

**San José State University: Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 169: Ethnicity in American Literature
Section 1, Fall Semester, 2018**

Course and Contact Information

Course Code:	42899
Instructor:	Allison Johnson
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Office Hours:	T 1:00-3:00
Class Days/Time:	T R 3:00-4:15
Classroom:	Sweeney 238
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area S, "Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S."

Course Format

Lecture, discussion.

Course Description

This course explores the influence of ethnic diversity on American literature by focusing on lines, including but not limited to borderlines, bloodlines, the color line, and timelines. Paying close attention to strategies of representation and resistance, we will examine the polyvocal literary and cultural fabric of the United States.

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 (3 hours per unit per week) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs):

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

CLO 1: Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of Ethnicity in American literature.

CLO 2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, and critical approaches to ethnic American literature, gaining an awareness of the range of cultural experiences and productions that make up American ethnic literary and cultural history, focusing on the self-representations of ethnic authors/groups.

CLO 3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.

CLO 4. Develop and carry out New Media research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively as a team.

CLO 5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts, strengthening their abilities to engage ethnic American literary text and to analyze both its form and content as well as its social and historical contexts.

Required Texts/Readings (Required)

Pauline Hopkins, *Of One Blood*

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*

All other readings are available on the course website.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Midterm, 10/18: 15%

Paper (5-7 pages), 11/19: 35%

Creative Project, 12/6: 10%

Final Exam, 12/17: 30%

Participation & Quizzes: 10%

See Appendix A: Grading Policy for further information

Paper Regulations: Write your papers in double-spaced 12pt. Times New Roman font, and format them according to MLA guidelines. The OWL site produced by Purdue (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>) provides good examples of MLA citations. Late papers will be marked down 1/3 letter grade per day (including weekends).

Participation: Every student will come to class prepared for a critical discussion. **Every student will read all of the assigned readings**, come to every class meeting, engage with the texts and participate in the discussion, offer interpretations, ask and answer questions, and be respectful to other students. Please email me if you are unable to attend. Detrimental and disruptive behavior (i.e., text-messaging, instant-messaging, snapchatting) will result in the loss of participation credit. **There will be 10 pop quizzes on the reading throughout the semester. You cannot make them up.**

Office Hours and Email Policies: I encourage you to meet with me in my office to receive further assistance on assignments and papers, and ask me questions. You can email me if you are

unable to come to the office.

Plagiarism Policy:

If you plagiarize, you will receive an automatic 0 grade. Please make sure you cite your sources using proper MLA format! See Appendix B: Academic Honesty.

Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: Your proposal should describe the question you hope to answer, listing five library resources (academic books or journal articles) in an annotated bibliography.

Research Paper: Your research paper, seeking to answer a question about the book you have read, should be five to seven pages in length, and include a “Works Cited” with at least three library sources (academic books or journal articles). It should be written in clear, correct English with logical paragraph breaks, an introduction that frames your argument, and a conclusion. Appropriate use of textual evidence from the novel and from your research are key to successful research papers.

Week 1:

8/21 – Tuesday

Introduction

8/23 – Thursday

Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought to America”

Unit 1: Bloodlines

Week 2:

8/28 – Tuesday

Elias Johnson, selection from *Legends, Traditions and Laws, of the Iroquois, or Six Nation and History of the Tuscarora Indians*

8/30 – Thursday

Sarah Winnemucca (Thocmetony), from *Life Among the Piutes*

Week 3:

9/4 – Tuesday

Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Bonnin), from *American Indian Stories*

9/6 – Thursday

Anzia Yizierska, “America and I”

Week 4:

9/11 – Tuesday

Pauline Hopkins, *Of One Blood*

9/13 – Thursday

Pauline Hopkins, *Of One Blood*

Unit 2: The Color Line

Week 5:

9/18 – Tuesday

Jupiter Hammon, “An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ, with Penetential Cries,” “An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley”

Phillis Wheatley, “On Virtue,” “To S.M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works,” “To His Excellency General Washington,” “On the Death of J.C. an Infant,” “Thoughts on the Work of Providence”

9/20 – Thursday

David Walker, from *Appeal*

Lydia Maria Child, from *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*, Chapters 6 and 8

Week 6:

9/25 – Tuesday

Frances E. W. Harper, “Aunt Chloe’s Politics,” “The Slave Mother,” “Learning to Read,” “Ethiopia,” “Bury Me in a Free Land,” “Bible Defense of Slavery,” “Songs for the People,” “The Slave Auction,” “The Deliverance”

9/27 – Thursday

Kate Chopin, “Desirée’s Baby,” “Old Aunt Peggy,” “A Matter of Prejudice,” “Nég Créol”

Week 7:

10/2 – Tuesday

Charles Chesnutt, From *The Wife of His Youth and Other Stories of the Color Line*: “The Wife of His Youth,” “Her Virginia Mammy,” “The Sheriff’s Children”

10/4 – Thursday

Charles Chesnutt, From *The Conjure Woman*: “The Goophered Grapevine,” “Po’ Sandy,” “Sis’ Becky’s Pickaninny”

Week 8:

10/9 – Tuesday

Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Exposition Address”

W.E.B. Du Bois, from *The Souls of Black Folk*

10/11 – Thursday

Zora Neale Huston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me”

Alaine Locke, “New Negro”

Langston Hughes, “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”

Jean Toomer, “Blood-Burning Moon”

Week 9:

10/16 – Tuesday

Langston Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” “Cross,” “Mulatto,” “Negro,” “I, Too,”
“Harlem,” “The Weary Blues,” “Let America Be America Again”
Gwendolyn B. Bennett, “Heritage,” “Advice,” “To a Dark Girl”
Claude McKay, “America,” “If We Must Die,” “The Lynching,” “Harlem Shadows”
Countee Cullen, “Threnody for a Black Girl,” “Incident,” “From the Dark Tower”

10/18 – Thursday

MIDTERM

Unit 3: Borderlines

Week 10:

10/23 – Tuesday

Edith Maud Eaton (Sui Sin Far), “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian,” “In the Land
of the Free,” “Mrs. Spring Fragrance”

10/25 – Thursday

Josephina Niggli, from *Mexican Village*
María Cristina Mena, “John of God, the Water-Carrier,” “The Education of Popo”

Week 11:

10/30 – Tuesday

Américo Paredes, selected poems
Juan Felipe Herrera, “Borderbus”
Alberto Rios, “The Border: A Double Sonnet,” “The Day of Refugios”

11/1 – Thursday

Julia Alvarez, “Bilingual Sestina”
Pat Mora, “La Migra”
José Antonio Rodríguez, “La Migra”
Julia de Burgos, “Ay, Ay, Ay De La Grifa Negra”
Judith Ortiz Cofer, “El Olvido”

Week 12:

11/6 – Tuesday

Helena María Viramontes, “The Cariboo Café”
Sandra Cisneros, “Woman Hollering Creek”

11/8 – Thursday

Gloria Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue,” “*La Conciencia de la Mestiza*/Towards a New
Consciousness”

Unit 4: Timelines

Week 13:

11/13 – Tuesday

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

11/15 – Thursday

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony*

Week 14:

11/19 – Monday

Paper due by 11:59 p.m.

11/20 – Tuesday

Marilyn Chin, “How I Got That Name,” “We Are American Now, We Live in the Tundra”

Wang Ping, “Immigrant Can’t Write Poetry”

Ocean Vuong, “Kissing in Vietnamese,” “Self Portrait as Exit Wounds”

11/22 – Thursday

NO CLASS

Week 15:

11/27 – Tuesday

Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, v. 1

11/29 – Thursday

Art Spiegelman, *Maus*, v. 2

Unit 5: Crossing Lines

Week 16:

12/4 – Tuesday

Mark Twain, “John Chinaman in New York”

H.T. Tsiang, “Chinaman, Laundryman,” “The Hanging On Union Square,” “And China Has Hands”

12/6 – Thursday

Mahtem Shiferraw, “Nomenclatures of Invisibility”

Yesenia Montilla, “Maps”

Contemporary poetry suggestions from the class

Creative Project due in class

12/17 – Monday

FINAL EXAM, 2:45 – 5:00 p.m.

Appendix A: Grading Policy

The following statement has 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 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.*

In written assignments for English 60, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay 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 that teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay 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" essay 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 and/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" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

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

Appendix B: Academic Honesty

“San José State University defines cheating as the act of obtaining credit, attempting to obtain credit, or assisting others to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.”

“San José State University defines plagiarism as the act of representing the work of another as one’s own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements.”

For full definition, see <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf>

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/>