

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 117A, (GE S), Section 2, Fall 2012

Instructor:	Ed Sams
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Email:	Edwin.Sams@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	T-TH noon—1:30, 4—4:30 p.m.
Class Days/Time:	Thursday 4:30—7:15
Classroom:	Clark 302
Prerequisites:	Writing Skills Test (WST), completion of Core General Education, and completion of or co-registration in 100W Area S: “Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.”
GE Category:	Note: Courses used to satisfy Areas R, S, and V must be taken from three separate SJSU departments or other distinct academic units.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/Edwin.Sams> or accessible through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU.

Course Description

By analyzing films and literary works, and by researching their historical and cultural contexts, students will study the interrelationship of individuals, ethnic and cultural groups to appreciate issues of diversity, equality, and structured inequality in the U.S., its institutions, and its cultures. Films and literary texts have been paired topically but sometimes from very different historical periods so that we can analyze both historical continuity and change over time. The class will also emphasize critical thinking and writing skills. Please keep in mind that some texts may offer alternative or even antagonistic value systems to your own.

GE Area S Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

After successfully completing the course, students will be able to:

GE 1. Describe how identities (i.e. religious, gender, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age) are shaped by cultural and societal influences within contexts of equality and inequality.

GE 2. Describe historical, social, political and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S.

GE 3. Describe social actions that have led to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. (i.e. religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age).

GE 4. Recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups within the U.S.

Departmental Learning Objectives (E in syllabus)

English 117A serves four of the five learning objectives of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, by having students demonstrate the ability to

E1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of “close reading” or close analysis in both the study of literature and the study of film.

E3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust one’s writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject

E4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.

E5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at

<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Adding and dropping classes

Required Texts/Readings

The Captivity Narrative of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (online, faculty Web page)

The Narrative of Frederick Douglass (online, faculty Web page)

“The Passing of Grandison” and “The Doll” by Charles Waddell Chesnut (online, faculty Web page)

“Battle Royal” by Ralph Ellison (online, faculty Web page)

Ragtime by E. L. Doctorow (campus bookstore)

“Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter” by Chitra B. Divakaruni (online, faculty Web page)

“Woman Hollering Creek” by Sandra Cisneros (online, faculty Web page)

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote (online, faculty Web page)

Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan (campus bookstore)

“This is What It Means to Leave Phoenix, Arizona” by Sherman Alexie (online, faculty Web page)

A good collegiate dictionary.

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to be in their seats when class begins. They should have all the necessary books and readings ready for class activities and discussion. The day’s assignments should have been read and assigned homework ready to turn in. There is no provision for late work. Please do not take, make, or check phone messages. Computers in class should be used only for note-taking. There is no provision for late work. If you are absent, please contact me that day.

Academic policies

You are responsible for reading the SJSU academic policies available online, especially concerning academic honesty. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html

Evidence of plagiarism will result in the student’s being reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development

Assignments and Grading Policy

Grading: A-F.

A+=100, A= 95, A-=90: Excellent writing that is informative, persuasive, correct

B+=89, B=85, B-=80: Above average writing that is organized, developed, and effective

C+=79, C=75, C-=70: Satisfactory writing that is clear, coherent, and complete

D+=69, D=65, D-=60: Unsatisfactory writing that is unclear, incoherent, and incorrect

F=50: Writing that is off-topic, late, brief

(Students with a D average or better pass English 117A.)

The Drop Deadline is September 4. The Add Deadline September 11.

Final Average will be determined by the breakdown of these grades:

Three 5-week journals (2 entries per week) at 30% to be graded on the A-F scale.

Two 1000-word research papers at 30% to be graded on the A-F scale.

Ten 5-question quizzes on readings at 10% to be graded on the 100-point scale.

Ten random participation grades at 10% to be graded on the 100-point scale.

One group report at 10% to be graded on the A-F scale.

Final Exam at 10% to be graded on the A-F scale.

(Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading according to Academic Policy F-69-24.)

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The [LARC website](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

English 117A Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/21	Introduction to course, <i>The Searchers</i> (GE 1) (E 1, E 5)
2	8/28	Quiz, <i>The Captivity Narrative of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson</i> , <i>The Searchers (cont'd)</i> (GE 1) (E 1, 5)
3	9/3	Quiz, Folk Music Report, <i>The Narrative of Frederick Douglass</i> , <i>Amistad</i> (GE 1, 2) (E 1)
4	9/10	Blues Music Report, <i>The Narrative of Frederick Douglass</i> , <i>Amistad cont'd</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4), (E 1, 4, 5)
5	9/17	Quiz, Minstrelsy Report, Journals , “The Passing of Grandison” & “The Doll” by <u>Chesnut</u> , “Battle Royal” by Ellison (GE 1, 2) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
6	9/24	Quiz, Ragtime Report, <i>Ragtime</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4), (E 1, 4, 5)
7	10/1	Quiz, Tin Pan Alley Report, Research Paper , <i>Ragtime</i> , <i>The Jazz Singer</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
8	10/8	Quiz, Jazz Report, “Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter,” “Woman Hollering Creek” (GE 1, 2, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
9	10/15	Hip Hop Report, <i>Zoot Suit</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
10	10/22	Quiz, Journals , Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
11	10/29	Quiz, Rock and Roll Report, Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
12	11/5	Quiz, Punk Music Report, Tan, <i>Joy Luck Club</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
13	11/12	Research Paper , Tan, <i>Joy Luck Club</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
14	11/19	Thanksgiving Holiday
15	11/26	Quiz, Journals , Alexie (GE 1, 2) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
16	12/3	Rap Music Report, <i>Smoke Signals</i> (GE 1, 2, 4) (E 1, 5)

Final Exam will be held on Wednesday, December 12, from 2:45 to 5 p.m.

Final Exam will be a 5-minute filmed group project graded on the following scale:

A= active participation, one-page summary of one's participation, and one paragraph explaining how the film satisfies one of our student or departmental learning objectives.

B= active participation and one page summary of one's participation

C=active participation in the film project

D=participation but absent for the final exam

F=off-topic or plagiaristic

Group Reports will be graded on the following scale:

A=informative multimedia report that includes music

B=informative report that includes music

C=informative oral report

D= uninformative report

F= no report

Participation grades: $\sqrt{+}= 100$, $\sqrt{=} 85$, $\sqrt{-}=70$