# San José State University English and Comparative Literature English 117: Film, Literature and Cultures

**The Politics of Viewing**

# Section 2 Spring 2011

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| Instructor: | Dr. Noelle Brada-Williams |
| Website: | http://www2.sjsu.edu/faculty/awilliams/index.html |
| Office Hours: | Mondays 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM. Additional times by appointment in Faculty Office Building (FOB) 110. |
| Email: | Noelle.Brada-Williams@sjsu.edu |
| Telephone: | (408) 924-4439 |
| Class: | Fridays 9-11:45 AM in BBC 222 |
| Prerequisites: | Writing Skills Test (WST), completion of Core General Education, and completion of, or co-registration in, 100W |
| GE/SJSU Studies Category: | GE Area V category: Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding. Courses to meet Areas R, S, and V of SJSU Studies must be taken from three different departments, or distinct academic units. |

## Course Description

## Using films and literary works, students will examine narratives that create and define cultural identity, explore cultural interaction, and illustrate cultural preservation and cultural difference over time. We will look at films and read texts that are written in, set in, or depict multiple time periods and world cultures. Some of the common themes we will explore across these widely different texts and cultures will include (but not be limited to) colonialism, power dynamics, race, gender, class, sexuality, social norms, and narrative form. This semester we will place a special emphasis on the power of viewing: how does viewing a film or other spectacle affect us? How does *being* viewed—being under surveillance—affect us? What is the impact of viewing on society? What is the role of art in defining cultural identity or in resisting cultural norms and definitions?

## GE Area V Course Goals and 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.

4. 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, material presented in lecture, and student research, while the various written assignments will allow us to accomplish objective 4 and to assess our level of accomplishment in objectives 1-3.

**Departmental Learning Objectives**

English 117 serves the learning objectives of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, by having students demonstrate the ability to

1.      read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of “close reading” or close analysis in both the study of literature and the study of film;

2.      show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to 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.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

Coursework includes reading assignments (see schedule below); two five to seven-page formal textual analyses (which must include research and be put on turnitin.com); five one-page analyses, and a final exam composed of both short identification and longer comparative essay questions. We actually have 6 “informal” one-page assignments listed but you only need to complete 5. By “informal” I mean no works cited or research is required. Detailed descriptions of the assignments are in the reader. **Late paper policy:** keeping in mind the many emergencies and unforeseen events that can occur in the average SJSU student’s life, I have a very generous extension policy. As long as you give me the request in writing—print or email— (complete with a new deadline) *before* the paper’s due date, most requests for an extension will be granted**. If the original deadline is passed by a student who has not received an extension or an extended deadline has been passed, 10% of the total points possible will be taken off for lateness up to one week. Extended or late papers will be graded AFTER on-time student work.** Note that *doing the reading and being able and willing to respond* to the comments and questions of both the professor and your fellow students on a daily basis is a requirement of the course. Reading quizzes and other in-class assignments will be given to ensure that students are indeed completing and understanding the readings. These cannot be made up. Due dates for all papers and the time for the final exam are listed on the reading and assignment schedule at the end of the syllabus.

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| Research Paper One | 5-7 page analysis w/ research 1,750-2,450 words | 25% |
| Research Paper Two | 5-7 page analysis w/ research 1,750-2,450 words | 25% |
| 5 Short essays | 5 (of 6) one-page typed analyses (350 words each) | 20% |
| Final Exam | 5 I.D.’s & 1 Comparative essay | 20% |
| Reading Quizzes & other in-class assignments | 15 class discussions, quizzes, etc. | 10% |
| Total |  | 100% |

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.

## Classroom Protocol

You are required to be courteous and professional to both classmates and the professor. Most people take this as a requirement in their daily lives and this statement does not need to be reiterated here. However, people sometimes forget that the classroom is a professional setting and rules that govern a business meeting apply here. For example, devices such as cell phones need to be turned off; coming to class late is unacceptable. While you may use a laptop to take notes in class, you may not waste class time by texting or performing non-course related activities on a phone or computer. If an emergency arises that requires your absence from class, please contact the professor. Simply prioritizing your education behind other time commitments does not constitute such an emergency. Participating in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are absolutely necessary for the successful completion of this course. Protocol for written work requires that all quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks or, when more than three lines, put in an indented block. Full citation of the original author and source must also be included. For all papers, review a writing handbook for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman composition classes). Also see the University policy on “Academic Integrity” below for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

## University Policy on Academic Integrity

Students should know that the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy is availabe at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial\_affairs/Academic\_Integrity\_Policy\_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf). Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html).

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. 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) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

## Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html) . [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/) **.** Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes. Note that September 7, 2010 is the last drop without a “W.” **The instructor of this course will not automatically drop you if you do not show up. Dropping is your responsibility.**

### Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

## Library Liaison for English & Comparative Literature:

## Contact Toby Matoush via email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu, or phone: (408) 808-2096 if you have library research questions that have not been answered in class.

## Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

## SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. The writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/)/.

## Seven Required Texts:

1. A reader available at Maple Press (located on West San Carlos between 10th and 11 streets)
2. Daniel Alarcon, *Lost City Radio* (2007, Harper Perennial ISBN: 978-0-06-059479-4)
3. Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters* (1990, Penguin, ISBN: 0-1401-4904-x)
4. David Henry Hwang, *M Butterfly* (1988, Plume, ISBN: 978-0-452-27259-0)
5. Manuel Puig, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (1978, Vintage Books, ISBN: 0-679-72449-4)
6. Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown* (2005, Random House, ISBN: 978-0-375-71483-2)
7. Karen Tei Yamashita, *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest* (1990, Coffee House Press, ISBN: 0-918273-82-X)
8. You also need to make sure that your MySJSU account has your most accessible and current email address. Since we only meet once a week, expect to occasionally get questions or information emailed to you.

The texts (not including the reader) can be purchased at Spartan Books and Roberts Bookstore as well as via internet sellers via <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/donations/>.

# English 117

# Film, Literature and Cultures: The Politics of Viewing

# Fall 2010 Course Schedule

*The schedule may vary depending on the needs of the class or scheduling issues. Any changes will be reported in class and via the email you have registered with MySJSU.*

| Week | Readings & Assignments |
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| 1: **January 28** | Introduction to course and film, *Cat People,* in class. |
| 2: **February 4** | Read first half of*Kiss of the Spider Woman* (at least to chapter 8, page 147). Be prepared to discuss the footnotes as well as the narrative. Recommended viewing: *I Walked With a Zombie* (available through Netflix). |
| 3: **February 11** | Finish *Spider Woman* by today and read assigned pieces of criticism or background reading (bring reader to class). |
| 4: **February 18** | Read Foucault and Mulvey in reader. In class we will watch the film *The Lives of Others.* **Informal essay #1** (analyzing either Puig or Torneur/Lewton’s work) **due.** |
| 5: **February 25** | Read *Lost City Radio* to page 146/through chapter 9. The film, *Children of Men*, is also recommended. |
| 6: **March 4** | Complete *Lost City Radio*. **Informal #2 due** on either *The Lives of Others* or *Lost City Radio*. |
| 7: **March 11** | **Paper 1 due.** Begin reading*Shalimar the Clown.* Watch *Mughal-E-Azam* (1960) in class & watch *The Terrorist* (1999) at home by April 1st. |
| 8: **March 18** | Read first half of *Shalimar the Clown* (read to at least page 213). |
| **March 26-30** | **SPRING BREAK** |
| 9: **April 1** | Finish *Shalimar the Clown* (to 398). Informal #3 due on Rushdie’s novel, *The Terrorist,* or *Mughal-E-Azam.* |
| 10: **April 8** | Read all of *M. Butterfly* (including “Afterword” by Hwang). |
| 11: **April 15** | Watch *M. Butterfly* film in class. **Informal #4 due** on *M Butterfly.* |
| 12: **April 22** | View a film, *All That Heaven Allows* in class. The films *A Place in the Sun*, *Magnificent Obsession, and The Harder they Come* are also recommended. Read first half of *Dogeaters* (at least through page 125). |
| 13: **April 29** | Finish *Dogeaters*. **Informal # 5 due** on *Dogeaters* or *All that Heaven Allows*. |
| 14: **May 6** | **Paper 2 due.** Read to 102 of *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest.* Watch *Bye Bye Brasil* in class. |
| 15: **May 13** | Complete *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest* and read essay by Ursula Heise (in reader). **Informal # 6 due** on *Through the Arc of the Rainforest* or *Bye, Bye Brazil.* |
| Final: **May 19** | **Final Exam: Thursday May 19, 7:15 to 9:30 AM** |