

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**English 71, Introduction to Creative Writing (GE C2), Section 03,**  
**Fall 2015**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Peter O'Sullivan
<b>Office Location:</b>	FO 107
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924- 4419
<b>Email:</b>	peter.o'sullivan@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesdays 1:30-2:30PM ;Thursdays 8-9AM
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00-10:15AM
<b>Classroom:</b>	SH 348
<b>GE Category:</b>	Humanities, Arts, and Letters C2

### **Course Description**

Welcome to English 71, Introduction to Creative Writing. This course meets the requirements for general education in area C2: Humanites and Arts, Letters. We will be embarking on a journey of discovery: discovery of voice, discovery of lyric, and discovery of narrative. We will look at both traditional and modern examples of creative prose and poetry both, and use those models to form our own works of expression. Creative output and class participation shall be the main components of this course. May we find the stories within each of us and let them sing.

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

#### ***English Department Student Learning Objectives: DSLOs***

- SLO: 1 Students will demonstrate the ability to 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 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature;
- SLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject;

- SLO 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;
- SLO 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

***GE Area C2 Letters Student Learning Objectives: GSLOs***

- SLO 1: Letters courses will enable students to recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns.
- SLO 2: Letters courses will enable students to respond to significant works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses.
- SLO 3: Letters courses will enable students to write clearly and effectively. Writing shall be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness.

***Course Objectives:***

- Decipher and understand the form and content of assigned literary works;
- Comprehend the historical and cultural contexts of assigned literary works;
- Recognize the accomplishments of and issues related to writing by men and women representing diverse cultural traditions;
- Acquire through both individual and collaborative/workshop efforts of a written and oral nature the skills necessary for reading, discussing, analyzing, interpreting, and—most importantly—emulating and writing works of poetry, creative non-fiction, and short fiction;
- Communicate such skills with clarity and precision;
- Develop an appreciation of literary works as expressions of human intellect and imagination, and as representations of diverse human cultures;
- Develop the ability to write literary works that express intellect and imagination and that represent diversity in human cultures;
- Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work;
- Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
- Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while at the same time representing their particular cultures;
- Write works of poetry, creative non-fiction, and short fiction that are of interest and value to the writer, to other students in the course, and to a diverse reading audience.

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

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

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbook

- King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*; Scribner. ISBN-10: 1439156816
- Lawn, Beverly. *40 Short Stories*; Bedford/St.Martin. ISBN-10: 1457604752

### Other Readings

Additional readings can be found on Canvas: <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>

## Classroom Protocol

Students will come to class every day and prepared to discuss that day's readings. I reserve the right to eject any student who comes to class unprepared. Unpreparedness is defined as not having done the readings and not having the materials necessary for class. Each day will begin with a quiz or in class writing assignment based on the readings for that day. The rest of class will be a mélange of small and large group discussions, lectures, student presentations, debates, and activities necessary to facilitate the learning process. Electronic devices such as smartphones and laptops are allowed, as they can be useful in looking up information during class, but I again reserve the right to refuse their use should they become distractions (e.g. facebook during lectures). Also, all cell phones should be silenced (or put on vibrate) before class. I will dance if your cell phone goes off.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

**Grading:** 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. Grades issued will represent a full range of student performance and will adhere to the following SJSU academic standards of assessment:

The "A" essay will be well organized and well developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic complexity and variety. Such essays will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors.

The "B" essay will demonstrate competence in the same categories as the "A" essay. The chief difference is that the "B" essay will show some descriptably slight weaknesses in one of those categories. It may slight one of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression, or contain some minor grammatical, mechanical, or usage flaws.

The "C" essay will complete all tasks set by the assignment, but show weakness in fundamentals (usually development), with barely enough specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. The sentence construction may be less mature, and the use of language less effective and correct than the "B" essay.

The "D" essay will neglect one of the assigned tasks and be noticeably superficial in its treatment of the assignment--that is, too simplistic or short. The essay may reveal some problems in development, with insufficient specific information to illustrate the experience or support generalizations. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

The "F" essay will demonstrate a striking underdevelopment of ideas and insufficient or unfocused organization. It will contain serious grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors that render some sentences incomprehensible.

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. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC shall replace D or F. In such cases, NC shall also substitute for W (or Withdrawal) because neither grade (NC or W) affects students' GPA.

All grades will be broken down on a percentage basis, using the following model.

A+ = 100-97%	A = 96-93%	A- = 92-90%
B+ = 89-87%	B = 86-83%	B- = 82-80%
C+ = 79-77%	C = 76-73%	C- = 72-70%
D+ = 69-67%	D = 66-63%	D- = 62-60%
F = 59-0% Unsatisfactory		

### **Grade Distribution:**

Pre and Post-course Diagnostic:	5%
Blog Entries:	25%
Short Stories:	30%
Poems:	25%
Written Critiques:	10%
<u>Participation Activities:</u>	<u>5%</u>
Total:	100%

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, students are expected to 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>. Assignments and Grading Policy:

## **Reading**

One of my most cherished beliefs is that you cannot be a good writer if you do not read. It's like being a musician who never listens to music or a director who never watches film. The notion is ludicrous. While there isn't an inordinate amount of reading, I am asking that you read everything that is assigned to you. We are going to read both for content as well as for form and technique. This is a different kind of reading than the kind to which you are most used.

## **Writing**

English 71 is a course in creative writing, and as such, it is a writing intensive course. You will be asked to write on a daily basis, everything from small poems and creative exercises, to long, multi-page short stories. All writing will be turned into Canvas: <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>

## **Participation**

Participation is a measurement of how much of the assigned reading you do and how much you participate in class. As such, I will assign writings, usually of no more than one page, on Canvas. These writings will be exercises in creativity meant to expand your toolset.

## **Diagnostic**

There is a common pre and post diagnostic assignment for this class. This diagnostic must be done as a poem.

## **Workshops**

You will workshop at least one short story and two or three poems, depending on time. These are opportunities to share your work openly with a group of peers and receive verbal feedback. These workshops are required and are part of your critique grade. All workshops are structured group exercises in which you will give and receive valuable feedback on your writing. **Workshops cannot be made up.**

## **Canvas**

While this is not a traditionally hybrid class, I see Canvas as a versatile tool for the teaching of creative writing. As such, there will be no hard copies of any assignments. All work will be either uploaded to or linked to Canvas. <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>

## **Extra Credit**

There is no extra credit given in this course.

## **Late Policy**

You may turn in assignments late, but grades are reduced on a sliding scale. After one week, your grade is reduced by 25%. After two weeks, your grade is reduced by 50%. After three weeks, your grade is reduced by 75%. Finally, after four weeks, you may turn in the assignment to meet word count requirement, but will receive a score of zero on the assignment.

## 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): <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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 71, Fall 2015, Course Schedule

OW = On Writing; 40S = 40 Stories

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
1	Thursday August 20	Introductions: Syllabus; Who are you? Why creative writing? Assign Pre-course diagnostic {GSLO 3} {DSLO 2,3}
2	Tuesday, August 25	Introduction to Creative Non-Fiction Blog writing 101 {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} Assign Blog Project {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5}
	Thursday, August 27	Finding your passion. Who is your audience? {DSLO 3} Critiques OW: Beginning - CV 19 (not page 19, subchapter 19) {DSLO 1} {GSLO 1}
3	Tuesday, September 1	Incorporating research into your blog {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} OW: CV 20 - 38 {DSLO 1} {GSLO 1}
	Thursday, September 3	Generating ideas {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} OW: What Writing Is and Toolbox
4	Tuesday, September 8	Supplementing your words with other media {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} OW: On Writing - 14 {DSLO 1} {GSLO 1}
	Thursday, September 10	Workshop Blog Entries OW: 15 - All of On Living: a Postscript {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1}
5	Tuesday, September 15	Workshop Blog Entries OW: And Further More - end {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1}
	Thursday, September 17	Workshop Blog Entries

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
6	Tuesday, September 22	<b>Final Blog Entries Due</b> {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} An introduction to Short Fiction 40S: Young Goodman Brown{GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Assign Short Fiction {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} Narratives
	Thursday, September 24	40S: Bartleby, The Scrivener{GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Characters and Plot
7	Tuesday, September 29	40S: Hills Like White Elephants{GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Dialogue
	Thursday, October 1	40S: Story of an Hour; The Yellow Wallpaper{GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Descriptions
8	Tuesday, October 6	40S: Cask of Amontillado {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Word Play
	Thursday, October 8	Workshop #1
9	Tuesday, October 13	Workshop #2
	Thursday, October 15	Workshop #3
10	Tuesday, October 20	Workshop #4
	Thursday, October 22	Workshop #5
11	Tuesday, October 27	Workshop #6
	Thursday, October 29	Workshop #7
12	Tuesday, November 3	Workshop #8

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Thursday, November 5	<b>Short Fiction Assignments Due</b> {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} Assign Poems {GSLO 2,3} {DSLO 3,4,5} Poetry: Form versus Free Verse --- Master then Break. <a href="#">Prufrock</a> ; <a href="#">Station of the Metro</a> ; <a href="#">What Lips</a> ; <a href="#">We Real Cool</a> ;
13	Tuesday, November 10	Sonnet, Villanelle {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} Shakespearean and Italian Sonnets {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} <a href="#">Do Not Go Gentle</a> ; Slice of Life {GSLO} {DSLO 1}
	Thursday, November 12	Blank Verse, Sestina, Terza Rima {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1} <a href="#">The Second Coming</a> ; <a href="#">Sestina: Altaforte</a> ; <a href="#">Acquainted with the Night</a> {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1}
14	Tuesday, November 17	Other Forms {GSLO 1} {DSLO 1}
	Thursday, November 19	Workshop #1
15	Tuesday, November 24	Workshop #2
	Thursday, November 26	<b>Thanksgiving. No Class</b>
16	Tuesday, December 1	Workshop #3
	Thursday, December 3	Workshop #4
17	Tuesday, December 8	Workshop #5 <b>Post Course Diagnostic Due</b>
Final Exam	Thursday December 10, 7:15	Leftover Workshop Breakfast? <b>All Revisions Due</b>