

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 71, Introduction to Creative Writing, Fall 2017

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Office Hours: T/Th 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. and by appointment
Class Days/Time: T/Th 1:30-2:45
Classroom Location: Boccardo Business Center 221

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Creative Writing is a 3-unit, lower-division course designed, adopted, implemented, and University's General Education Program Guidelines to fulfill Core General Education requirements in the Letters area of Humanities & the Arts.

In this course, we will read and write poetry, creative non-fiction, and short fiction. The course will be taught using a combination of discussion, exercises and writing workshops. In the discussion, we will closely read and analyze published works of creative writing. In the writing workshops, you will analyze and critique the creative work of fellow class members. At the end of the semester, each of you will produce a portfolio of work.

Canvas

Our class uses Canvas, the Learning Management System that SJSU purchased. You are responsible for submitting your assignments to Canvas (Assignments, Discussions), sending them to members of your group (when required), and printing them out to turn in (when required). All major assignments will be reviewed for plagiarism using turnitin.com.

If you have technical problems with Canvas, contact the SJSU Help Desk. Your instructor cannot provide technical support.

Department Student Learning Objectives (SLOs):

In the Department of English and Comparative Literature, 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, creative writing, and/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 the 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.

English 71 GE Course Goals (GELs):

1. Decipher and understand the form and content of assigned literary works
2. Comprehend the historical and cultural contexts of assigned literary works

3. Recognize the accomplishments of and issues related to writing by men and women representing diverse cultural traditions
4. 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 nonfiction, and short fiction;
5. Communicate such skills with clarity and precision
6. Develop the ability to write literary works that express intellect and imagination and that represent diversity in human cultures
7. Respond to literature through clear and effective communication in both written and oral work
8. Read and respond to texts with both analytical acumen and personal sensibility;
9. Appreciate how literary works illuminate enduring human concerns while also representing matters specific to a particular culture
10. Write works of poetry, creative nonfiction, and short fiction that are of interest and value to the writer, to other students in the course, and to a diverse reading audience

Required Texts

Sellers, Heather. *The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide for Students*. Third Edition, ISBN 978 1 319 04016-1

Other Reading: All other reading materials will be made available to you via Canvas and/or as handouts.

Required Materials

- 1” binder dedicated to class
- Writing Journal – spiral notebook with binder holes
- Two-pocket folder with binder holes
- Loose binder paper
- Pens and Pencils
- Highlighters
- Computer, Internet, and Printer Access

COURSE CONTENT

1. **Creative Writing**--Each student will write, revise, workshop, and submit the following new writing for workshop. This work will be commented on for later revision. Grade is based on process and use of specific strategies. (GELO 1,2,4,5,6, 9,10) (SLO)
 - “Self-Portrait” assessment (per university/department instructions)
 - 1 creative nonfiction piece (approximately 4-6 pages each)
 - 1 fiction piece (approximately 4-6 pages)
 - 3-4 poems of various lengths and forms
2. **Final portfolio and reflection**--At the end of class, you will have the opportunity to revise your work once again for the portfolio. The revised work will be compiled into a portfolio. You will reflect on your work in this course (review the learning objectives) and assess your work in a one- or two-page reflection. The entire packet is due the last class period before the final. Grading is product based. (GELO
2. **Workshop responses**--For each student workshop, you will respond to the student work (peer-review) both by writing on the manuscript and by discussing in class with your group. Additionally, you will write a one-page response to the author that you will also submit to the instructor. (GELO

3. **Participation and Creative Reading**--Quizzes, practices and projects (Writing Journal), class discussion (which includes participating in class discussions, in-class writing, and in-class activities (even those that involve drawing scenes on the floor!). These assignments cannot be made up if you are not in class. Writers read like writers. As you read the works in this class, you are expected to mark up the text and prepare for class discussions.
4. **CLA or Other Literary/Reading event**--You are required to attend at least one on-campus literary event and write a 500-word review of the event. But I hope you will be hooked and go to more. We have two Pulitzer Prize winners coming this fall! See www.litart.org for schedule. Write up is due by first class session after last CLA event.
5. **Final Exam**--Tuesday, December 19. This will be a fun performance reading of your own work. Full credit for active participation.

GRADING: Final Portfolio and reflection

A: Creative writing that receives an "A" is likely to:

- Fulfill all assignment requirements
- Demonstrate a compelling plot, idea, event (significance)
- Function well as a whole (structure)
- Demonstrate an engaging voice that incorporate strong word choices (style)
- Engage the writer as well as the reader (sincerity)
- Lack clichéd or over-used language
- Incorporate unusual/unique associations that fit the tone of the piece (originality)
- Lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

B: Creative writing that receives a "B" is likely to:

- Fulfill most of the assignment requirements
- Demonstrate some significance
- Function generally well as a whole
- Demonstrate a generally engaging voice
- Incorporate some strong word choices
- Use some concrete imagery
- Mostly lack clichéd or over-used language
- Mostly lack spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

C: Creative writing that receives a "C" is likely to:

- Neglect some aspects of the assignment requirements
- Be derivative of other works
- Not completely function as a whole (some parts may be underdeveloped)
- Incorporate some strong, and some weaker, word choices
- Lack concrete imagery
- Include clichéd or over-used language
- Have some spelling and punctuation errors, typos, etc.

D: Creative writing that receives a "D" is likely to:

- Not fulfill the assignment requirements
- Not function as a whole
- Be a cursory response that demonstrates lack of motivation
- Show poor understanding of the assignment

F: No response or paper turned in one week past due.

Grading Protocol:

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GRADING STATEMENT: In English Department courses, instructors comment on and grade the quality of writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All your writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

Grades given conform to the English Department and university grading policy. The Department of English is committed to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog (“The Grading System”).

Grading Policies: This course uses A-F grading with +/-

This course uses the full range of A-F grades. Letter grades break down as follows (shaded areas indicate you might have to repeat the course depending on your major’s requirements):

98.0-100% = A+	93.0-97.9 = A	90.0-92.9= A-
87.0-89.9 = B+	83.0-86.9 = B	80.0-82.9= B-
77.0-79.9 = C+	73.0-76.9 = C	70.0-72.9 = C-
67.0-69.9 = D+	63.0-66.9 = D	60.0-62.9 = D-
Below 60.0 = F		

In the past, students who did not turn in assignments or routinely turned in assignments late received a grade below a C. It is far better to turn in a rushed assignment (even if you earn an F or receive few points) than it is to not turn one in at all and receive a zero

Course Assignments

Major Assignment	Points	Word Count	GELOs	SLOs
Creative Non-fiction	100	1500	1,2,4-6,10	1, 3
Short Fiction	100	1500	1,2,4-6,10	1-3
Self-portrait poem	25	Varies	4,5,9,10	3-5
Formal Poem	25	Varies	4,5,9,10	3-5
Poem of Witness	25	Varies	4,5,9,10	
Chosen Form Poem	25	Varies	4,5,9,10	3-5
Portfolio (revised) Creative Non-fiction, Fiction, Poems	100	4000 words	1-10	1-5
Self-reflection	50	500 words	1-10	1-5
In-class Work/Short Assignments		description		
Complete drafts submitted on time/	30	3 @ 10 points per	1-5, 7-9	1, 3, 5

Workshop participation				
Peer mark-ups and Responses	60	20 points per unit		
Final Class Reading	25	Of chosen piece	4, 5, 9, 10	3-5
Journal Exercises Practices, projects, reading annotations	25	1000 words	1-10	1-5
Class Preparation				
Literary Event Attendance and Write-up	10	500 words	1-3, 5,7, 9	3, 4
Quizzes	60	6 @ 10 each	1-5, 7-9	1, 3, 5
Discussions	20	5 each	1-3, 5,7, 9	3, 4

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL

Please arrive prepared and on time for every session with your binder, texts, and homework. Come ready for class activities and discussion; your assignments should read, and, if hard copies are due, they are stapled and ready to turn in. Sessions may begin with reading assignments, group assignments, or short assignments that cannot be made up if you are late or absent.

- Please feel free to **ask questions** about anything that is not clear to you. If I don't have an answer, I will do my best to find one and get back to you.
- We are building a community of writers. **Respect** for each other and each other's work is key here. Student writing should not be discussed outside this classroom.
- If you **miss a class**, please **contact a classmate** for notes, reading assignments, and handouts. Also, remember to ask if any changes have been made to the assignment calendar. I strongly encourage you to **take notes in this class**. Much of what you will learn will come from lectures, class discussions, and in-class exercises.
- **Computers** and **cell phones** are to be turned off and put away unless you are specifically asked to have them out for an in-class assignment.
- **Sleeping is not allowed** in class. Please get enough sleep so you are able to participate fully.
- **Recording, filming, or photographing** any parts of lectures or course material requires my permission and that of any students or guests. See rules on technology use:
<http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>.

PARTICIPATION

Because this course is highly participatory, and you must be here to participate, attendance matters. Students who attend regularly tend to be the most engaged, inspired, and productive; and their grades generally reflect that. **Practice SBBPRI** Show up. Be on time. Be prepared. Participate. Revise.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

You are adults and responsible for attending class and turning in assignments on time. If you must miss class, **contact a classmate** about what we covered. Please do not write ask me what we discussed or if you missed "anything important. Every class is important. Instead, contact a classmate for that material.

I welcome you to email me if you need clarification on an assignment or need to arrange an appointment to meet in person. However, please use standard English (including capitals and punctuation) in all emails to me. Please do not use text messaging or chat abbreviations (like cul8r, u, i). Treat your communications with me as you would with an employer.

Because of the nature of this course in which participation is essential, material done in class, including in-class writing, discussions, quizzes, or other work, cannot be made up.

Group members need to have their work by the day/time it's due or it will not be workshopped and the final grade will be reduced by 20%. If you do not respond to your group member's work on time, you will not receive credit for the assignment. Because of time constraints, I cannot accept a late portfolio or reflective essay.

I do not accept emailed assignments. They tend to get lost.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism means passing someone else's work off as your own, such as:

- using a story or poem or part thereof written by someone else
- using web page text directly in your papers without citing
- having someone else write all or part of your assignments

Any assignment containing plagiarized passages will receive an F grade automatically, and I will report the incident to university officials who may elect to expel you from the university.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism or cheating on any portion of any assignment, including copying more than seven consecutive words from a web site, will result in a failing grade for assignment and possibly the course. All student work is subject to review through Turnitin.com to identify possible sources of plagiarism. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty will be reported to the proper authorities and may result in a course grade of F.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the MLK library. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college.

Computers/laptops are also available for checkout from the MLK 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, video players and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall, but is in the process of moving to the library. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>

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 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

English 71 / Introduction to Creative Writing, Fall 2017, Course Schedule

Key

POCW—The Practice of Creative Writing

HO—Handouts

WJ—Writing Journal

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8.24.17 Class Introduction	Welcome! Nameplates, write/share artist inventory, discuss class, text, and syllabus. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read and annotate “How to Mark a Book” –Adler, “Girl” –Kincaid, and “Shitty First Drafts”--Lamott ▪ POWC—Read and annotate text Introduction. ▪ Write the story of your life in one long 250-word sentence. Submit to Canvas. Bring a hard copy to class.
2	8.29.17 Finding Focus/ Invention	Discuss readings and artist inventories; do practices 13, 15b; discuss 15a <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ POWC—Read and annotate Chapter 1 ▪ WJ—Finish practices: 15a, 15b.
2	8.31.17 Finding Focus/ Invention	Quiz Intro/Chapter 1 , discuss close reading, “The Neighbor” comic; do practices 17, 18, 19, 20; Discuss 21. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ POWC--Read and annotate Chapter 2, pages 35-51, and “I Go Back to Barryman’s”—Scarpa, and “Buying Wine”—Matthews. ▪ Do writing project-26-3.
3	9.5.17 Creative Reading	Discuss readings, do practices 45 and 47. As a class, read and discuss “I Go Back to Barryman’s,”—Scarpa; begin writing project 62-3. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ POWC—Read and annotate Chapter 2, pages 52-62, ▪ WJ—Complete writing project 62-3.
3	9.7.17 Creative Reading	Quiz Chapter 2 and readings. Discuss “lost in a book; share writing; begin writing practice 63-5 by drawing scene. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete writing project 63-5 (first part). Submit to Canvas. Bring a hard copy to class. ▪ POWC—Carefully read and annotate Chapter 3 part 1 “Building Blocks, pages 83-109, and “Swerve” and “Cathedral” by Carver ▪ WJ—Do practices 85 and 86 on “Cathedral,” and writing project 93b.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
4	9.12.17 Building Blocks	Quiz Chapter 3, part 1 , and readings. Discuss narrative building blocks; class do practice 89, Read as a class HO: "A Life in Sections"--Doerr. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WJ--Do practices 86, and 89 for "A Life in Sections." Type up your work and submit to Canvas. Bring a hard copy to class. POCW -- Read and annotate "A Word on Words," pages 96-99.
4	9.14.17 Building Blocks/ Images	Discuss practices. Do exercise on clichés and word packages, practice 98 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSoRzTtwgP4 Writing descriptively. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WJ—Do practice 95b. Draw the scene first. Then write the scene . Submit to Canvas. Bring a hard copy to class. POCW— Read and annotate chapter 4 "Images" pages 133-156 and "Surrounded by Sleep"—Sharma. WJ—Do practice 140a.
	9.19.17 Images	Discuss images vs. thoughts, scenes and summary images; do class anecdote exercise. Do practice 156. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCW--Read and annotate "Two Hearts"—Doyle. HO--Read and annotate assigned works from creative nonfiction packet. WJ—Each group will be assigned to further analyze one of these stories, and answer assigned questions.
5	9.21.17 Images/ Energy	Quiz Chapter 4 and readings. Discuss WJ exercise. Introduce "Energy." Discuss "The Colonel"— Forché <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCW—Read and Annotate Chapter 5, "Energy, " "Boys"—Moody, "The things I lost,"--Arundel and "What Every Soldier Should Know"—Turner. WJ--Do practices 188, 189, 195, 196, 198.
6	9.26.17 Energy/ Creative Non-Fiction	Discuss subjects, leaps, and words. Discuss CNF writing assignment. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HO--Read and annotate assigned works from creative nonfiction packet. POCW—Read and annotate "Son of Mr. Green Jeans"—Moore. WJ—Your group will be assigned to further analyze one of these stories and answer specific questions.
6	9.28.17 Creative Nonfiction	Quiz Chapter 5. Discuss craft elements in CNF pieces. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all of your work so far to determine what you would like to write/expand on for your CNF piece. WJ--Outline your piece. Draw the scenes with as much detail as possible. Write a draft. Submit to Canvas and to each member of your group, and bring a hard copy for me.
7	10.3.17 Creative Nonfiction	Discuss writing process, questions, prepare for CNF workshop. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and carefully read and annotate all work submitted by your group members. Also, follow guidelines to write a one-page response to each member's

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		work. Submit to Canvas. Bring hard copies to class.
7	10.5.17 Creative Nonfiction	Group Workshop--Creative Nonfiction <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCW--Read and annotate pages 379-389 "Revising Nonfiction. Revise your CNF piece. Turn in to Canvas. Print out a hard copy to turn in to me clipped to all members' marked-up drafts and single-page responses.
8	10.10.17 Tension	Discuss point of view and psychic distance. Class exercise. Introduce Tension. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCW—Read and annotate Chapter 6, "Tension," pages 222-232 and "What I Saw from Where I Stood"—Silver.
8	10.12.17 Tension/ Fiction	Discuss tension, and practice 225. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POCW—Read and annotate Chapter 6, "Tension," 233-245 plus assigned stories. WJ--Do dialogue exercise.
9	10.17.17 Fiction	Quiz Chapter 6. Discuss readings and dialogue. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HO--Read and annotate assigned short fiction. Identify specific craft elements in each piece.
9	10.19.17 Fiction	More on craft elements--character, setting/description, plot/action, dialogue, interiority, and summary/exposition. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft your short story. Submit to Canvas. Send to members of your group and bring a hard copy for me.
10	10.24.17 Fiction	Continue discussion of craft elements, examples. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and carefully read and annotate all work submitted by your group members. Also, follow guidelines to write a one-page response to each member's work. Submit to Canvas. Bring hard copies to class. POCW—Read and annotate "Revision" pages 369-375.
10	10.26.17 Fiction	Group Workshop—Fiction <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise your short fiction. Submit to Canvas. Print and bring a hard copy stapled to the hard copies from each member of your group.
11	10.31.17 Poetry	Discuss/review poetry parts of poems, POCW pages 95-111, go over poetry basics handout, self-portrait poem assignment. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HO--Read and carefully annotate all self-portrait poems. Choose one to model your work after. See full assignment that will include an analysis with specific examples. Generate a list of ideas you might use in and expand upon in your poem.
11	11.2.17 Poetry	Discuss self-portrait poems and more on poetry elements, pages 288-290, and handout. Poetry Workshop requirements. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a draft of a self-portrait poem. Submit to Canvas. Print and bring copies for each member of your group and for me.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> POWC—Read pages 453-458, plus “First Poem for You”—Addonizio and “Fatigues”—Livewell. Do practices 456-1,2,3.
12	11.7.17 Poetry	Group Workshop--Self-portrait Poem <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise self-portrait poem. Submit to Canvas. Print and turn in hard copy to me, stapled to all group members’ responses. POCW--Read and annotate additional formal poems in book or in handouts, and 375-379, 430-432, and 458-460.
12	11.9.17 Poetry	More on formal poems, images, turns, meter, rhyme, rhythm, repetition. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft formal poem. Submit to Canvas. Print and bring copies for group members to workshop. Read and annotate pages 375-379 “Revising Poetry.”
13	11.14.17 Poetry	Group Workshop—Formal Poem <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise formal poem. Submit to Canvas. Print and turn in hard copy to me, stapled to all group members’ responses. POCW—Read additional assigned poems.
13	11.16.17 Poetry	Discussion and exercises for witness poem and poem of choice. Spoken word poetry videos. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a draft of your witness poem and your poem of choice. Submit to Canvas. Print and bring enough copies for the class and for me.
14	11.21.17 Poetry	Group Workshop--Poem of Witness and Poem of Choice <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise both poems. Submit to Canvas. Print and bring a hard copy to class for me stapled to all group members’ responses. POCW—Read and Annotate Chapter 8, “Insight” and assigned works.
14	11.23.17	Happy Thanksgiving!
15	11.28.17 Revision	Discuss insight, revision, and portfolio. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin revisions of work for portfolio.
15	11.30.17 Revision/ Reflection	Discuss revision, reflection essay, portfolio format. <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue revisions of work for portfolio. Write a two-page reflection. Journal Due on 12.5.
16	12.5.17 Revision	Writing Journal Due. Reflection due. Revision workshop <u>Homework</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete final revision of creative non-fiction, short fiction, and poetry for portfolio. Format portfolio as assigned. Submit to Canvas, and print portfolio with all final revised drafts and graded drafts.
16	12.7.17	Portfolio due. What’s Next? Writing and publishing beyond the classroom. <u>Homework</u>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Wrap Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prepare for poetry reading.
Final	12.19.17 Final	Poetry Reading. Tuesday, 12:15-2:30 p.m. Attendance Required.

Classmates' names, phone numbers, and emails

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.