

**San José State University**  
**English Department**  
**Engl 190, Section 1: Honors Colloquium, Fall 2016**  
**Booker Prize-Winning Novels**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	D. Mesher
<b>Office Location:</b>	Faculty Office Building (FOB) 220
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924-4440
<b>Email:</b>	d.mesher@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00-8:30 am and 4:30-5:00 pm
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30-2:45 pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	Clark Hall (CL) 238
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Application to the English Honors program

**Course Format**

**Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses :**

There are no special requirements for the use of technology as such in this course, and alternatives or help will be provided should students have difficulties with any of the course procedures. We will be meeting in a “next generation” classroom, with the capability of recording lectures, presentations, and seminar discussions by students as well as the instructor, and including overhead or media projections during the presentations, and students will have access to such recordings on request, as well as copies of their own presentations (to save for their own purposes, including use in educational and employment applications). Students will submit essays online (and not in printed form), in their Canvas account, and receive them back, marked and graded, through Canvas as pdf files. Essays can only be submitted to Canvas in RTF or Word format, and a recent version of the free software program Adobe Reader may be required to read the marks and grades in the returned pdf files. In addition, students may be required to access the course web page and download or read files there, as well as to communicate via email; and quizzes will be taken and collected via iClicker. All this will be discussed on the first day of class.

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging (Optional)**

Links for course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, and readings can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher> .  
Written assignments for this class will be submitted on the Canvas learning management system

course website (<http://sjsu.instructure.com> ). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](http://my.sjsu.edu) at <http://my.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates.

## Course Description

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

English Department Course Learning Outcomes:

- 1) Read closely and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature.
- 2) Show familiarity with major 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.
- 5) Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

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

- 1) offer a close and informed reading of each of the texts covered in the course, and how they relate to national and international contemporary literary trends and techniques;
- 2) utilize major critical approaches to British and world Literature in discussing the themes and techniques of the works read;
- 3) write effectively in an academic style and context about the literature under study;
- 4) point to their written and oral presentations of material connected with the course as evidence of their individual accomplishments in contributing original critical insights to the discussion of this literature;
- 5) discuss with authority some of the background information and historical context necessary to understand fully the settings and themes of contemporary novels written by authors from Britain, India, Canada, Jamaica, and South Korea.

### Required Texts/Readings

#### Textbooks

- A.S. Byatt, *Possession* (1990). Vintage. ISBN 978-0679735908.  
Han Kang, *The Vegetarian* (2015). Hogarth. ISBN 978-0553448184.  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day* (1989). Vintage International. ISBN 978-0679731726.  
Marlon James, *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2015). Riverhead. ISBN 978-1594633942.  
Yann Martel, *The Life of Pi* (2002). Mariner. ISBN 978-0156027328.  
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* (1981). Modern Library. ISBN 978-0812976533.

Please note: While it will probably be easier to follow the discussion in class using the editions listed above, you are not required to buy those particular editions.

### Other technology requirements / equipment / material

As mentioned above under “Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses,” students will be asked to submit their written work electronically, via Canvas, in either Word or RTF format, and to access their marked and graded work in PDF format. This should be relatively easy for anyone with access to a computer; students having difficulty doing so should contact the IT Help Desk on the ground floor of Clark Hall. There will also be options for students to include Powerpoint or

other slide shows in their oral presentations, and to respond on quizzes via iClicker, but only if they choose to do so.

### **Library Liaison (Optional)**

Toby Matoush, [Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu](mailto:Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu), (408) 808-2096

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that, in order to be successful, students will 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>.

**Preparation and Participation:** Students should come to class having read the day's assignment and prepared to discuss it. Opportunities for such contributions may take the form of small-group or full-class discussions; in either situation, individual students may be called upon by the instructor to answer a question, interpret a passage, or express an opinion.

**Quizzes and Participation:** This class will be small enough that no quizzes will be given. Instead, students are encouraged to participate both formally and informally in the colloquium discussion. Formally, each student will make three seminar presentations during the course of the semester. The first will be on an assigned topic for the first book under discussion, *The Remains of the Day*. Students will pick their own topics for the other two presentations, though a list of suggestions will be offered for each book. The second presentation will be on *Midnight's Children* or *Possession*; the third on *A Brief History*. We will deal with *Life of Pi* and *The Vegetarian* together as a class, without formal presentations. Informally, students will be encouraged to contribute their ideas and insights as the colloquium considers the day's reading and related topics connected to presentations by students and the instructor.

**Written Work:** There will be two essays, both about 1500 words and counting 25% of the final mark each, and a final examination counting 25%. Three class presentations plus other sorts of participation (especially class discussions and the timely completion of readings and written work) make up the four equal parts of the "participation" grade. Finally, the final exam will also count 25%. Grading will be on a 100-point scale for each assignment. For the course mark, 100-97 will be an A+, 96-93 an A, 92-90 an A-, 89-87 a B+, 86-83 a B, 82-80 a B-, 79-77 a C+, 76-73 a C, 72-70 a C-, and so on.

First Essay (Ishiguro/Rushdie/Byatt):	25%
Second Essay (Martel, James):	25%
Participation (3 presentations plus class discussions, etc.)	25%
Final Exam (Han and comprehensive)	25%

**Submission of written work:** The two essays must be double-spaced (and without a cover page), otherwise follow standard MLA format (except that your name should not appear anywhere), and be submitted online only, through the course Canvas page (at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>), by the beginning of class on the days they are due. Work should be submitted in RTF (Rich Text Format), though Microsoft Word files are also acceptable. Other formats should not be submitted, including PDF and, in particular, Apple's iWork Pages format. Work submitted via Canvas is

automatically sent to Turnitin.com, as well, to check for plagiarism. Late work will only be accepted by prior arrangement. Do not email or leave at my office any work for this class, unless I specifically ask you to do so; and please do not leave email or any other messages for me on Canvas. Corrected work will be returned online (in your Canvas account) in PDF format. Please keep a copy of all work submitted on disk, and retain all graded work returned until the end of the semester; English majors should save the graded copies of their essays in all department classes, since these will be required for the portfolio in their senior seminar. Students should anticipate a significant delay in the return of late work. Please note that many people find it harder to proofread work on a computer screen than in printed form and, if that is true in your case, you may want to print out your final draft and make corrections to that, before submitting the finished file online. Also remember that I will also be keeping a copy of your marked work during the semester so that, when you submit your second essay, I will begin by reviewing the technical mistakes you made in the first one, and looking to see if you have made any progress in those areas on the second. You, too, should take the time to review those errors, and use that review to improve your writing.

### **Final Examination or Evaluation**

Students will have an opportunity to write about each of the novels we cover. The first essay will deal with two of the first three novels (*Remains of the Day*, *Midnight's Children*, and *Possession*); the second essay will deal with the next two (*Life of Pi* and *A Brief History of Seven Killings*); and the final exam will have one question dealing with the last novel (*The Vegetarian*) in terms of the different problems presented by literature in translation, and another question of a more comprehensive nature about the works covered in the course.

### **Grading Information**

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" composition 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" composition 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" composition 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 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" composition is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

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

## **English Department Statements on Grading**

The following statements have 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 by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

## **Course Workload**

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 three hours per unit per week with one of the hours in the classroom) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus. In other words, since this is a three-unit course, you should expect to spend on average about six hours each week working on the course, in addition to the time you spend in class.

## **Classroom Protocol**

Please treat everyone – classmates, guests, and even the instructor – with respect and courtesy at all times, and comport yourself accordingly, in the classroom, and while entering or leaving it. During class, electronic devices, including phones, tablets, and laptops, may only be used for purposes related to class work at that moment, such as note-taking; please remember that University policy recognizes any unauthorized use of a cell phone or other technological device during an examination as grounds for failing the examination. Even during breaks, please refrain from eating in the classroom, and avoid other activities and behavior that might distract or upset others. After class, please try not to stop in the doorway to check your phone, preventing others from getting out.

## **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>.

## Engl 190, Honors Colloquium, Fall 2016, Course Schedule

Subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on the course web page.

August 25	Thursday	Introduction
August 30	Tuesday	Remains of the Day, Prologue - Day One
September 1	Thursday	Remains of the Day, Day Two Morning - Afternoon
September 6	Tuesday	Remains of the Day, Day Three Morning - Evening
September 8	Thursday	Remains of the Day, Day Four, Five, Six
September 13	Tuesday	Midnight's Children, pages 3-85
September 15	Thursday	Midnight's Children, pages 86-169
September 20	Tuesday	Midnight's Children, pages 170-271
September 22	Thursday	Midnight's Children, pages 272-374
September 27	Tuesday	Midnight's Children, pages 375-464
September 29	Thursday	Midnight's Children, pages 465-533
October 4	Tuesday	<b>No class;</b> Possession, chapters 1-4
October 6	Thursday	Possession, chapters 5-9
October 11	Tuesday	Possession, chapters 10-13
October 13	Thursday	<b>First essay due;</b> Possession, chapters 14-18
October 18	Tuesday	Possession, chapters 19-24
October 20	Thursday	Possession, chapters 25-end
October 25	Tuesday	Life of Pi, Author's Note-chapter 30
October 27	Thursday	Life of Pi, chapters 31-55
November 1	Tuesday	Life of Pi, chapters 56-89
November 3	Thursday	Life of Pi, chapters 90-100
November 8	Tuesday	A Brief History, pages 1-117
November 10	Thursday	A Brief History, pages 121-235
November 15	Tuesday	A Brief History, pages 236-362
November 17	Thursday	A Brief History, pages 363-470
November 22	Tuesday	A Brief History, pages 471-576
November 24	Thursday	<b>Thanksgiving--No class</b>
November 29	Tuesday	A Brief History, pages 577-686
December 1	Thursday	Vegetarian, chapter 1
December 6	Tuesday	<b>Second essay due;</b> Vegetarian, chapter 2
December 8	Thursday	Vegetarian, chapter 3
<b>December 16</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Engl 190 Final, 12:15 - 2:30 pm</b>