

Seminar in Thematic Studies of American Literature Section 01

ENGL 255

Fall 2023 4 Unit(s) 08/21/2023 to 12/06/2023 Modified 08/24/2023

Landscape and the Environment in American Literature

Class Days/Times: T 7:00 PM – 9:45 PM

Classroom: Hugh Gillis Hall 227

Instructor: Allison Johnson

Office Location: FOB 105 (in-person meetings by appointment only)

Office Hours: T,Th 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM on Zoom

Course Description and Requisites

Focuses on development of a theme in American Literature. With prior permission of graduate advisor may be repeatable once for credit.

Prerequisite: Classified standing or instructor consent.

Note: This course satisfies graduate-level GWAR in this master's program.

Letter Graded

* Classroom Protocols

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.

Canvas and MYSJSU Messaging

All course materials are on the course homepage on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU on [Spartan App Portal](http://one.sjsu.edu) (<http://one.sjsu.edu>) to learn of any updates.

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).**

Office Hours and Email Policies

I encourage you to meet with me during my virtual office hours to receive assistance on assignments and papers, and ask me questions. You can email me if you are unable to meet me during my designated hours.

Plagiarism Policy

If you plagiarize, you will receive an automatic 0 grade. Please make sure you cite your sources using proper MLA format!

“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>

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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

Upon successful completion of the MA English program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
2. Demonstrate high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research
3. Demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.
4. Demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to
 - a. organize and present material in a cogent fashion,
 - b. formulate and defend original arguments,
 - c. employ effectively the language of their discipline and
 - d. write under time constraints.
5. Demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

Upon successful completion of the MFA in Creative Writing, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a high level of ability to propose and complete a publishable, full-length work of literature in a primary genre concentration (fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or scriptwriting).
2. Demonstrate high level of proficiency to write works of literature in a secondary genre concentration (fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or scriptwriting).
3. Demonstrate an appropriate level of knowledge of literary history, literary theory, and craft and theory of creative writing.
4. Demonstrate critical and analytical skills in the evaluation and interpretation of literary texts.
5. Demonstrate a command of written academic English, including the abilities to:
 - a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion;
 - b) formulate and defend original arguments;
 - c) employ effectively the language of their discipline;
 - d) write under time constraints.

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 Materials

All books available at SJSU Bookstore. All other materials are available on Canvas.

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Author: Zora Neale Hurston

Publisher: Harper Perennial

ISBN: 9781269365284

Ceremony

Author: Leslie Marmon Silko

Publisher: Penguin

ISBN: 9780140086836

The Squatter and the Don

Author: María Amparo Ruiz de Burton

Publisher: Arte Publico Press

ISBN: 9781558851856

Library Liaison

Peggy Cabrera, email: peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

Scholarly Article Response Worksheet and discussion leading

15% [PLO 1-4]

Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, 10/29

20% [PLO 2-4]

Paper Presentation (10 minutes), 12/6

5% [PLO 1-4]

Research Paper, (10-20 pages), 12/10

30% [PLO 1-4]

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

You can find files of or links to the texts below on the course Home page.

When	Topic	Notes
Week 1 08/22/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Introduction	Read before class: Timothy Clark, "Introduction" from <i>The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment</i> . Cambridge, 2011. Harold Fromm, "Ecocriticism: The Expanding Universe," from <i>A Companion to Literary Theory</i> . John Wiley & Sons, 2018.
Week 2 08/29/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	The (not so) New World	Karin Wulf, "Vast Early America" Two indigenous creation stories Mayan Account of Spanish Conquest, c. 1520 Jacques Cartier, from <i>The First Relation of Jaques Carthier of S. Malo, 1534</i> <i>Relation of the Voyage of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, 1542-1543</i> John Smith, from <i>Map of Virginia, 1612</i> Statement to French Missionaries Micmac c. 1680 Browse "Assorted Illustrations of North America"
Week 3 09/05/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	The Hudson River and the Vast Prairie	Kevin Avery, The Hudson River School Washington Irving, "The Author's Account of Himself," "Rip Van Winkle," "Philip of Pokanoket," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" George Catlin, <i>North American Indian Portfolio</i> Zitkala-Sa, from <i>American Indian Stories</i>
Week 4 09/12/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	The Transcendentalists	Ralph Waldo Emerson, From <i>Nature</i> (1836), "Nature" (1844) Henry David Thoreau, "A Walk to Wachusett" Margaret Fuller, from "Summer on the Lakes in 1843"

When	Topic	Notes
Week 5 09/19/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Emily Dickinson & Walt Whitman	Emily Dickinson, Selected poems Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1855), "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" (1865)
Week 6 09/26/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	María Amparo Ruiz de Burton	<i>The Squatter and the Don</i> (Chapters 1-13)
Week 7 10/03/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	María Amparo Ruiz de Burton	<i>The Squatter and the Don</i> (Chapters 14-27)
Week 8 10/10/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	La Frontera	<i>The Squatter and the Don</i> (finish) Anzaldúa, "The Homeland, Aztlán" from <i>Borderlands La Frontera</i>
Week 9 10/17/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	The Landscapes of Slavery and Reconstruction	Charles Chesnutt, "The Gophered Grapevine" W.E.B. DuBois, "Of Work and Wealth," from <i>Darkwater</i> Jean Toomer, From <i>Cane</i>
Week 10 10/24/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Zora Neale Hurston	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> (Chapters 1-10)
Assignment Week 10	Research Proposal/Annotated Bibliography	Due via Canvas by 11:59 pm.
Week 11 10/31/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Zora Neale Hurston	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> (finish)
Week 12 11/07/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Leslie Marmon Silko	<i>Ceremony</i> (read first half)

When	Topic	Notes
Week 13 11/14/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Leslie Marmon Silko	<i>Ceremony</i> (finish)
Week 14 11/21/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Black in Nature	Selections from <i>Black Nature</i>
Week 15 11/28/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Milton Murayama	From <i>All I Asking For is My Body</i>
Week 16 12/06/2023 7:00 PM - 9:45 PM	Paper Presentations	
Assignment Week 16, 12/10	Research Paper, 12/10	Due via Canvas by 11:59 pm.