

Creative Writing Section 03

ENGL 71

Spring 2025 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/23/2025 to 05/12/2025 Modified 01/21/2025

Contact Information

Instructor email address: kristin.fitzpatrickezell@sjsu.edu

Office Location: Zoom

Office Hours: Wednesdays on Zoom from 9:30-11:10 a.m.

Office Hour Zoom Link: <https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/2239875288>

Course Information

Together, we'll work toward collective understandings of our reading and writing and the ways they explore historical, interpersonal, racial, gender-related, economic, and artistic issues on the page. The reading and writing projects are designed to challenge our perspectives and help us understand the views of others. I hope to create an inclusive and collaborative environment that will allow you to grow as critical and creative readers and writers.

This is a collaborative class that also includes a lot of individual work. Our goal is to have fun while helping each other to develop our creative writing skills. We will read instructional text and short examples of poems, short stories, and creative nonfiction essays. We will do short exercises before writing full pieces in

each of the genres mentioned. We will share a good amount of our writing with partners, small groups, or with the whole class. Toward the end of the semester we will choose a few of those pieces to revise and submit as a portfolio.

In-person Lecture

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:45 p.m.
Sweeney Hall 240

Course Description and Requisites

Examinations of works of poetry, creative nonfiction and short fiction as expression of human intellect and imagination, to comprehend the historic and global cultural contexts, and recognize issues related to writing of diverse cultural traditions. Students will also write poetry, creative nonfiction, and a short fiction.

GE Area(s): C2. Humanities

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

We will write community agreements at the beginning of the semester in order to form a shared understanding about what we all expect from each other in our efforts to support the development of each class member's creativity.

If you are one of the first people to arrive in the classroom, **please help to move the chairs** and tables into a circle or other configuration that allows us all to see each other and have a large group conversation.

CLASS POLICY ON GENERATIVE AI

Generative AI programs like ChatGPT and GrammarlyGo are not recommended resources in this class. As a writing community, we've decided that while they can be integrated into our writing process (brainstorming, generating and organizing ideas, identifying errors in our drafts, etc.), we should not use them to write our papers for us. Our work should represent our own ideas and our own ways of articulating them. **This course is designed to strengthen your writing skills, and the only way to do that is to write your work yourself in your own unique voice.** Keep in mind that for assignments written by hand, these tools will not be available.

Large language models, like Chat GPT, perform intensive mining, modeling, and memorization of vast stores of language data "scraped" from the internet. They have been trained to learn language patterns and to predict the most probable next word or sequence of words based on the context they receive. In other words, it imitates or mimics what humans have put on the internet (think about that for a minute).

ChatGPT, like all generative AI systems, is a tool. Tools are used by humans to accomplish specific tasks. Thinking of it that way helps unlock its potential, but also avoid its pitfalls.

As AI is emerging in the workforce, you will likely encounter and use AI. One of the course goals is to help you learn to write and communicate effectively, which requires practice. Therefore, you must learn how to create, edit, and recognize high-quality writing yourself. If AI can do these tasks without you, you won't have employable skills. You will be responsible for any final product and limitations or potential biases from LLMs. **You will also be responsible for disclosing when and how you used AI.**

Misusing AI (i.e., using it to write any part of the essay without significant contributions or revision by you) or failing to disclose the use of AI will result in consequences ranging from a written/verbal warning to failing the assignment or course and a report to the Student Conduct Board. If you are unsure, ask!

Disclosure Agreement

If you use AI to assist you, you are required to disclose in your process journal how and how much you used AI in your writing process, and which parts of your project (down the exact paragraph and sentence) were affected by the use of these tools. Below are samples of how you can disclose your use of AI tools.

- I did all of this work on my own without assistance from tools, technology, or AI.
- I did the first draft but then asked AI paraphrase/grammar/plagiarism software to read it and make suggestions. I made the following changes after this help:
 - Fixed spelling and grammar
 - Changed the structure or order
 - Rewrote entire sentences in paragraphs #1 and 3/rewrote entire paragraph on page 3 (paragraph #4)
- I used AI to help me generate ideas. (Describe that process.)
- I used AI to do an outline/first draft, which I then edited. (Describe the nature of your contributions.)
- I used AI to revise a sentence in paragraph 2.

Remember: this is a creative writing class. The goal is to develop your own ideas using your own unique style. **There is no need to use AI tools to develop your own style.**

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The university emphasizes responsible citizenship and an awareness of ethical choices inherent in human development. Academic honesty and fairness foster ethical standards for all those who rely on the integrity of the university, its courses, and its degrees. University degrees are compromised and the

public is defrauded if faculty members or students knowingly or unwittingly allow dishonest acts to be rewarded academically. This policy sets the standards for such integrity and shall be used to inform students, faculty, and staff of the university's Academic Integrity Policy.

STUDENT ROLE

The San José State University Academic Integrity Policy requires that each student:

1. know the rules that preserve academic integrity and abide by them at all times, including learning and abiding by rules associated with specific classes, exams, and course assignments;
2. know the consequences of violating the Academic Integrity Policy;
3. know the appeal rights and procedures to be followed in the event of an appeal;
4. foster academic integrity among peers.

You can access the SJSU's comprehensive academic integrity policy here:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf>

Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php). (<https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php>)

English Program Information

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.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a +(plus) or -(minus) grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of an undergraduate degree program in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will be able 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, 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 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, including structures of power.

Department Information:

Department Name: English and Comparative Literature

Department Office: FO 102

Department Website: www.sjsu.edu/english (<https://www.sjsu.edu/english>)

Department email: english@sjsu.edu (<mailto:english@sjsu.edu>)

Department phone number: 408-924-4425

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area C2: Humanities

Area C Arts and Humanities courses help students to respond subjectively as well as objectively to aesthetic experiences and to develop an understanding of the integrity of both emotional and intellectual responses. C2 Humanities courses encourage students to analyze and appreciate works of philosophical, historical, literary, aesthetic, and cultural importance.

GE Area C2 Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a C2 course, students should be able to:

1. analyze and understand works of philosophical and humanistic importance, including their temporal and cultural dimensions;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such texts;
3. analyze and assess ideas of value, meaning, and knowledge, as produced within the humanistic disciplines; and
4. research and write effective analyses of works of the human intellect and imagination

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

There is no required book for this course.

The *recommended* textbook is:

Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft, 5th Edition by Janet Burroway

All other materials will be provided for free on Canvas or in class meetings.

Occasional material from *The New York Times* may be assigned. Please access it through your free SJSU student subscription, which you can subscribe to for free here: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/nyt-online>

The only personal information you need to provide to *The New York Times* is your SJSU email address, and possibly your graduation year and alternate email address. You do not need to enter payment information, because your free pass is valid until you graduate or stop attending SJSU.

We will be using some parts of *Imaginative Writing*, 5th edition, which should be available to rent or buy new, or to find in a library.

Many of the parts of the book that we will use are similar to a lot of free online resources, such as lists of particular types of writing prompts, so I will assign these parts with alternative options that don't require having the book. I will also post some reading materials on Canvas.

If you end up getting access to the 4th edition instead of the 5th, please note the main difference between the two editions' tables of contents, which contain different lists of poems, short stories, and essays and ask me whenever you are unsure how to find the assigned readings. Some of the readings listed in the 5th edition the table of contents only may be available for free online or through the MLK Library. The book also contains chapters about drama as well as the other genres. The drama chapters will not be assigned,

but you are free to read them and apply what you learned about them in your work and in class discussions. If you would like to compare the differences, here is a link to the 4th edition table of contents: https://archive.org/details/imaginativewriti0000burr_u0p0/page/n9/mode/2up

And here is a link to the 5th edition table of contents:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/products/imaginative-writing-janet-burroway-v9780137674237>

You will also need access to a laptop (available to check out for free on campus), a notebook (or stack/folder of loose paper) to use as a journal, and pens or pencils. Please carry the journal and pen/pencil with you all the time if you can (to record ideas that come to you throughout the day) and bring all of these items, along with the book, to every class.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Assignments will include:

In-class exercises

Reading responses to published works (and other homework)

Discussion board postings (and replies)

Manuscripts (in various phases of development) for peer review

Peer response letters

Process journals

Idea journals

Project 1: fiction -- 5-15 pgs (one full short story, two short-short stories, or the beginning of novel/novella)

Project 2: poetry -- 3-7 pgs

Project 3: creative nonfiction -- 5-15 pages

Portfolio is all 3 projects revised for a total of 15-25 pages.

Items/actions that contribute to your portfolio grade:

-manuscripts for peer review (these are the project drafts 1, 2, and 3 that will be workshopped)

-revision letter (written at the end of the course and turned in with portfolio)

- peer review workshop journals
- attendance at and good participation in workshop sessions
- evidence of revision in your project drafts
- all assignments turned in on time
- bonus points for evidence that you submitted at least one assignment for publication.

Conferences and office hours: We will have time during class on some days for brief, informal conferences (check-ins) about your work. I am also available to talk about your writing during my office hours or by appointment. Please email me to set up an appointment.

✓ Grading Information

In this course, we will use a grading contract.

This is the Grading Contract. By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it.

Creative Writing

Kristin FitzPatrick Ezell

Grading Contract:

In this class, we will work as a learning community to develop our approaches to reading and writing different types of texts. We will experiment with unfamiliar strategies, and at times we will feel unsure about the direction of our work and our comprehension of the work of others. We will develop writing processes to help us, including prewriting, drafting, workshopping, and revising. We will rely on each other for feedback and support, but we will also take charge of our own learning and success. What does that mean in terms of grading?

This class is meant to improve your skills and experiences as college-level writers, drawing from each of your unique funds of knowledge. Therefore, we will not be using a traditional grading system. Instead, **you will be largely responsible for your own grade.**

The default grade for this course is a "B+." If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit in which it is asked, if you work through the processes we establish and the work we do throughout the semester, if you continue to improve those processes in order to gain more intensity and engagement in your writing, then you will receive a "B+." If you miss in-class activities, turn in assignments late, fail to increase your work's intensity, or fail to submit assignments, your grade will be lower.

You will not be graded, at least not in a traditional sense, on any assignment. Instead, you will receive oral and/or written feedback from your peers and writing coach for each major assignment. **All work (major and minor assignments) will be awarded one point for completion. You are guaranteed a "B+" if you meet the following conditions:**

1. You complete 88% of all in-class and out-of-class minor assignments, including in-class reading responses and outlines and drafts of all major assignments. Note: In-class assignments cannot be made up as the result of an absence.
2. You prioritize attendance and participate in in-class activities.
3. You abide by the classroom protocol/community agreements we establish as a writing/learning community.
4. You work cooperatively and collegially in groups. We will come up with parameters for constructive criticism and a shared vocabulary for discussing potentially sensitive subjects.
5. You complete all major and minor assignments on time.
6. You may turn in one major assignment late per semester. Late work must be submitted within 48 hours of the initial due date.
7. All submissions are complete. Any incomplete assignments or assignments that do not meet the requirements of the prompt will be deemed "missed." You will not receive credit for missed work.
8. You receive a 1/1 on all major essays/writing projects.
9. You provide thoughtful peer feedback during class workshops and commit yourself to other collaborative work.
10. You honor the writing process and complete all steps thereof (e.g. reading/researching, prewriting, drafting and revising). Revisions should indicate significant changes – extending or changing up the thinking or organization – not just editing or changing words.

****NOTE:** The B+ grade is contingent on your behavior as an engaged member of our learning community.

"A" Grades:

The grade of A depends on the quality of and progress demonstrated in your final portfolio reflection. To receive an "A" as your final course grade, you will first need to qualify for the default grade of B+.

Additionally, you will need to receive the commendation "exceeds expectations" on your final portfolio.

Grades Lower Than "B+": "B," "C," "D," or "F" grades occur when you fail to complete the required 88% of minor assignments in the semester or to engage in class activities, including workshops and discussions, or you miss one or more major assignment (drafts of full short stories, poems, or creative nonfiction essays). You are not eligible for a "B+" unless you have met the guidelines outlined above. If you are falling behind or feeling overwhelmed, please contact me before you miss an assignment. I am here to support you, and I want you to succeed.

Plea: I (Kristin FitzPatrick Ezell), as the administrator of our contract, will decide in consultation with you (the student) as to whether a plea is warranted in any case. You must come to me as soon as possible (before breaching the contract), in order to make fair and equitable arrangements. You may use a plea for any reason, but only once. The plea is not an "out clause" for anyone who happens to not fulfill the contract in some way; it is for rare and unusual circumstances out of the control of the student.

CONTRACT AGREEMENT: By staying in this course and attending class, you accept this contract and agree to abide by it. I (Kristin FitzPatrick Ezell) also agree to abide by the contract and oversee it fairly and impartially.

This grading contract was adapted from Dr. Amanda Emanuel Smith's sample grading contract, which was adapted from Professor Angela Clark-Oates's ENGL 220D syllabus, Dr. Ti Macklin's ENGL 10/11 syllabus, and the scholarship of Dr. Asao Inoue and Professor Peter Elbow.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

Course Schedule

*Subject to change

**Details about individual assignments will be included in the assignment boxes on Canvas.

Please use the Modules page to find course materials and assignments. This will be easier than using pages such as Assignments, Discussions, or To-do Lists.

This course will be divided into units based on the structure of the textbook—one for each element for writing (i.e. image, voice, character), followed by one unit for each of the following genres: short fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction—with a unit for revising your final project at the end. The following is a tentative course plan. It may change slightly depending on how much time we may need to spend on a particular genre, set of readings, or individual assignment.

Week One: January 23

Read/write before class: nothing

Read during/after class:

-Syllabus (in SJSU Official Syllabus tab in this course)

-this poem: "Missing the Boat" by Naomi Shihab Nye (please scroll down to the poem and skip other text on the page), on page 323 in the book or here: <https://sites.udmercy.edu/poetry/2018/03/29/holy-thursday-naomi-shihab-nye-missing-the-boat/>

-this creative nonfiction essay: "Partido" by Hiram Perez, on page 256 of the book or here: <https://brevitymag.com/nonfiction/partido/>

-this short story: "Lights" by Stuart Dybek (not included in our book but available here:) <https://silverbirchpress.wordpress.com/2014/04/10/lights-story-by-stuart-dybek/>

Write during/after class:

- post to the introductions discussion board
- try a physical exercise and write about it
- post to the community agreements discussion board

Week Two: January 28-30

Image week

Read:

Chapter 2: Image (pages 15-46 in 5th edition)

Write:

- chapter exercises TBA
- journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

In class plan:

- chapter exercises TBA

Week 3: February 4-6

Voice week

Read:

Chapter 3: (pages 50-87 in 5th edition)

Write:

-chapter exercises TBA

-daily journal entries

-journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

Week 4: February 11-13

Character week

Read:

Chapter 4: (pages 93-123 in 5th edition)

Write:

-chapter exercises TBA

-daily journal entries

-journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

In class plan:

--chapter ("try this") exercises TBA

Week 5: February 18-20

Setting week

Read:

Chapter 5: (pages 128-154 in 5th edition)

Write:

-chapter exercises TBA

-daily journal entries

-journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

In class plan:

-Physical exercises

--chapter exercises TBA

Week 6: February 25-27

Story week

Read:

Chapter 6: (pages 161-191 in 5th edition)

Write:

-chapter exercises TBA

-daily journal entries

-journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

Week 7: March 4-6

Development/Revision week

Read:

Chapter 7: (pages 196-224 in 5th edition)

Write:

-a draft of one piece or revise at least one exercise from weeks 1-6

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

-peer review workshop

Week 8: March 11-13

Creative Nonfiction week

Read:

Chapter 8: (pages 228-262 in 5th edition)

Write:

-a draft of an essay

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

-peer review workshop

Week 9: March 18-20

Fiction week

Read:

Chapter 9: (pages 263-298 in 5th edition)

Write:

-a draft of a short story

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

-peer review workshop

Week 10: March 25-27

Poetry week

Read:

Chapter 10: (pages 299-326 in 5th edition)

Write:

-chapter exercises TBA

-daily journal entries

-journal update (What discoveries did you make while journaling?)

-a draft of at least one poem

In class plan:

--chapter exercises TBA

-peer review workshop

Spring break week: April 1-3 – No assignments due, no online activity expected

Week 11: April 8-10

Workshop week

Week 12: April 15-17

Workshop week

Week 13: April 22-24

Workshop week

Week 14: April 29-May 1

Workshop week

Week 15: May 6-8

Workshop/Revision week

May 8 is last class meeting

Exam Week: May 20

Turn in final portfolio on Canvas by 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20. We will not have a class meeting during exam week.