

Writing Fiction Section 01

ENGL 130

Fall 2023 4 Unit(s) 08/21/2023 to 12/06/2023 Modified 08/30/2023

Course Description and Requisites

Workshop in short stories or other short fiction. Beginning the novel in individual cases. May be repeated twice for credit.

Prerequisite: ENGL 71 (or equivalent) or instructor consent.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

Workshop Etiquette

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://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/policies/>) http://notalone.sjsu.edu/policy_information/index.html

Per Title 5, 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.” Please keep this in mind as you submit work for this course. The work you create in

this class should aspire to resemble in quality the work we read. The work should be literary and character driven (this class is not the place for cat poems, fan-fiction, and the like.) I will not tolerate any work that is gratuitously violent, pornographic. If you aren't sure about your work, see me before distributing it to your classmates.

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> (<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/>.

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 Goals

Creative writing can be evaluated according to general standards used to determine how well a piece of writing works. These include:

1. Textual and/or technical competence and eloquence.
2. Imaginative risk.
3. Energy and freshness of language.
4. Effective use of metaphor and other forms of figurative language.
5. Clarity and precision of detail.
6. Capacity for mixed feelings and uncertainty.
7. Effective use of grammar, syntax, and rhythm.
8. Naturalness and believability.
9. Appropriateness of style to subject.
10. Compelling audience interest.

*Student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. Grades will be based on the quality and quantity of writing you do as well as the quality and constructiveness of the criticism offered during the workshops. Please be courteous and team-oriented

when it comes to submitting your work on time and within the page count (going way over will result in point deduction).

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

This course addresses the following Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) approved for the BA in English. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- SLO #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.
- SLO #3: Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.

Course Materials

A People's Future of the United States edited by Victor LaValle

Best American Short Stories 2022 edited by Andrew Sean Greer and Heidi Pitlor

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

Short stories

Students will be required to write two original short stories of between 2000-5000 words and to additionally revise one of the two stories. (Instead of stand-alone short stories, chapters from novels-in-progress are also acceptable.)

Attendance at Literary Readings

You are required to view/attend three readings by poets or prose writers. The Bay Area is one of the world's great literary regions, where seven days a week one can view/attend a reading by a renowned writer at a bookstore, college, community center, or library. Readings are listed on [litseen](http://litseen.com) and in the Sunday editions of the *San Jose Mercury News* and *San Francisco Chronicle*, and in *Metro*. Readings and writer talks the world over are now available to us 24/7 via Zoom. In your response papers, you may respond to any aspect of the reading, for example the speaker, the venue, the material performed, or the Q&A with the audience.

Participation

Students are expected to attend regularly and thoughtfully engage in class discussion. Be open to relating to the stories in various ways. This includes through your lived experience, previous reading, the way you respond to a character, like-able or not, or a particular, unexpected turn of phrase—all of which you can adapt to your own writing. Allow your work (and yourself) to undergo a positive change. Thoughtful peer feedback and self-reflection is vital to succeeding in the course.

✓ Grading Information

Final grades will be the product of the following factors:

- 2 Short stories, 2000-5000 words: 20% each

Assignment example: Original short story: 2000-5000 words, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12" font; due date: TBD

- Peer commentaries 10%
- Response papers on four literary readings 10%
- 1 Major Revision of a Short Story: 20%
- Writing Exercises: 10%
- Attendance 10%
- The maximum values of the above assignments total 100% that gradates, in accordance with University policy as follows: 100-98=A+; 97-94=A; 93-90=A-; 89-87=B+, 86-84=B; 83-80=B-; 79-77=C+; 76-74=C; 73- 70=C-; 69-67=D+; 66-64=D; 63-60=D-; 59-0=F.

Determination of Grades

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.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
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<i>A+</i>	<i>97 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 96.9%</i>
<i>A-</i>	<i>90 to 92.9%</i>
<i>B+</i>	<i>86 to 89.9%</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85.9%</i>
<i>B-</i>	<i>80 to 82.9%</i>
<i>C+</i>	<i>77 to 79.9%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 76.9%</i>
<i>C-</i>	<i>70 to 72.9%</i>
<i>D+</i>	<i>66 to 69.9%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65.9%</i>
<i>D-</i>	<i>60 to 62.9%</i>

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See University Policy F13-1 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf>

for more details.

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

See Canvas.