

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
ENGL 40, Contemporary World Fiction, Spring 2015

Instructor:	Revathi Krishnaswamy
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Office Hours:	M 1:30-3:00 and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	MW 12:00-1:15
Classroom:	Engineering 232
GE Category:	Area C2

Course Description

The theme of this course is “Borders.” The border represents a line of demarcation between two countries, two cultures, two peoples. While national borders are increasingly porous in today’s globalized world, they continue to be a source of conflict and confrontation. Using contemporary literature we will explore the role of the border in three locations across the world: U.S.-Mexico, India-Pakistan, and Israel-Palestine. The exploration will give us a deeper understanding of how “border narratives” shape cultural identity, interaction, clash, change, adaptation, diffusion and fusion.

Course Website

Electronic copies of course materials such as the syllabus, readings, assignment guidelines and rubrics, supplemental resources, Internet links, and lectures can be found on the Canvas website for this course (<https://sjsu.instructure.com/login>). You are responsible for checking this website on a regular basis for updates about all course-related information. Other communications will be handled via SJSU campus email.

GE Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. recognize and discuss how significant works of fiction illuminate enduring human concerns,
2. respond to significant works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses.
3. write clearly and effectively. Writing shall be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness.

English Major Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability 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, in all aspects of coursework but, in particular, in frequent and detailed quizzes, as well as in essays;
2. show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to European literature from ancient Greece to medieval Italy, and to demonstrate that familiarity in class discussions, essays, and examinations;
3. write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject, as demonstrated in two essays and the final examination;
4. develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively, as demonstrated particularly in the second essay;
5. articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts, in both class discussions and written assignments.

Required Texts/Readings

Jimenez: [The Circuit](#) (any edition; buy/borrow)

On Canvas:

- Fuentes: [The Crystal Frontier](#),
[Malintzin of the Maquilas](#)
[Las Amigas](#)
- Liebrecht: [A Room on the Roof](#)
[The Road to Cedar City](#)
- Amiri: [A Dog's Life](#),
[A Shopping Spree](#)
- Manto: [Toba Tek Singh](#),
[Open It](#),
[Mishtake/Mishtake Removed](#)
[Letters to Uncle Sam](#)
- Antharjanam: [A Leaf in the Storm](#)
- Abbas: [The Death of Sheikh Burhanuddin](#)

Library Liaison

Contact Toby Matoush via email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, or phone: (408) 808-2096 if you have library research questions that have not been answered in class.

Classroom Protocols

Attendance & Participation: Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are extremely important. Please arrive on time and stay for the entire class. You are responsible for all materials assigned, presented and discussed. You are encouraged to take notes in class, but you should have studied the materials before class begins. Poor attendance/participation will have negative effects on your final grade.

Since most classes will be based on group discussions, presentations and workshops it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and take an active as well as thoughtful role in all classroom activities. Your questions, comments, insights, and interpretations are valuable no matter how outlandish they may seem. So do speak up!

Conferencing: I encourage you to visit me in my office whenever you need to discuss something, whether it is an assignment or any other difficulty you may be having with the structure and format of the class. I am completely open to criticism and suggestions because the only way I can fix things is if I know what is wrong.

Submitting work: Except for the Reader Responses, which are to be submitted directly on Canvas, all work must be turned in as hard copy during the class period on the date indicated in the schedule; please do not email assignments to me unless I ask you to do so.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Assignments/requirements: Total word count 5000 (more detailed guidelines/rubrics etc will be provided in class and on Canvas)

1. **Quizzes:** You will take **3** in-class quizzes on the dates indicated in the schedule; these quizzes will ask for factual as well as brief interpretive responses. Please bring a green exam booklet for each quiz. (GE SLO 1) (word count: $500 \times 3 = 1500$).
2. **Presentations:** You will make **one 30-minute** group presentation consisting of a PPT that covers relevant “Historical, Geographical, Political, Economic and Cultural Issues” relating to a specific border. The PPT will be uploaded to Canvas and be accessible to everyone in the class for reference. (GE SLO 2). (word count: 500)
3. **Reading Responses:** You will complete **4** Reader Responses in the format provided on CANVAS. (GE SLO 2) (word count: $500 \times 4 = 2000$)
4. **Critical Analysis Essay:** You will write an essay that focuses on a border other than the one on which you did your group presentation; you will write this in stages that involve outlining, drafting, revising, and editing. (GE SLO 2 & 3) (word count 1000 words)

Grading:

3 Quizzes	450 points (150 each)
1 Presentation	150 points
4 Reader Responses	100 points (25 each)
1 Essay	250 points
Participation	50 points

Note: Unless you have received prior permission from me, assignments will be graded one letter grade lower for each late day. No work will be accepted beyond one week late. In-class work including presentations cannot be made up.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas conveyed. In other words, your grade will depend not only on what you say but also on how (well) you say it. All student writing should therefore be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

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.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. 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).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. 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) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

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.

Student Technology Resources (Optional)

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 (Optional)

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 is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

SJSU Writing Center (Optional)

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 is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

Peer Mentor Center (Optional)

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/> .

Tentative Schedule

1/26	M	Introduction to course. Form Groups
1/28	W	“The Mexican Dream” and discussion
2/02	M	Jimenez: The Circuit
2/04	W	Jimenez: The Circuit
		Reader Response #1 Due on Canvas, Fri 2/6 @ 12:59 pm
2/09	M	Consultation on Group Presentations
2/11	W	Group Presentation: U.S.-Mexico Border
2/16	M	Fuentes: Malintzin of the Maquilas
2/18	W	Fuentes: Las Amigas
2/23	M	Fuentes: The Crystal Frontier
2/25	W	Review U.S.-Mexico Border; Preview Quiz.
		Reader Response #2 Due on Canvas, Fri 2/27 @ 12:59 pm
3/02	M	Quiz #1
3/04	W	Group Presentation: Israel-Palestine Border
3/09	M	Lemon Tree (film)
3/11	W	Lemon Tree
3/16	M	Lemon Tree
3/18	W	Discussion of Lemon Tree
3/23	M	Spring Break
3/25	W	Spring Break
3/30	M	Liebrecht: Room on the Roof
4/01	W	Liebrecht: The Road to Cedar City
4/06	M	Amiri: Shopping Spree; Dog’s Life
		Reader Response #3 Due on Canvas, Fri 4/10 @ 12:59 pm
4/08	W	Quiz #2
4/13	M	Group Presentation: India-Pakistan Border
4/15	M	Manto: Letters to Uncle Sam; Toba Tek Singh

4/20 M Manto: Open It; Mishtake/Mishtake Removed
4/22 W Antharjanam: A Leaf in the Storm

4/27 M Abbas: The Death of Sheikh Burhanuddin
4/29 W Earth (film)
Reader Response # 4 Due on Canvas, Fri 5/1 @ 12:59 pm

5/04 M Earth
5/06 W Earth; **Submit outline of essay to Canvas by 11:59 pm on Fri 5/8**

5/11 M Discussion of Earth
5/13 W **Quiz #3**

5/21 Th Peer Editing of Essay **10:00-11:00**
Essay Due: SUBMIT TO CANVAS BY 11:59 PM on Fri 5/22