San José State University

Humanities & Arts/English & Comparative Literature

**English 117B: Global Film, Literature and Cultures**

**2017 Summer Study Abroad in Ireland**

[](http://www.vipie.com/guide-to-dublin/)

The beautiful Ha’penny Bridge lights Dublin’s Liffey River at night.

**Instructor**: Dr. Julie Sparks

**Email**: julie.sparks@sjsu.edu

**Professor Office:** Faculty Office Building (FOB) 128

**Office Hours:** 12:30-1:30 class days

**Class meets**: **Classes at SJSU:** 9-noon, June 20-23 M-F, and June 26-30

**Program in Ireland:** July 9st-20th

**Classroom:** FOB 104

**Prerequisites**: Completion of GE core; Satisfaction of Writing Skills Test;

Upper-division standing

**GE/SJSU Studies Category**: GE Area V: Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/julie.sparks/index.html> and on Canvas Leaning Management System course login website at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at http://my.sjsu.edu to learn of any updates.

**Course Description**: What does it mean to be an American in the 21st century? How much does our identity depend on the stories we tell about the nations that our ancestors came from? How is American culture still being shaped by cultures of other countries we share a history with? This course is designed to help students answer these questions. This particular section will give students an opportunity to understand their own personal and national identities by examining a culture that has always been closely tied to America’s—the Irish culture.

**General Ed. Description**: Using films and literary works, students will appreciate and understand the narratives that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time. We also examine how the films approach story-telling differently from traditional fictional forms: especially plays and short stories. We will look at films and read texts that are written in, set in, or depict multiple time periods and world cultures, with an emphasis on Ireland and other former colonies of the British Empire, including the U.S. Some of the common themes we will explore across these widely different texts and cultures will include the ways in which national and cultural identities are formed and contested, particularly in the telling of stories and the recording of history.

The course is open to upper division students of any major and satisfies the Gen Ed requirement for Area V, global engagement.

**English Department** **Student Learning Objectives**

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

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes and articulate the value of close reading;
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to 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.

**GE Student Learning Objectives**

1. Students shall be able to compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S. through the media of film and literature.
2. Students shall be able to identify the historical context of ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture.
3. Students shall be able to explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

1. Students shall hone their reading, writing, researching, and critical thinking skills through the practice of intellectually challenging analyses.

Course objectives 1-3 will be accomplished through the readings, class discussions,

students’ research and presentations, while the various written assignments and the final oral presentation will allow us to accomplish objective 4 and to assess our level of accomplishment in objectives 1-3.

**Required Readings** Unless otherwise noted, these will be posted on the course website and/or handed out in class.

* Selected tales from Irish mythology
* Selected essays from *Being Irish* + essay by Bernard Shaw on Irish identity
* Selected scene from *John Bull’s Other Ireland* (a play) By George Bernard Shaw
* Selected film reviews, context articles, and travel essays (these will be posted on the course Web site and/or handed out in class)
* “Guess Who’s Coming for the Dinner,” a story from *The Deportees and Other Stories* by Roddy Doyle

**Other Readings** Additional supplementary (optional) reading material, in addition to the works listed above, will help give you historical background and cultural context for the main readings and films. Most of these will be posted on the course Web site. Shorter readings will be handed out on paper, as in days of yore.

**Film List:** We will watch these in class before we leave for Ireland and discuss them together, and often there will be brief in-class writings afterwards to catch your first impressions. This is a significantly different experience from watching the films on your own, so please *do not* expect to skip class when the films are scheduled.

**Required Films (tentative)**: *Song of the Sea, The Quiet Man, Michael Collins,* *Brooklyn*, *The Boxer*, and a selection of short films from Ireland and elsewhere.

There will also be extra (optional) films shown in the evenings at the International House. We will arrive at a consensus of which to screen based on the wishes of those who will come that night. There will, of course, be a wealth of other films to see in Ireland, but the list of titles will not be available until late June.

**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 117, 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 which 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.

More guidelines on grading information and class attendance can be found from the following two university policies:

* University Syllabus Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>)
* University policy F15-12 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>)

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

* Critical Analysis, informed by research (1200 words) 250 points
* Site Visit/Interview Project (1000 words) 250 points
* Final essay: Final Reflection (1000 words) 250 points
* Smaller Assignments
  + 6 short homework responses: (250-350 words each) 150 points
  + Film reflections/evaluations (2 final ones + notes) 60 points
  + photo essay 30 points
  + post-game analysis (a form I’ll have you fill out) 10 points

**Small assignments** will include short, informal responses to performances; short responses to reading questions, and a photo essays (photos with captions) or brief videos from your own observations of Dublin. These assignments will have enough variety and flexibility to encourage students to capitalize on their talents, whether in writing fiction, analyzing historical documents, or writing travel essays. A detailed assignment sheet about these smaller assignments will be posted.

For the **critical** **film analysis/research project**, students will choose an extra film, play, or story to research and write about. This will include analysis and evaluation, as well as background information to provide context.

**Portfolio:** Most of the writing projects (final versions) will be submitted in a portfolio after we get back. The only thing you’ll submit before that will be the first five reading responses.

More details about final exams in general can be found in University Policy S06-4 (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S06-4.pdf) which states that “There shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless specifically exempted by the college dean who has curricular responsibility for the course.”

**Late papers**: I realize everyone has emergencies now and then, but I have found that accepting late work opens the door to chaos. Therefore: IN-CLASS WRITING CANNOT BE MADE UP. Grades for late essays will be reduced a grade step (e.g. from B- to C+) for every day they are late, and one week late is the limit. This policy provides incentive to meet deadlines, which are even more crucial in the workplace than in school. Upper-division students should already know this.

**Procedures for turning in work**:

**All assignments are to be submitted on** **paper** (not just electronically) **in class**, **at the beginning of class when they are due.** They are not to be slid under my office door or into my mailbox. One reduced grade on an essay or a couple of missed quizzes will not destroy your grade. Repeated lapses *will* damage your grade.

**Extra Credit**: During a regular semester I offer extra credit, but due to the unusual logistics of a class abroad, that is harder for this class. We might work something out if *minor* make-up work is needed.

**\*\*\*\*\* Prerequisite** “Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C‐ not accepted), and completion of Core General Education are prerequisite to all SJSU Studies courses. Completion of, or co‐registration in, 100W is strongly recommended. A minimum aggregate GPA of 2.0 in GE Areas R, S, & V shall be required of all students.”

More details about SJSU syllabus policy can be found from University Syllabus Policy S16-9 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>.

**Academic Policies** “University Policies: Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs maintains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.” You may find all syllabus related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP’s Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

**Academic Integrity** The University’s Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit, **or submitting your own work that you wrote for another class**) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student submitting them unless otherwise specified. **Turniti.com:** To receive credit, *all essays for this class must be submitted to Turnitin.com*. Late submissions to Turnitin could be penalized—if I have to keep asking. . .

**Classroom Protocol**

**Professionalism and maturity:** Perhaps this should go without saying, but students will be expected to treat each other and their professor with courtesy and respect. This includes the little things, like getting to class on time, turning your cell phones off in class, and refraining from toying with electronic devices and chatting with buddies in class. We will be discussing some emotionally potent issues, so it will be important for us all to express ourselves carefully and try to keep our cool. Students who fail in this regard might be asked to leave the classroom.

Professionalism and maturity also mean you will take responsibility for coming to class every time, well prepared for class, and it means following directions and meeting deadlines. **Significant problems with this can and often does mean failure in the class**. More about this below.

**Attendance and Participation:**

**It is very important that students come to class, every time, and come prepared to participate.** This means that reading assignments should be finished *before* the class period when they will be discussed, and that students should get to class on time to participate in the discussions, see the films, turn in homework, and/or take quizzes. There will be frequent, unannounced in-class writing of some sort, and these cannot be made up by students who miss class, even for illness or some other reason beyond your control. **Poor attendance and weak participation will significantly reduce your learning experience and your grade.**

**Absences**: Due to the unusual logistics of a study-abroad class, **absences will be a very serious problem, especially when we are abroad, as your absence could damage the experience for everyone in the group and can lead to your being dismissed and sent home.** Absences before we leave could result in your being expelled from the class before we leave. Don’t risk it.

**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/>