

San José State University
English Department
Engl 123C: South Pacific Lit, Section 1, Fall 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	D. Mesher
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Office Hours:	T-Th: 8:00-8:30am and 4:30-5:00pm (and by appointment)
Class Days/Time:	T-Th: 1:30-2:45pm
Classroom:	Clark Hall (CL) Room 111
Class Web Page:	http://www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher/engl123c/
Prerequisites:	Completion of core GE; satisfactory completion of the WST; completion of or concurrent enrollment in a 100W course
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	This course satisfies the requirement for SJSU Studies (upper-division GE) Area V.

Course Format Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses

All written work in this course will be submitted and returned on Canvas – submitted by students in RTF (Rich Text Format, an option available in all word processors) and returned marked in PDF (Portable Document Format). To open returned material, students should (1) download the file to their device, without trying to open it; (2) open the latest version available of Adobe Reader (a free PDF program – other PDF programs may not work); and (3) drag the downloaded file onto the open Reader window.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

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

This course focuses on works written in English by writers from islands in the South Pacific, including Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa, and how they use the history and culture of those areas in their fiction. We will be interested in the linguistic and thematic differences in the writings of these “other Englishes,” as well as in their artistic similarities

to British, American, and other literatures. Earning a grade of C or better in Engl 123C satisfies Area V of the General Education (SJSU Studies) requirement.

GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes (GELO)

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

1. compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, and/or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S. This learning objective will be met by studying the depictions within the fictions read, and comparing groups described in novels from Australia (including those of European and Aboriginal heritage), New Zealand (including those of Maori and European heritage), and Samoa.
2. identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture. Though many of these novels document the influence of American economic and cultural influence on populations in the South Pacific, Europeans and Americans have also long fantasized about the South Pacific as an idyllic, naturally beautiful, and sexually free slice of paradise. To explore the elements of that fantasy, and the reasons behind it, students will make presentations on such varied topics as the descriptions brought back by South Seas explorers and sailors, the images perpetuated in American popular fiction and films like *South Pacific*, the questionable treatment of Samoa by Margaret Mead, and the so-called “tiki culture” in the US, including restaurants such as Don the Beachcomber’s and Trader Vic’s.
3. explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures. From the early colonization of Australia to the struggles, in particular, of Polynesian women within the contemporary societies of New Zealand and Samoa, almost all the fiction we will be reading deals with issues of race and gender in the South Pacific. All cultures change, but novelists have the opportunity to inspect those changes, for better or for worse, and the reader likewise has the opportunity to analyze the novelist’s take on the evolution of the society presented in the fiction.

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 modern and contemporary fiction written by authors from Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

Murray Bail, *Eucalyptus* (Picador, 978-0312427313)
Sia Figiel, *Where We Once Belonged* (Kaya, 978-1885030276)
Miles Franklin, *My Brilliant Career* (Penguin, 978-0143105053)
Kate Grenville, *The Secret River* (Canongate/Grove, 978-1841959146)
Keri Hulme, *The Bone People* (Penguin, 978-0140089226)
Witi Ihimaera, *The Whale Rider* (Harcourt, 978-0152050160)
David Malouf, *Remembering Babylon* (Vintage, 978-0679749516)

Most of these books are available at the bookstore or from online sellers. Two exceptions may be *The Secret River* and *The Whale Rider*, both of which are temporarily out of print according to the bookstore (though *The Secret River* shows as in stock at Amazon). There are electronic and used copies of both for purchase at online sites such as Amazon.com, and multiple copies of both on the shelf in the San Jose Public Library system; just be sure you secure a copy of each well before we are due to read it. In addition, in case your copy of the first text, *My Brilliant Career*, does not arrive on time, I have a link on the class web page to the non-profit Gutenberg Project, where you can download the novel in various electronic formats (including epub, kindle, HTML, and plain txt). **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 or use those specific editions.**

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

Besides the use of Canvas, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this syllabus, 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

Toby Matoush, Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, (408) 808-2096

Course Requirements and Assignments

University's Credit Hour Requirement. Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 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.

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: In order to ensure that you get credit for the hard work you do in reading and reflecting on the works assigned for this course, there will be frequent quizzes (on average, one every two or three class meetings). I think of quizzes as one of the best ways for you to measure how carefully you are reading the texts, and how much of that reading you retain (at least for a day or so). The quizzes will cover significant information from that day's reading assignment, though that information may not be the sort readily accessible to you in plot

summaries, outlines, or synopses, but only through personally experiencing the text for yourself. If you read well ahead of the assigned schedule, be sure to review your notes and come to class with a fresh and detailed impression of the works. A pattern of doing poorly on these quizzes should be taken as an indication that you are not doing the reading, or not reading attentively enough, or not reading with the care and analysis necessary to be successful as an English major and devotee of literature. In addition, students will make one presentation to the class; a list of possible topics will be distributed early in the semester.

Oral reports: Topics will be assigned early in the semester. Reports should be no more than five minutes, followed by time for questions. Please present, in a clear, organized, and interesting way, your research on the given topic. You may use visual aids if you would like, but please arrive early if you want to make a Powerpoint or other computer-supported presentation, to ensure that everything is working properly. Please submit a bibliography of your research at the time of your report, which will be graded along with your oral presentation. Reports will be recorded, and students may request copies of their own report.

Written Work: There will be two essays, both about 1500 words and counting 25% of the final mark each, and a final examination counting 20%. There will also be frequent quizzes, which will help determine the remaining 25%, along with participation in class discussions, the timely completion of readings and written work, and the mid-semester group presentations. Both essays will require research beyond the class texts themselves; students will have the option of revising and resubmitting the first essay, and the final grade on that essay will be an average of the grades received on the original and revised submissions. 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 (Franklin, Grenville, Malouf)	
Rough draft	10%
Final draft	15%
Second Essay (Bail, Ihimaera, Hulme)	25%
Participation (quizzes, presentation, class discussions, etc.)	25%
Final Exam (Figiel 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 four works (*Such Is Life*, *My Brilliant Career*, *The Secret River*, and *Remembering Babylon*); the second essay will deal with the next three (*Eucalyptus*, *The Whale Rider*, and *The Bone People*); and the final exam will deal with the last novel (*Where We Once Belonged*) in part in terms of the impact of American misconceptions of Polynesian culture both here and there.

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

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.

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 123C: South Pacific Lit, Fall 2014, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to modification. If you miss class, please check for changes to the syllabus on the class web page at www.sjsu.edu/people/d.mesher, or on Canvas at sjsu.instructure.com.

Thursday	August	24	Introduction
Tuesday	August	29	<i>Such Is Life</i> , chapter 3
Thursday	August	31	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , Intro-chapters 10
Tuesday	September	5	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 11-19
Thursday	September	7	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 20-28
Tuesday	September	12	<i>My Brilliant Career</i> , chapters 29-38
Thursday	September	14	<i>The Secret River</i> , "Strangers" - Part I
Tuesday	September	19	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part II
Thursday	September	21	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part III
Tuesday	September	26	<i>The Secret River</i> , Parts IV-V
Thursday	September	28	<i>The Secret River</i> , Part VI
Tuesday	October	3	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 1-4
Thursday	October	5	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 5-9
Tuesday	October	10	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 10-16
Thursday	October	12	<i>Remembering Babylon</i> , chapters 17-20
Tuesday	October	17	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 1-4
Thursday	October	19	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 5-9
Tuesday	October	24	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 10-26; 1 st essay rough draft due
Thursday	October	26	<i>Eucalyptus</i> , chapters 27-39
Tuesday	October	31	"Encounters with Polynesia"
Thursday	November	2	<i>The Whale Rider</i> , Prologue-chapters 11
Tuesday	November	7	<i>The Whale Rider</i> , chapters 12-21
Thursday	November	9	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 3-92
Tuesday	November	14	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 93-153
Thursday	November	16	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 157-261; 1 st essay final draft due
Tuesday	November	21	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 261-331
Thursday	November	23	Thanksgiving--No class
Tuesday	November	28	<i>The Bone People</i> , pages 335-445
Thursday	November	30	<i>Where We Once Belonged</i> , pages 1-91
Tuesday	December	5	<i>Where We Once Belonged</i> , pages 92-164
Thursday	December	7	<i>Where We Once Belonged</i> , pages 165-239 ; 2 nd s essay due
Thursday	December	14	Engl 123C Final, 2:45 - 5:00 pm