

Creative Writing

ENGL 71

Spring 2026 Section 04 In Person 3 Unit(s) 01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026 Modified 01/18/2026

Contact Information

Instructor:	Jill Logan
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Student Hours:	MW 1:00-2:00 via Zoom link or by appointment
Class Days/Time:	TTh 12:00-1:15
Classroom:	Hugh Gillis Hall 120

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 short fiction.

Satisfies 3A. Arts (Formerly Area C1).

Grading: Letter Graded.

* Classroom Protocols

What is expected of me and what can I expect?

Your task as a student will be to embrace the opportunities afforded to you in this class: the exploration of new reading, the discussions with your peers and me about the work at hand, the opportunity to give feedback on the works of your peers, the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on your own work, and, of course, the opportunity to take part in a thoughtful and supportive community of writers. I hope that you'll understand how truly valuable all of these opportunities are.

Because good writing often asks us to explore the sometimes difficult and ugly truths in life, there may be times when you feel uncomfortable about something that you've read or something that you're attempting to write. Please communicate with me about these situations. The sooner I know about them, the more effective I can be in helping to find solutions to ease your discomfort.

To help foster a safe and supportive writing community, I ask that you be mindful of your words, both spoken and written. If you think something you've written might be potentially disturbing to or painful for some readers, please speak to me ahead of time so that we can discuss our options. Also, please be mindful of issues of appropriation or of harmful tropes that might exist in your work. These issues might be difficult to gauge in your own writing, but I'm always here to discuss situations or texts with you, if you have concerns.

I expect that you will treat each other and me with respect and dignity at all times, and that you will attend class regularly and give your full attention to the activities and to the work of your peers. You can expect that I will treat you as an individual, and that I will challenge you to think, experiment, probe, and create. I am happy to talk to you about any concerns or questions by email or during Student Hours.

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 Goals

What will we do in this course?

In short we will explore how creative texts work – open them up, understand how they’re put together, how they live and breathe. Hopefully that understanding can help us to better create and strengthen our own writing. Does this make us doctors? Mad scientists? Nurturing parents? I’ll let you choose the metaphor. You will be responsible for short written responses to readings, participating in class discussions and activities, reading and responding to each other’s work, and creating a portfolio of your work. Above all, I ask that you be respectful of each other and of your own writing.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area 3A: Arts

Across the disciplines in Area 3 coursework, students cultivate and refine their affective, cognitive, and expressive faculties by studying works of the human intellect and imagination. Area 3 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. In their intellectual and subjective considerations, students develop a better understanding of the interrelationship between the self and the creative arts and the humanities in a variety of cultures.

3A (Arts) courses emphasize the integration of history, theory, aesthetics, and criticism. Performance and studio classes may be credited toward satisfaction of this subject area if their major emphasis is the integration of history, theory, and criticism. Audition-based courses will not be approved for GE.

GE Area 3A Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of a 3A course, students should be able to:

1. identify aesthetic qualities and processes that characterize works of the human intellect and imagination;
2. explore and articulate their own subjective aesthetic and intellectual responses to such works;
3. analyze the role and impact of the creative arts in culture and on the interrelationship of self and community; and
4. research and apply relevant aesthetic criteria and/or artistic conventions in effective written responses to works of art.

Writing requirement

3A classes require a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

What texts do I need?

Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide & Anthology (2016) by Nancy Pagh, Broadview, ISBN 978-1554812264
Available at San José University Spartan Bookstore

What else do I need?

- Paper and pen/pencil for In-Class Activities
- Reliable Wi-Fi with access to email, Canvas, Google Docs. [See the Learn Anywhere website for current Wi-Fi options on campus.](#)
- *Optional* Ability to print manuscripts, if useful to you

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

What kind of assignments will we do?

You will submit the following Writing Assignments over the course of the semester:

Poetry	Imagery poem
	Sound poem
	Cento poem
	Visual/Materials poem
Fiction	Short Story
Creative Nonfiction	Personal Essay

I will provide instructions for each assignment before it is due, along with a rubric for how I will be evaluating it. You will also be workshoping it with peers before submitting it for a grade.

Reading Responses

Throughout the class you will be required to post a Reading Response on Canvas. I will post a prompt and you will write a response to it. We will use these responses in various ways to analyze the works of others and to try out techniques for our own writing. Please note the rubric accompanying each Response assignment.

In-Class Activities

These activities will vary from class to class, and I will give individual instructions on them during class time. Some you will turn in to me; some you will not. You must be in class to receive credit for these.

Poetry Packet

At the end of our poetry unit, you will submit a packet that includes annotations of your revised poetry, as well as a short essay discussing your revisions and revision process.

Workshop Submissions

The ability to give and receive constructive feedback is crucial to your development as a writer. We will do so with the tact and close attention that such work demands, especially in the workshop setting. Your ideas may be challenged, but we will strive to ensure that such challenges are neither personal nor malicious. My guidelines for workshop conduct are best summed up by the poet Liam Clancy: **"No fear. No envy. No meanness."**

Poetry Workshops

During the Poetry unit we will have Small Group Workshop. I will assign you to groups, with whom you will workshop your poems. We will also have Small Group Workshops for longer works not already workshopped by the larger group, as well as for Revision Activities.

Short Story/Personal Essay Workshops

For the longer genres, we will workshop 2-3 writers per class. We will sign up for slots early in the semester. You will be required to workshop one longer piece (Short Story or Personal Essay). You will need to post your work to Canvas **one week before you are scheduled to be workshopped**. This will give your peers time to thoroughly read and comment on your work.

After your workshop, I will give you a **Revision Activity** to complete. These are meant to help you to experiment and re+vision your work. You'll try the activity and reflect on how it affected the way you think about your piece.

Feedback Letters

You will submit feedback letters to your peers for the short story/personal essay workshops. (Small Group workshop feedback will be done in class.) We'll discuss effective feedback in class, and that criteria will be what I use to evaluate these.

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a portfolio of **substantially revised** work. The Final Portfolio must include:

Author's Introduction

4 revised Poems

1 revised Short Story

1 revised Personal Essay

Note: A revision is a reworking of an earlier draft. The editing of minor spelling or grammatical choices does not constitute a revision. Rather, revision requires considering the whole, re-imagining events, ideas, characters, or organization, and rewriting what can be improved.

Assignments

Type	Number of Words	Learning Outcome
Reading Responses	100-200 each	GELO 1/2/3/4
In-Class Activities	Varies	GELO 1/2/3/4
Imagery poem	Varies	GELO 2
Sound poem	Varies	GELO 2
Cento poem	Varies	GELO 2
Visual/Materials poem	Varies	GELO 2
Poetry Packet	1000	GELO 2
Short story	1500-2000	GELO 2
Personal Essay	1000-2000	GELO 2
Revision Activity	Varies	GELO 2
Feedback Letters	300 each	GELO 1/3/4

Type	Number of Words	Learning Out come
Final Portfolio	Varies	GELO 1/2/3/4

✓ Grading Information

Grading Policy

The percentage breakdown for the class is as follows:

Assignment	% of Course Grade
Reading Responses	10%
In-Class Activities	15%
Imagery poem	2%
Sound poem	2%
Cento poem	2%
Visual/Materials poem	2%
Poetry Packet	12%
Short story	10%
Personal Essay	10%
Revision Activity	5%
Feedback Letters	10%

Assignment	% of Course Grade
Final Portfolio	20%

Grading Scale:

A = 93-100%	B+ = 87-89%	C+ = 77-79%	D+ = 67-69%
A- = 90-92%	B = 83-86%	C = 73-76%	D = 63-66%
	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	D- = 60-62%

This course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

If you do not understand the reason you received a specific grade, please ask for clarification *at least 24 hours after receiving it, and at most one week after.*

Please know that "All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Is late work accepted?

Any work not turned in by the assigned time/date will be **lowered 10% and must be turned in within 2 weeks of the due date** unless you've made other arrangements with Jill.

The exception to this is the Short Story or Personal Essay submitted for the Large Group Workshop you've signed up for. For late Large Group Workshop submissions, late work grades will be **lowered 10% per day for each day they're late**. The reason for this is that the rest of the class needs a full week to thoughtfully read and process the story and give feedback.

In-Class Activities are, by definition, "in class" and therefore may not be turned in late.

A note on Academic Integrity

Your commitment to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic coursework. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

TurnItIn has been enabled in Canvas to check all submitted material for plagiarism. Plagiarized work will receive a "0". If you're working with borrowed material and are concerned about plagiarism issues, please see me before submitting the piece so that we can discuss the specifics of your situation.

Note: In this policy you will notice that it is considered “cheating” to submit previously graded work for a grade in another class, as well as to submit the same work simultaneously in two or more classes. **This means that you cannot submit a piece of writing for this class that you have also submitted for another SJSU class.** Any such submissions will receive a “0” and I will take the appropriate administrative actions. Please talk to me if you have any questions about this policy.

What about AI?

Because this is a **creative writing** course, the focus is obviously on the work that **YOU** create.

Please note section 1.2 from [SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf).
(<https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf>):

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.

Notice the parts of the policy that have been italicized for emphasis. These highlight a couple of important things:

- Doing academic work requires that the work you turn in is your own. Work that is generated by AI is not considered your own original work.
- It doesn't matter which AI program/software you use. Using any of these to generate work that you put under your name is considered a form of plagiarism.

You may, however, use spellcheck and grammarcheck functions of software to highlight what that program considers "errors". Keep in mind, though, that--as a writer--you may not agree that something is, in fact, an "error". Question the suggestions you're given and then make your own thoughtful choices that you can support as a thinker and an artist.

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

**Like any working draft, this schedule is subject to revision. I will alert you to changes through class announcements and email.*

+All reading is to be done before class. Page numbers are from *Write Moves*.

+All Reading Responses are due *before* class

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
1	Th 1/22	Introductions Syllabus Characters in Our Class Create our Community Contract
2	T 1/27	Read: "Why Write" (19-24) Due: Reading Response 1 (Why we write) Sign up for workshops In-Class Activity 1 (Deconstructing a Poem)
2	Th 1/29	Due: Reading Response 2 (Self-Portrait Poem) Discuss Defamiliarization In-Class Activity 2 (Guided Lines)
3	T 2/3	Read: "Revision" (48-61) Due: Reading Response 3 (Revision process) Discuss process In-Class Activity 3 (Cut-up + Reflect OR Line / break + Reflect) Discuss Poetry Revision Checklist
3	Th 2/5	Read: "Image, Detail, and Figurative Language" (67-79) Due: Reading Response 4 (Discuss and imitate) In-Class Activity 4 (Imagery in Poetry) Discuss Imagery Poem assignment Meet your Poetry Reading Group

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
4	T 2/10	<p>Read: "Sound" (80-92)</p> <p>Due: Reading Response 5 (Discuss and imitate)</p> <p>In-Class Activity 5 (Playing with Sound)</p> <p>Discuss poetry feedback</p> <p>Discuss Sound Poem assignment</p>
4	Th 2/12	<p>Read: "Writing Poems" (139-155)</p> <p>Due: Reading Response 6 (Find a poem)</p> <p>Due (in class): Imagery poem</p> <p>In-Class Activity 6: Small Group Workshop</p> <p>Discuss Cento Poem assignment</p>
5	T 2/17	<p>Due (in class): Sound poem</p> <p>In-Class Activity 7: Small Group Workshop</p> <p>Discuss Chosen Form Poem assignment</p>
5	Th 2/19	<p>Due (in class): Cento poem</p> <p>In-Class Activity 8: Small Group Workshop</p> <p>Discuss Poetry packets</p> <p>Review Poetry Revision Checklist</p>
6	T 2/24	<p>Due (in class): Chosen Form poem</p> <p>In-Class Activity 9: Small Group Workshop</p>
6	Th 2/26	<p>Due: Poetry packet</p> <p>In-Class Activity 10 (The 5 Plots, Predicament/Plot)</p> <p>Discuss Short Story Assignment and Feedback Letters</p>

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
7	T 3/3	<p>Read: "Writing Stories" (156-172)</p> <p>Due: Reading Response 7 (Find a story)</p> <p>In-Class Activity 11 (Dialogue Activity)</p> <p>Discuss Dialogue handout</p>
7	Th 3/5	<p>Read: "Character and Setting" (93-105)</p> <p>Due: Reading Response 8 (Discuss and imitate)</p> <p>In-Class Activity 12 (Writing Scenes Driven by Dilemma and Conflict)</p>
8	T 3/10	<p>Read: "Scene, Exposition, and Reflection" (106-118)</p> <p>Read: "Voice and Perspective" (119-132)</p> <p>Due: Reading Response 9 (Find a Story)</p> <p>In-Class Activity 13 (Point of View/Perspective, Lobster Dinner)</p> <p>Discuss Point of View Chart</p>
8	Th 3/12	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 14: Large Group Workshop Writers 1, 2</p>
9	T 3/17	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 15: Large Group Workshop Writers 3, 4, 5</p>
9	Th 3/19	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 16: Large Group Workshop Writers 6, 7, 8</p>
10	T 3/24	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 17: Large Group Workshop Writers 9, 10, 11</p>
10	Th 3/26	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 18: Large Group Workshop Writers 12, 13, 14</p>

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
11	T 3/31	SPRING BREAK
11	Th 4/2	SPRING BREAK
12	T 4/7	Due: Feedback Letters In-Class Activity 19: Large Group Workshop Writers 15, 16, 17
12	Th 4/9	Due: Short Story Revision Activity (for those who have already workshopped) Due: Short Story (for those who have not yet workshopped) In-Class Activity 20: Small Group Workshop
13	T 4/14	Read: "Writing Personal Essays" (173-186) Due: Reading Response 10 (Find an essay) In-Class Activity 21 (Elements of Personal Essay, Bad Decision) Discuss Personal Essay Assignment
13	Th 4/16	Due: Reading Response 11 (Discuss and imitate form) In-Class Activity 22 (Playing with Structure)
14	T 4/21	Due: Reading Response 12 (Self-Portrait Poem Revision) In-Class Activity 23 (Choosing Details, Ex-Loves: Specificity vs. Stereotype)
14	Th 4/23	Due: Feedback Letters In-Class Activity 25: Large Group Workshop Writers 18, 19, 20

Week	Date	Readings, Assignments & Deadlines
15	T 4/28	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 26: Large Group Workshop Writers 21, 22, 23</p>
15	Th 4/30	<p>Due: Feedback Letters</p> <p>In-Class Activity 27: Large Group Workshop Writers 24, 25</p>
16	T 5/5	<p>Due: Personal Essay Revision Activity (for those who have already workshopped)</p> <p>Due: Personal Essay (for those who have not yet workshopped)</p> <p>In-Class Activity 28: Small Group Workshop</p>
16	Th 5/7	In-Class Activity 29: Portfolio Workshop, Submit for Gallery
Final	T 5/19 10:45 am	Due: Final Portfolio