

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**English 117A, (GE S), Section 2, Spring 2013**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Ed Sams
<b>Office Location:</b>	Faculty Offices 212
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<b>Email:</b>	Edwin.Sams@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	MW 12:30-1:30 p.m.
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Wednesday 4:30—7:15
<b>Classroom:</b>	BBC 201
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	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.”
<b>GE Category:</b>	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 read” 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 Divakaruni(online, faculty Web page)

“Woman Hollering Creek” by Sandra Cisneros (hand-out)

*In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote (campus bookstore)

*Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan (campus bookstore)

“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. 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](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.)

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

Three 5-week journals (200 words per week) at 30% graded on the A-F scale.

(Please include word count at the end.)

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

(Each essay should have five documented sources in MLA format.)

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

(Questions are fill-in-the-blank. Look for proper nouns, dates, amounts.)

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

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

(Reports should be no longer than 15 minutes, including full songs, definitions, history, and analysis relating music to our texts.)

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

(The Final Exam Project will be a student collaboration for a short film (5-10 minutes) that creatively relates one or more of our class texts to one or more of our GE learning objectives.)

(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 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

## English 117A Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/23	Introduction to course, <i>The Searchers</i> (GE 1) (E 1, E 5)
2	1/30	Quiz, <i>The Captivity Narrative of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson</i> , <i>The Searchers (cont'd)</i> (GE 1) (E 1, 5)
3	2/6	Quiz, American Folk Music Report, <i>The Narrative of Frederick Douglass</i> , <i>Amistad</i> (GE 1, 2) (E 1)
4	2/13	American 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	2/20	Quiz, American Minstrelsy Report, <b>Journals</b> , “The Passing of Grandison” & “The Doll” by <u>Chesnutt</u> , “Battle Royal” by Ellison (GE 1, 2) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
6	2/27	Quiz, American Ragtime Report, <i>Ragtime</i> by Doctorow, <i>The Jazz Singer</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4), (E 1, 4, 5)
7	3/6	Quiz, Tin Pan Alley Report, <b>Research Paper</b> , <i>Ragtime</i> , <i>The Jazz Singer cont'd</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
8	3/13	American Swing Music Report, <i>Zoot Suit</i> , Cisneros (GE 1, 2, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
9	3/20	Quiz, Hip Hop Report, <i>Zoot Suit</i> “Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter,” <b>Journals</b> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
10	3/25	<b>Spring Break!</b>
11	4/3	Quiz, Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
12	4/10	Quiz, American Be Bop Report, Capote, <i>In Cold Blood cont'd</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 4, 5)
13	4/17	Quiz, American Funk Music Report, <b>Research Paper</b> , Tan, <i>Joy Luck Club</i> (GE 1, 2, 3, 4) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)
14	4/24	Tan, <i>Joy Luck Club cont'd</i>
15	5/1	Quiz, <b>Journals</b> , Alexie, <i>Smoke Signals</i> (GE 1, 2) (E 1, 3, 4, 5)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
16	5/8	American Punk Music Report, <i>Smoke Signals cont'd</i> (GE 1, 2, 4) (E 1, 5)

Final Exam will be held on May 15 fro 2:45-5:00 p.m.