

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 130, Writing Fiction, Section 3, Spring 2013

There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed. —Ernest Hemingway

If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that. — Stephen King

Write what disturbs you, what you fear, what you have not been willing to speak about. Be willing to be split open. — Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*

Instructor:	Kelly A. Harrison
Office Location:	FO 222
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Email:	kelly.harrison@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	T 4:30-5:30, by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tu/Th 3:00PM-4:15PM
Classroom:	BBC 002
Prerequisites:	English 71 or instructor consent

Canvas online class and Turnitin.com

I will post course materials to Canvas. We might use Canvas for posting stories, working in groups, or doing other tasks. We will use Turnitin.com for online workshops and turning in stories (both draft and final versions).

Canvas login:

URL: <https://sjsu.instructure.com> Username : SJSU 9-digit ID

Help: http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/student_resources/index.html

Turnitin.com: Class ID: 5953951 Password: sjsu

Course Description

This class creates a community of practice within which we'll explore the art of fiction. We'll learn to analyze what works in a story and what doesn't, and we'll learn techniques to help fix the common problems in short fiction. Together, we'll construct class as a safe environment for learning. Critique will be positive, encouraging, and constructive.

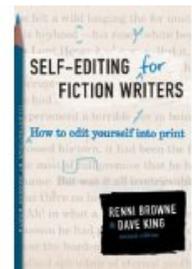
Required Texts/Readings

Self-Editing for Fiction Writers: How to Edit Yourself into Print, Renni Browne, Dave King

This is an easy-to-read book with simple exercises. We'll read this immediately and refer to the lessons throughout our discussions in class.

You are also required to photocopy your story for the class and instructor (21 copies). This will cost approximately \$30. You will also be required to print one- to two-page responses for each story we read for workshop. Other materials you need:

- A 3-ring binder (referred to as your **notebook**) with four sections (writing exercises, notes, literary events, and your story drafts)
- Lined binder paper, 8.5x11, for in-class writing exercises (NO SMALL SHEETS!)
- Blue or black pens for in-class writing, colored pen (green, purple) for workshops
- Reliable internet access and email



Recommended books

The following texts are good books on writing.

- *From Where You Dream*, Robert Olen Butler
- *The Making of a Story*, Alice LaPlante. ISBN: 978-0-393-06164-2
- *Zen in the Art of Writing: Essays on Creativity*, Ray Bradbury
- *Gotham Writers Workshop: Writing Fiction: The Practical Guide From New York's Acclaimed Writing School*
- *On Writing*, Stephen King (skip to part 2, on writing craft)

Classroom Protocol

No cellphones. No texting. No laptops unless we're writing.

We all deserve respect. Please honor the fact that this is an elective class and classmates are here to learn without disruption.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Belonging to a community of writers means we have a responsibility to each other and to the class as a whole. As such, a large portion of your grade is based on honest participation, effort, and collegiality.

I have no problems submitting a grade roster of all As provided the class works honestly to earn it. Your grade is based largely on your effort. Do you perform writing exercises and participate in discussion? Come prepared? Provide honest and supported criticism?

In addition to in-class and out-of-class writing exercises, you will write one short story for the entire class to workshop. I will not assign letter grades to your stories. You will revise this story based on the workshop feedback; the revision is due at the final exam (or earlier). So how do I determine grades? A total of points.

- For each student story we discuss as a class, you must write a one-page response, typed and handed in to me as well as to the author due on the day we discuss the story. The total for these responses will be 20% of your grade (200 points). **NO LATE RESPONSES!**
- In-class writing exercises, your **notebook**, quizzes, and participation account for 30% of your grade (300 points). Part of your notebook is a collection of writing exercises. Another part is writing notes—your observations, story ideas, or other exercises you do for your own edification. The third part requires you to attend at least two literary events on campus (see litart.org for a schedule) and write at least two pages of reflection/response to the event; avoid summary and focus on what you got from the event. The last section is for story drafts, which receives a separate grade.
- The final exam consists of a class reading. You will choose an excerpt of three to five minutes to perform for the class for 5% of your grade (50 points).
- The remainder of your grade (45%, 450 points) comes from the story you submit (“drafts” for workshops and a revision). If the draft is weak because it is a rush job, is short of the assignment, and/or contains a plethora of surface errors, the assignment will receive partial credit.

Total points determine your grade as follows:

A	=	930 points +	B-	=	800-829	D+	=	670-699
A-	=	900-929	C+	=	770-799	D	=	630-669
B+	=	870-899	C	=	730-769	D-	=	600-629
B	=	830-869	C-	=	700-730	F	=	below 600

Grading: A-F

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official 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.

Student workload

Consider your high school math class for a moment. You likely had 4-5 hours of class instruction per week plus 30-60 minutes of homework each night, for a total of 7-10 hours a week. Just to match your minimum high school workload, you would need to spend 4.5 hours a week on this course. This is college. Expect to spend more time just to meet the minimum requirements for this course.

The SJSU policy on student workload (from <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S12-3.htm>):

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism means using someone else’s work without attribution as your own work, such as:

- using text from a book and not citing it as such
- using web page text directly in your papers without citing
- having someone else write all or part of your paper
- using someone’s story from a previous class (or another university)

Any assignment containing plagiarized passages will receive an F grade automatically. Copying work into your “own” story warrants an F in the course. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will be reported and may result in a grade of F.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

The English department has designated the following general learning objectives for courses in the major. Students will learn 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; and
- 5) articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

In this fiction writing course, students will learn to:

- 1) identify and discuss the merits and flaws in a short work of fiction,
- 2) write fiction that engages the audience and addresses significance and meaning around the human condition,
- 3) use the techniques of craft (character development, dialog, structure, style, etc.) when drafting and revising fiction, and
- 4) revise fiction significantly, going beyond correcting surface errors.

Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following information online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>

- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload
- Recording policies
- Adding and dropping classes

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.

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):

<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.

SJSU Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. Our staff is here to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

English 130, Spring 2013, Course Schedule

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
1 Jan 22/24	No class	Introductions, course overview
2 Jan 29/31	Significance, structure, style, sincerity, originality Discuss Editing Ch 1-2	Busch "Ralph the Duck"
3 Feb 5/7	Discuss Editing Ch 3-4	Flash fiction online
4 Feb 12/14	Discuss Editing Ch 5-6	Exercises & online reading
5 Feb 19/21	Discuss Editing Ch 7-8	Small groups: first pages
6 Feb 26/28	Discuss Editing Ch 9-10	Exercises
7 Mar 5/7	Discuss Editing Ch 11-12	Small groups: scenes Student conferences begin
8 Mar 12/14	Student conferences week (Thursday Kelly at 4Cs conference)	
9 Mar 19/21	Revision, restructure, rethink	Due: G1/2 stories
SPRING BREAK MARCH 25 – 29		
10 Apr 2/4	Group 1	Group 2 Due: G3/4 stories
11 Apr 9/11	Group 3	Group 4 Due: G5/6 stories
12 Apr 16/18	Group 5	Group 6 Due: G7/8 stories
13 Apr 23/25	Group 7	Group 8 Due: G9/10 stories
14 4/30 5/2	Group 9	Group 10
15 May 7/9	Revision strategies	Last day of class NOTEBOOKS DUE
Final Exam: Friday, May 17, 1445-1700		

Important SJSU dates Spring 2013

Monday	February 4	Last Day to Drop Without Entry on Permanent Record
Monday-Friday	March 25-29	Spring Recess
Monday	April 1	Cesar Chavez Day Observed - Campus Closed
Monday	May 13	Last Day of Instruction – Last Day of Classes
Tuesday	May 14	Study/Conference Day (no classes or exams)
Wednesday-Friday	May 15-17	Final Examinations
Monday-Tuesday	May 20-21	Final Examinations
Wednesday	May 22	Final Examinations Make-Up Day