see other group members working, they're not. It can also help you read body language that just turning on your microphone can't. Feel free to blur your background if you desire.
- Lastly, nodding your head yes or shaking your head no is an easy way to reach a conclusion in a convenient, quick way that is unique to interaction with cameras turned on. Eye contact and body language are essential elements of participatory engagement.

**Scholastic Honesty:** Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to all drafts and assignments, and a report of the incident will be submitted to the appropriate Dean's office on campus.

**Mantra for Course Success:** Walt Whitman, my favorite poet, once wrote: "Listen! I will be honest with you, / I do not offer the old smooth prizes, but offer rough new prizes." So, listen. I will be honest with you. The readings here are demanding: sometimes for linguistic reasons (old or unfamiliar language), or cultural ones (the author's world is so different from our own), or intellectual ones (abstract, complex, or obscure ideas), or some combination of the above reasons. I take attendance and class participation very seriously. I will expect you to talk and work with other students. You will be asked to write and re-write. Believe me, this is a challenging course. But, precisely because of its difficulty, it will offer rough new prizes. Class will be exciting, even fun. Our discussions will be lively, animated, exhausting. You will have the opportunity to compose the best writing you have ever done. We will watch films, study artwork, have guest lecturers visit and you might have the opportunity to talk and interact with students from India. And you will learn so much—about India and its cultures, about literature and writing, about how to read texts that are strange and complex because they are so different from the ones you are familiar with, and thereby discover a whole new world.

## Course Schedule – ENGL 123D

*Note: This schedule is subject to change. Pay attention to announcements on Canvas.*

**All readings must be completed before coming to class. Make sure to write one page responses to each reading.**

### ***Thurs, June 2***

**Module 1:** Introduction to the course: review syllabus.

Pre course quiz

Video on history of India

Beginnings of Indian Literature-Vedas and the Ramayana

#### **Readings:**

Greensheet;

India timeline

Ramanujan, “Is There an Indian Way of Thinking”? (Canvas)

### ***Tues, June 7***

**Module 2: Bhakti Movement**

**Origins: Guest Lecture by Prof. Kevin Fernandes, Bangalore University.**

#### **Readings:**

Ramayana (Canvas)

Kabir- Couplets and Songs (Canvas)

Rumi- Love Poems (Canvas)

Discuss Essay# 1

### ***Thurs, June 9***

**Module 3: The “Bengal Renaissance”;**

**“The Postmaster” by Satyajit Ray (Film, 1961)**

#### **Readings:**

Rabindranath Tagore, “The Postmaster” (Canvas)

Rabindranath Tagore, “Jana Gana Mana” (Canvas)

Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, *Devdas* (Novel) (Canvas)

**Devdas by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, (Film, 2002)**

### ***Tues, June 14***

**Module 4: The British Rule and Freedom Struggle**

Gandhi: My Experiments with Truth (Canvas)

Nehru: Tryst with Destiny (Canvas)

**Gandhi: by Sir Richard Attenborough (Film, 1982)**

### ***Thurs, June 16***

**Writing Due:** Essay #1

**Module 5: Partition and its Aftermath**

#### **Readings:**

Singh, Khushwant, *Train to Pakistan* (Novel)

Manto (Canvas)  
Raavi Paar (Canvas)  
**1947 Earth by Deepa Mehta (Film,1998)** (Time Permitting)  
Discuss Essay#2

*Tues, June 21*

**Module 6: Indian Writing in English**

Stories of Ordinary People

**Readings:**

R. K. Narayan, **The Guide (Novel)** (Canvas- Leganto)  
Rushdie, from “Midnight’s Children” (Canvas)  
Ruskin Bond, “The Night Train at Deoli” (Canvas)  
**The Guide by Vijay Anand (Film, 1965)**

*Thurs, June 23*

**Writing Due: Essay#2- Creative Essay**

**Module 7: Casteism**

**Readings:**

Ambedkar-(Canvas)  
**Ananthamurthy, Samskara (Play)**  
Bhimayana- **Guest Lecture by Prof. Kevin Fernandes**  
Discuss Research Paper

*Tues, June 28*

**Module 8: Culture Clash/ Indian Diaspora**

**Readings:**

**Jhumpa Lahiri, Namesake (Novel)**  
Divakaruni, Bannerjee, “Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter” (Canvas)  
Upamanyu Chatterjee, from *English, August: An Indian Story* (Canvas)  
**The White Tiger by Ramin Bahrani (Film, 2021)**(Time Permitting)  
**Research Paper Conferences- Work on Rough Draft- Peer Review Workshop**

*Thurs, June 30*

**Module 9: India Today**

**Writing Due: Final Essay**

**Topics: Gender Issues- Guest Lecture by Dr. Alka Pande**

**IT**

**Pandemic**

**Bollywood**

**The Contemporary Indian– Author Neharika Gupta**

**Readings:**

TBA