

Materials and Methods of Literary Research

Section 01

ENGL 201

Fall 2023 4 Unit(s) 08/21/2023 to 12/06/2023 Modified 09/01/2023

Course Description and Requisites

Use and evaluation of resource for literary research; problems in critical writing and literary history. Required for all English Masters students (to be taken as early as possible after achieving Classified standing).

Note: This course satisfies graduate-level GWAR in this master's program.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

Preparation & Participation

Please come prepared to discuss the day's materials and participate in class activities. This means that you've completed the assigned reading for the day in advance of class, you have access to those readings during our class discussion (the exception to this is if you accessed the reading through our print course reserves), and you have basic materials like pen/pencil and paper.

I encourage you to participate in class discussion not only by sharing your thoughts and asking questions but also by actively listening and creating space for others to share. I understand, however, that we all participate and process knowledge in different ways and that our level of comfort participating in the classroom may be influenced by our own relationships to power and privilege and by experiences of educational exclusion.

Devices

You are welcome to read and take notes on your phone, laptop, or tablet. However, please respect me and your peers by using your devices for class work only during our time together. If it appears that you are becoming distracted by or distracting others with your devices, we may need to have a discussion after class or via email.

Engaging in Scholarly Discourse & Community

Our class will require participation and collaboration and the texts we will read cover complex issues, such as but not limited to race and ethnicity, xenophobia, gender, sexuality, and citizenship status. Your respectful, responsible, and self-aware engagement and dialogue will be vital to maintaining a safe and supportive learning community for all. While we will develop community expectations and discussion guidelines together in class, here are some foundational considerations:

- We can disagree and challenge each other's thinking and ideas in a caring, respectful, and generative ways as long as that disagreement is not predicated on hate speech, disinformation, or exclusion.
- We will not use sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist and other marginalizing language. If harmful language is used in class, we will address it together as a learning moment to the extent it is appropriate and safe to do so. Intentionally violent and exclusionary language (i.e., slurs of any kind), however, will not be tolerated.
- Close attention to the language that we read, write, and use is a necessary component of reading and thinking like a literary scholar, which is what this class trains you all to practice. Please be mindful of the language you use, and we will continue to work together to unpack the relationship between and among language, identity, and power.

Attendance

While attendance is not graded and cannot be per University Policy F15-12, regular attendance is vital to your learning and success in the course and is ultimately your responsibility. If you are sick, please stay home from class for your own and others' wellbeing. If you are unable to attend class, please email me in advance when possible to discuss how to make up what you missed.

Course Communication & Emails

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#). You are responsible for regularly checking both your email and the Canvas messaging system through MySJSU on [Spartan App Portal](#) to learn of any updates. For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](#).

Please be aware that I do not respond to emails outside of traditional business hours, M-F 9-5. If it is not a weekend and I have not responded to your email within 48 hours, please do not hesitate to follow up and send me a reminder (in fact, I would appreciate it).

When you email me, please be clear, concise, and respectful. Include a specific subject that states the purpose of your email as well as a greeting and a signature that includes your name.

Important note about a possible work stoppage during the semester

The California Faculty Association (the labor union of Lecturers, Professors, Coaches, Counselors, and Librarians across the 23 CSU campuses) is in a difficult contract dispute with California State University management. It is possible that we will call a strike or other work stoppage this term. I promise to promptly

inform you of any schedule disruption. Our working conditions are your learning conditions; we seek to protect both. For further information go to www.CFAbargaining.org (<http://www.des05.com/t/45119655/1652061468/87769107/1/47801/?x=91a93ef1>).

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

Upon successful completion of the MA English program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
2. Demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research
3. Demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
4. Demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to
 - a. organize and present material in a cogent fashion,
 - b. formulate and defend original arguments,
 - c. employ effectively the language of their discipline and
 - d. write under time constraints.
5. Demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

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 Goals

Detailed Course Description

English 201: Materials and Methods of Literary Research provides a foundation for graduate students and advanced undergraduate majors to read, write, and research at the graduate level. We will develop our close reading and formal analysis as we read literary texts alongside relevant works of theory and criticism. We will also familiarize ourselves with various research methods within the discipline of literary studies and practice writing across multiple academic genres (including an abstract and annotated bibliography, a conference paper, and a journal article) as well as within alternative-academic, digital, and public-facing spaces (such as book reviews, op-eds, and blog posts). A significant portion of our class will be focused on students pursuing their own original research projects: first, by familiarizing yourself with relevant scholarship, then by developing your own original interpretation and contribution, and finally by writing, revising, and presenting your ideas. The course will underscore researching and writing as a process and will rely heavily on peer-review, feedback, and revision. By the end of English 201, students will have a wider skillset to participate in ongoing conversations within the discipline, and we will celebrate your original contributions with a class mini-conference.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of English 201, students will be able to:

1. Select and analyze textual evidence to develop original ideas and interpretations (i.e., the process of close reading).
2. Discuss, evaluate, and critique ideas presented in literary texts, theory, and secondary criticism.
3. Develop persuasive, compelling arguments by conducting research; selecting, synthesizing, and organizing evidence; and revising writing for both concept and clarity.
4. Contribute sophisticated contributions to ongoing scholarly conversations by putting literary texts in conversation with theory and criticism.

Course Materials

While you are not required to buy these texts, you are responsible for getting access to the required readings, whether you purchase them through the campus bookstore, find them online, or check them out through the course reserves or the SJSU or SJPL libraries.

All other course readings will be available on Canvas.

Dreaming in Cuban

Author: Cristina García

Publisher: Ballantine Books

ISBN: 9780345381439

Availability: Campus Bookstore and hard copy on course reserve via "Library Course Materials" Tab on Canvas

Course Requirements and Assignments

Participation: While you will not get credit for attending class, you will get credit for participating in class activities and discussion each week. If you are unable to attend a class, please communicate with me in advance when possible to discuss alternatives.

Discussion Posts: You will be responsible for completing three discussion posts on your assigned working group. These discussion posts will be a low-stakes opportunity for you to practice thinking through approaches to conducting literary studies research and to develop your writing.

- **Group 1:** Aly, Alyssa, Allyson, Karen, Katherine, Kyra
- **Group 2:** Brin, Jeff, Maeve, Rachel, Salsabeel, Selwan

Major Writing Assignment Rough Drafts: You will receive credit based on completion for submitting all required rough drafts in advance of writing workshops and conferences. These rough drafts will be an opportunity for you to engage in the writing process, receive feedback on your work, and revise and improve your work for the final draft.

Close Reading Paper: You will respond to a prompt of your choice to develop an original interpretation of our shared text for the semester, Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*. You will draw on close reading as a research methodology as well as relevant theoretical approaches and critical sources from both our class reading and your own research.

Independent Project Conference Paper & Presentation: The conference paper will be the first iteration of your independent research project. You will submit a 8-10-page paper and will present a 15-20 minute version of it to the class.

Independent Project Final Paper: This will be the final iteration of your independent research project, which you will develop into a 16-18-page paper based on feedback received on your conference paper and presentation.

Grading Information

Participation, 10%

Discussion Posts, 10%

Major Assignment Rough Drafts, 10%

Close Reading Paper, 20%

Conference Paper & Presentation, 25%

Final Paper, 25%

Extensions & Late Work

I am very willing to work with you if you anticipate that you may need extra time to submit your best work in an assignment. However, I can only do this if you communicate with me in advance. Please email me in advance if you would like to request an extension on an assignment. If an emergency or other extenuating circumstance arises that makes this impossible, please contact me, and we can work out a solution. If late work is submitted, it will be graded at the instructor's discretion and may receive a deduction.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](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 the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Note that this schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion. While I will never add more work, I may adjust readings, schedule, and assignment deadlines as the semester unfolds. All changes will be announced with fair notice via Canvas.

When	Topic	Notes
Week 1: August 21	Introduction to the Course & to Literary Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visit from Professor Krishnaswamy, Graduate Program Director• Introduction to course• Interactive syllabus activity• Complete course pre-survey in class
Week 2: August 28	What is literary studies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Terry Eagleton "What Is Literature?" from <i>Literary Theory: An Introduction</i>• Jonathan Culler "What Is Literature and Does It Matter?" from <i>Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction</i>• Rita Felski "Introduction" from <i>The Uses of Literature</i> <p>Group 1: Discussion Post #1 due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 1.</p>

When	Topic	Notes
Week 3: September 4	The Power of Research, The Power of Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class for labor day holiday. • Booth et al. "Research, Researchers, and Readers" from <i>The Craft of Research</i> • Archie Bongiovanni and Tristan Jimerson <i>A Quick and Easy Guide to They/Them Pronouns</i> selection <p>Group 2: Discussion Post #2 due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, September 8.</p>
Week 4: September 11	New Historical Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cristina García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i> "Introduction" and pp. 1-55 • Andrea O'Reilly Herrera's "Cristina García, <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i>" from <i>Reading U.S. Latina Writers</i> • George Lambie's "The Cuban Revolution: Building a Participatory Democratic Process" from <i>The Cuban Revolution in her 21st Century</i> <p>Group 1: Discussion Post #3 due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, September 15.</p>
Week 5: September 18	Formalist Approaches & Close Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i> pp. 57-101 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Content warning: rape and sexual violence • Culler's "Language, Meaning, and Interpretation" from <i>Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction</i> • Kadji Amin, Amber Jamilla Musser, and Roy Pérez "Queer Form: Aesthetics, Race, and the Violences of the Social" <p>Group 2: Discussion Post #4 due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, September 22.</p>
Week 6: September 25	Psychoanalytic Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i> pp. 104-144 • Selections from Sigmund Freud's <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i> and "Creative Writers and Day Dreamers" • Discuss Paper #1 <p>Group 1: Discussion Post #5 due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, September 29.</p>
Week 7: October 2	Spatial & Environmental Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i> pp. 144-209 • Halperin's "Artistic Aberrance and Liminal Geographies in Cristina García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i>" from <i>The Intersections of Harm: Narratives of Latina Deviance and Defiance</i> • George B. Handley's "Down Under: New World Literatures and Ecocriticism" • Workshop Close Reading Paper in class. Bring Introduction, Body Paragraph, and Outline <p>Group 2: Discussion Post #6 due by 5:00 p.m. Friday, October 6.</p>

When	Topic	Notes
Week 8: October 9	Feminist Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • García's <i>Dreaming in Cuban</i> pp. 213-245 • Gloria Anzaldúa's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" from <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> • Iraidia H. López "'... And There Is Only My Imagination Where Our History Should Be': An Interview with Christina García" • Check in for Close Reading Paper <p>Close Reading Paper due by 5:00 pm. Friday, October 13th.</p>
Week 9: October 16	Developing a Theoretical Framework & Using Primary and Secondary Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest lecture by Dr. Katherine Harris TBD • Jonathan Culler "What Is Theory?" from <i>Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction</i> • Booth et al. "Asking Questions, Finding Answers" from <i>The Craft of Research</i> • Discuss Independent Research Projects • In class writing workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Engaging with theory & primary and secondary sources ◦ Developing a research topic & question ◦ Beginning the researching/writing process
Week 10: October 23	Project Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Prospectus & Annotated Bibliography due by start of class. • One-on-one project conferences
Week 11: October 30	Developing Arguments, Structuring Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booth et al. "Making Good Arguments: An Overview," "Planning and Drafting," and "Organizing Your Argument" • In-class writing workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Developing a tentative argument ◦ Building and developing an argument ◦ Structuring your writing and your process
Week 12: November 6	Peer-Review Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing to present your work • Complete rough draft due by start of class. • Peer review workshops
Week 13: November 13	Class Mini-Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present mini-conference paper. • Submit conference paper and slides by start of class.
Week 14: November 20	Class Mini-Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present mini-conference paper. • Submit conference paper and slides by start of class.
Week 15: November 27	Expansion & Revision Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booth et al. "Revising Style: Telling Your Story Clearly" from <i>The Craft of Research</i> • Discuss final paper • Expansion & Revision Strategies

When	Topic	Notes
Week 16: December 4	Course Reflections & Final Preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Course reflection & evaluations• Writing workshop for final paper
Finals Week		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit final paper by 11: 59 p.m. Monday, December 11.