

San José State University  
Humanities & Arts/English & Comparative Literature  
**English 117B: Global Film, Literature and Cultures**  
Fall 2013

**Instructor:** Dr. Julie Sparks

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**Professor Office:** Faculty Office Building 128

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Class meets:** 9-12:15 pm

**Classroom:** Sweeney Hall 413

**Prerequisites:** Completion of GE core; Satisfaction of Writing Skills Test;  
Upper-division standing

**GE/SJSU Studies Category:** GE Area V: Culture, Civilization, and Global  
Understanding

### **Course Description**

Using films and literary works, students will appreciate and understand the narratives that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time. We also examine how the films utilize the approaches to story-telling differently from traditional fictional forms: especially plays, short stories and poetry. We will look at films and read texts that are written in, set in, or depict multiple time periods and world cultures, with an emphasis on Ireland and other former colonies of the British Empire, including the U.S. Some of the common themes we will explore across these widely different texts and cultures will include the ways in which national and cultural identities are formed and contested, particularly in the telling of stories and the recording of history; imperialism, occupation, and war; the role of the artist in society, and dynamics of class, gender, race, and religion.

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

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. through the media of film and literature.
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.
3. Students shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.
4. Students shall hone their reading, writing, researching, and critical thinking skills through the practice of intellectually challenging analyses.

Course objectives 1-3 will be accomplished through the readings, class discussions,

student research and presentations, while the various written assignments and the presentation will allow us to accomplish objective 4 and to assess our level of accomplishment in objectives 1-3.

### **Required Texts/Readings**

- *The Táin* Translation by Thomas Kinsella
- *Modern Irish Drama: A Norton Critical Edition* Edited by John P. Harrington
- *TransAtlantic: A Novel* By Colum McCann ISBN: 9781400069590
- *The Deportees & Other Stories* By Roddy Doyle ISBN: 9780143114888

**Required Films** These we will watch in class. Others you can watch on your own for your other projects and (if you wish) to write about for extra credit (see course Web site).

Irish Films: *The Quiet Man, The Hanging Gale, Michael Collins, The Boxer* (the one with Daniel Day Lewis)

Multi-Cultural Films: *Cry Freedom, Swades, Whale Rider*

### **Other Readings**

Supplementary reading material, in addition to the works listed above, will help give you historical background and cultural context for the main readings and films. Most of these will be posted on the course Web site. Shorter readings will be handed out on paper, as in days of yore.

### **Academic Policies**

You are responsible for reading the SJSU academic policies available online:

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

### **Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

### **Academic Integrity**

The University's Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit, **or submitting your own work that you wrote for another class**) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student submitting them unless otherwise specified. **Turniti.com:** To receive credit, all essays for this class and all extra credit must be submitted to Turnitin.com. Late submissions to Turnitin could be penalized—if I have to keep asking. . .

### **Classroom Protocol**

**Attendance and Participation:** It is very important that students come to this class regularly and come prepared to participate. This means that reading assignments should be finished before the class period when they will be discussed, and that students should get to class on time to turn in homework and/or take quizzes. There will be frequent, unannounced in-class writing of some sort, and these cannot be made up by students who miss class, even for illness or some other reason beyond your control. Poor attendance and weak participation will significantly reduce your learning experience and your grade.

**Professionalism and maturity:** Perhaps this should go without saying, but students will be expected to treat each other and their professor with courtesy and respect. This includes the little things, like getting to class on time, turning your cell phones off in class, and refraining from toying with electronic devices and chatting with buddies in class. Professionalism also involves the more serious matter of avoiding rude or hostile remarks. We will be discussing some emotionally potent issues, so it will be important for us all to express ourselves carefully and try to keep our cool. Students who fail in this regard might be asked to leave the classroom.

**Late papers:** I realize everyone has emergencies now and then, but accepting late work opens the door to chaos. Therefore: QUIZZES and other in-class writing CANNOT BE MADE UP. LATE HOMEWORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Grades for late essays will be reduced a grade for every day they are late, and one week late is the limit. This policy provides incentive to meet deadlines, which are even more crucial in the workplace than in school. All assignments are to be submitted on paper (not electronically) in class, not slid under my office door or into my mailbox. **Please do not ask for exceptions to these policies** because you put me in an awkward position and provoke the ire of your classmates. One reduced grade on an essay or a couple of missed quizzes will not destroy your grade. Doing Extra Credit assignments will protect your grade from occasional lapses.

**Extra Credit:** To soften the no-late-homework policy and to encourage you to seek enriching extra learning experiences, I will periodically urge you to attend campus lectures or performances and write about those for extra points. Film comparison write-ups from an approved list will also be accepted. There is a 30-point maximum per semester, per student, for extra credit. (The other assignments will be worth 1000, total). Extra credit can be turned in any time, but it will be graded when I have time. Please do not nag! The final deadline for extra credit is the last day of class.

**Absences:** If you are not in class, contact classmates to get assignments, directions, handouts, notes, etc. Please don't make your absences extra work for me. With 4 classes to teach and several hundred student essays to grade, I already have as much work as I can manage.

### **Assignments**

Paper #1 paper with research 3-4 pages (1050-1400 words)	15%
Paper #2 paper with research 5-7 pages (1700-2400 words)	20%
Presentation on extra book/film 1-2 pages (350-700 words)	15%
Final Exam	20%
Quizzes, homework, small in-class assignments	30%

**Grading Policy** 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.

In written assignments for English 117, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the literary text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A" essay contains a fresh insight which teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

**Tentative Schedule** Please note: Any schedule adjustments we might need will be announced in class and by email. Homework questions are not specified below, but will be due most days.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, major assignments due dates
1	F 8/23	Introduction to the Course, <b>Watch Film: <i>The Quiet Man</i> (2 hours)</b> <u>Read for next time:</u> "The Quiet Man" story, Readings on <i>The Quiet Man</i>
2	F 8/30	Discuss <i>The Quiet Man</i> , film and story <u>Read for next time:</u> Selections from <i>The Táin</i> <u>Due next week:</u> topic proposal

3	F 9/6	Discuss: <i>The Táin</i> <u>Due</u> : topic proposal for paper #1  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>Translations: A Play</i> , and Modern Irish Drama pp. 551-564
4	F 9/13	Discuss <i>Translations: A Play</i>  <u>Read for next time</u> : Selection from <i>TransAtlantic</i> (“Freeman” pp. 40-99) and Frederick Douglass material on course Web site
5	F 9/20	Discuss: <i>TransAtlantic</i> “Freeman”  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>Hanging Gale</i> material on course Web site
6	F 9/27	<b>Watch film: <i>The Hanging Gale</i></b>  <u>Read for next time</u> : Selection from <i>TransAtlantic</i> (“Icehouse” pp. 156-191)
7	F 10/4	Discuss: <i>The Hanging Gale</i> , <i>TransAtlantic</i> “Icehouse”  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>John Bull’s Other Island</i> and “Preface for Politicians”
8	W10/11	Discuss: <i>John Bull’s Other Island</i>  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>Swades</i> material on course Web site
9	W10/18	<b>Watch Film: <i>Swades</i></b> <u>Due</u> : topic proposal for paper #2  <u>Read for next time</u> : Michael Collins material on course Web site
10	F 10/25	Discuss <i>Swades</i> <b>Watch film: <i>Michael Collins</i></b> ; Discuss film, poetry of the revolution  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>Cry Freedom</i> material on course Web site
11	F 11/1	<b>Watch Film: <i>Cry Freedom</i></b>  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>The Boxer</i> material on course Web site
12	F 11/8	<b>Watch film: <i>The Boxer</i></b> <u>Due</u> : Essay #2  <u>Read for next time</u> : from <i>The Deportees</i> : “The Deportees,” “Home to Harlem”
13	F 11/15	Discuss: Stories from <i>The Deportees</i>  <u>Read for next time</u> : <i>Whale Rider</i> material on course Web site
14	F 11/22	*****THANKSGIVING*****
15	F 11/29	<b>Watch Film: <i>Whale Rider</i></b> Discuss film, discuss presentations
16	F 12/6	<b>Student presentations, discuss the final</b>
		Final Exam