SJSU SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Humanities and the Arts · English & Comparative Literature

Creative Writing Section 81

ENGL 71

Fall 2023   3 Unit(s)   08/21/2023 to 12/06/2023   Modified 08/20/2023

🖥 Course Description and Requisites

Examinations of works of poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction as expression of human intellect and imagination, to comprehend the historic and global cultural contexts, and recognize issues related to writing of diverse cultural traditions. Students will also write poetry, creative nonfiction, and a short fiction.

GE Area(s): C2. Humanities

Letter Graded

✳ Classroom Protocols

<u>Section-Specific Course Description</u>

Developing as a writer requires a commitment to two inseparable activities: reading and writing. We read in order to discover what we most value in writing and to get a glimpse of the full range of possibilities in the current literary scene.

So, these will be the two activities of this class. You will read and discuss contemporary writers of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction—analyzing the writers' craft and how it might apply to your own work. In parallel, you will be practicing and experimenting with writing—completing regular writing exercises in most classes. Finally, you will produce your own polished work of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction and, in workshop, critique the work of your peers.

Course Format

This is an **asynchronous online course** with two Canvas course modules required to be completed each week. As such, the course requires a computer, access to Canvas, and reliable internet connectivity.

MYSJSU Messaging

All course materials such as syllabus, readings, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. Most importantly, we will be having discussions and critiquing each other's work through Canvas. Please set your Canvas notifications so that you receive announcements, which will be sent out regularly. You are responsible for monitoring Canvas throughout the semester. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU on Spartan App Portal http://one.sjsu.edu (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates. For help using Canvas, see the Canvas Student Resources page (http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources).

Classroom Protocol

You need to participate, complete the modules on time, and be courteous to your peers and to your teacher.

<u>Generative AI Policy</u>: the use of ChatGPT and all other generative AI is prohibited. The use of AI is considered a form of plagiarism, which is a violation of SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy. All workshop assignments (poems, short story, creative nonfiction piece, and portfolio) are automatically submitted to Turnitin, which scans for AI usage.

Related to this, all submitted writing must be new work created for this class. Reusing previously created work--whether originally made for another class or in high school--is considered a form of plagiarism and is also a violation of SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy.

▤ Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.
Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.
Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the GE website. (https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php)

English 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)](https://www.sjsu.edu/english)
Department email: [english@sjsu.edu (mailto:english@sjsu.edu)](mailto:english@sjsu.edu)
Department phone number: 408-924-4425

📊 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area C2: Humanities

Area C Arts and Humanities courses help students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to aesthetic experiences and to develop an understanding of the integrity of both emotional and intellectual responses. C2 Humanities courses encourage students to analyze and appreciate works of philosophical, historical, literary, aesthetic, and cultural importance.

GE Area C2 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a C2 course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and understand works of philosophical and humanistic importance, including their temporal and cultural dimensions;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such texts;
3. analyze and assess ideas of value, meaning, and knowledge, as produced within the humanistic disciplines; and
4. research and write effective analyses of works of the human intellect and imagination

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students be able to:

- Appreciate the wide breadth of contemporary writing in poetry, fiction, and essay;
- Express themselves creatively in poetry, fiction, and essay;
- Associate reading as a crucial component to writing;
- Consider writing—their own and others'—as contributing to a larger community both inside and outside the university;
- Place their own creative output within the larger contemporary writing community.

📘 Course Materials

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

You aren't required to buy any books, but you will be assigned reading for almost every module. All readings are PDFs available through Canvas and linked through your syllabus.

Other Readings

All readings are PDFs available through Canvas and linked through your syllabus. Included authors:

Poetry: Danez Smith, Hanif Abdurraqib, Morgan Parker, W. Todd Kaneko, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Colette Arrand, Fatimah Asghar, Christopher Soto, Jenny Zhang, Timothy Yu, CAConrad, Raquel Salas Rivera, Layli Long Soldier, Ashraf Fayadh, Jayy Dodd, Terrance

Hayes, Mónica de la Torre, Claudia Rankine, Jos Charles, Jordan Abel, Marilyn Chin, Vanessa Angélica Villarreal, Jay Besamer, Nikki Wallschlaeger, Jennifer Tamayo, Bhanu Kapil, Simone White, Eileen Myles

Fiction: Lydia Davis, Toni Cade Bambara, Ursula K. Le Guin, Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, Carmen Maria Machado, Clarice Lispector, Tommy Orange, Casey Plett, Sandra Cisneros, Jenny Zhang, Amparo Dávila, Sabrina Helen Li

Creative Nonfiction: Jamaica Kincaid, Joe Brainard, Joseph Han, Kiese Laymon, Carmen Maria Machado, Hanif Abdurraqib, Valeria Luiselli, Shamala Gallagher, Julia Madsen, Brandon Shimoda

Course Requirements and Assignments

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.

Writing Assignments

Poems: Three poems. Two will be workshopped, and an additional third will be included in your portfolio.

Short Story: One piece of short fiction

Essay: One piece of creative nonfiction.

Your pieces are due to Canvas three times during the course of the semester. Late submissions will not be workshopped.

Creative Wildcard: One poem/poem sequence, short story, literary essay, or hybrid form of your choice. Throughout the semester, you will regularly complete writing exercises in class—encouraging you to try new forms, techniques, etc. Your creative wildcard—which will be included in your final portfolio but not workshopped—should be drawn from these exercises or inspired by our outside reading. This piece should be free of errors but doesn't need to be as polished or revised as the other work: use this submission to demonstrate your openness to experimentation and (previously) unfamiliar modes of writing.

Workshop Assignments

For each day of workshop, you must fully annotate and critique in Canvas the work of your peers assigned to you. You are required to both mark on the text (suggestions, errors) and to write a developed critique as a comment in Canvas. This critique should be one to two *full* paragraphs, a minimum of 100 words. You will be typically be critiquing 6 works of your peers on workshop weeks, so you must be careful to budget enough time to do them properly. Additionally, you are required to be active in class discussion, regularly sharing your critiques with the class as a whole. No late critiques will be accepted.

Reading Assignments

Alongside reading and critiquing the work of your peers, you will be reading the work of outside writers, with a substantial number of pages assigned every week. These readings will provide the material for our discussions of craft and form; they provide the framework for the discussion of *your* work. So, completing all the assigned reading is absolutely crucial.

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a portfolio that consists of edited/ final versions of your creative work. It is crucial that all pieces be substantially revised from their earlier, workshopped drafts. The quality of your revisions will be a significant factor in your portfolio grade.

Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	Word Count	GELO
3 Poems (two drafts each)	Varies	4,5,7,8,11
1 Short Story (two drafts)	1,500-2,000	4,5,7,8,11
1 Literary Essay (two drafts)	1,500-2,000	4,5,7,8,11
1 Creative Wildcard	Varies	4,5,7,8,11
Workshop Critiques	100-200 each	3, 4, 5, 8, 9
Revised Portfolio of Work	Varies	4,5,7,8,11

Final Examination or Evaluation

As the culminating activity for this course, your final portfolio will be due during our assigned final exam period.

Grading Information

Final portfolio grade: 60%

Poems: 17%

Story: 17%

Literary Essay: 17%

Creative Wildcard 9%

Participation (Module Completion): 25%

Participation (Workshop Critiques): 15%

Due to the workshop format, neither your creative pieces nor your workshop critiques can be submitted late. Late critiques will not be accepted, and creative pieces submitted late to Canvas will not be workshopped. The pieces you submit to workshop will not receive a grade; they will only be graded as part of your revised final portfolio.

If you do not turn in a piece to workshop, but then submit that piece to your portfolio, your non-workshopped pieces will receive an automatic 50% deduction from that portion of your final portfolio grade.

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.

🏛 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

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available. If a change occurs, you'll be informed via Canvas announcements, and the change will be reflected in the Canvas modules.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 21/22	Introduction to Class: How This Class Will Work; Writing and Revision; Creative Introductions
1	Aug 23/24	Topic: (Un)Defining Poetry Reading: Poetry Reading 1 (Danez Smith, Hanif Abdurraqib, Morgan Parker, W. Todd Kaneko, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Colette Arrand) Craft Talk: Poetry & Pop Culture/ Poetry & Now
2	Aug 28/29	Topic: Poetry & "Tell it slant" Reading: Poetry Reading 2 (Fatimah Asghar, Christopher Soto, Jenny Zhang, Timothy Yu, CAConrad, Raquel Salas Rivera, Layli Long Soldier, Ashraf Fayadh, Jayy Dodd) Craft Talk: Compression
2	Aug 30/ 31	Topic: Form & Formlessness in Poetry Reading: Poetry Reading 3 (Terrance Hayes, Fatimah Asghar, Mónica de la Torre, Layli Long Soldier, Claudia Rankine, Jos Charles, Jordan Abel) Craft Talk: Power of Fragment, Mismatched Parts
3	Sep 4/5	HOLIDAY
3	Sep 6/7	Topic: Poetry & the Self Reading: Poetry Reading 4 (Marilyn Chin, Vanessa Angélica Villarreal, Jay Besamer, Nikki Wallschlaeger, Jennifer Tamayo, Bhanu Kapil, Simone White, Eileen Myles) Craft Talk: Image and Circling POEMS DUE SEPTEMBER 10
4	Sep 11/12	Workshop: Poetry Group 1 & 2
4	Sep 13/14	Workshop: Poetry Group 3 & 4

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
5	Sep 18/19	Topic: Responding to Readers and Critique No Reading Craft Talk: Orality & Performance
5	Sep 20/21	Workshop: Poetry Group 5 & 6
6	Sep 25/26	Workshop: Poetry Group 7 & 8
6	Sep 27/28	Topic: (Un)Defining Fiction Reading: Fiction Reading 1 (Lydia Davis, Toni Cade Bambara, Ursula K. Le Guin) Craft Talk: The Question of Conflict
7	Oct 2/3	Topic: Fiction and "Tell it slant" Reading: Fiction Reading 2 (Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, Carmen Maria Machado) Craft Talk: Show *and* Tell
7	Oct 4/5	Topic: Building Character in Fiction Reading: Fiction Reading 3 (Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, Clarice Lispector, Tommy Orange) Craft Talk: Conflicting Traits & the Power of Fragment
8	Oct 9/10	Topic: The (Non)Importance of Plot in Fiction Reading: Fiction Reading 4 (Casey Plett, Sandra Cisneros, Jenny Zhang) Craft Talk: Dialogue, Revisiting the Power of Fragment & the Question of Conflict SHORT STORY DUE OCTOBER 10
8	Oct 11/12	Workshop: Fiction Group 7 & 8
9	Oct 16/17	Workshop: Fiction Group 5 & 6
9	Oct 18/19	Topic: Revisiting "Tell it slant" & Finding Poetry in Fiction Reading: Fiction Reading 5 (Amparo Dávila, Sabrina Helen Li) Craft Talk: Techniques Fiction Shares with Poetry
10	Oct 23/24	Workshop: Fiction Group 3 & 4
10	Oct 25/26	Workshop: Fiction Group 1 & 2

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	Oct 30/ 31	Topic: (Un)Defining Creative Nonfiction Reading: CNF Reading 1 (Jamaica Kincaid, Joe Brainard, Joseph Han) Craft Talk: Fiction Techniques and 'True Stories'
11	Nov 1/2	Topic: Memoir and Examining the Self in CNF Reading: CNF Reading 2 (Kiese Laymon, Carmen Maria Machado) Craft Talk: Self as Character and The Power of Fragment
12	Nov 6/7	Topic: Looking Outward in CNF Reading: CNF Reading 3 (Hanif Abdurraqib, Valeria Luiselli) Craft Talk: Observation, Research, & Reportage
12	Nov 8/9	Topic: "Tell it Slant" & Finding Poetry in CNF Reading: CNF Reading 4 (Shamala Gallagher, Julia Madsen, Brandon Shimoda) CREATIVE ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 12
13	Nov 13/14	Workshop: CNF Group 3 & 4
13	Nov 15/16	Topic: Workshop Biz and Where We're At Workshop: CNF Group 5 & 6
14	Nov 20/21	Workshop: CNF Group 1 & 2
14	Nov 22/23	HOLIDAY
15	Nov 27/28	Workshop: CNF Group 7 & 8 Craft Talk: Starting with the End and Other Techniques for Revision
15	Nov 29/ 30	Topic: Prepping for the End, Collaborative Writing Exercises
16	Dec 4-6	Last Class Class Reading (video of you reading due by Thursday, Nov 30)
Final	Dec 8	PORTFOLIO DUE to Canvas by 10 PM, Friday, Dec. 8