

**San José State University
Humanities Department
AMS/Hum 169-01, The American Dream, Spring 2015**

Instructor:	Dr. Dan C. Williamson
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Office hours:	MTWTH 10:30-11:30am and by appointment
Class days/time:	TTh, 9:00am-10:15am
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 241
Prerequisites:	Completion of Core GE and Upper Division Standing, successful completion of WST and concurrent or successful completion of 100W
GE/SJSU Studies Category, if applicable	Area S; Self, Society and Equality in the U.S.

“Students are strongly encouraged to take courses to satisfy GE Areas R, S, and V from departments other than their major department. 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.” See [University Policy S14-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-5.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-5.pdf>.

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/dan.williamson>. You should check there regularly for assignment materials. Another easy way to access my page is to type into Google search: Dan C. Williamson SJSU. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor) to learn of any updates.

Course Description and Goals

The "American Dream" is widely used phrase. To think about it leads one to think about nothing less than the history, values, ideas and culture(s) that have evolved--and in some cases died--in the history of the United States. By reflecting on past and present visions of this idea, students gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the complexity of American experiences and the dreams that circulate in those experiences. Several texts have been chosen to reflect the history and diversity of this idea as it has occurred to people from different ethnic, racial, gender and class backgrounds. The course looks at this pervasive and broad idea from the point of view of multiple ethnic, racial, gender and class perspectives

Student Learning Objectives

Objectives must be measurable, specific, and time-related. See Greensheet Guidelines for more information. Sequential numeration of GE/SJSU Studies learning outcomes followed by course content learning outcomes

GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes, if applicable

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

LO 1 Describe how religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age identity are shaped by cultural and societal influences in contexts of equality and inequality;

*Several activities are designed to help you meet this objective including homework assignments based on the readings of Frederick Douglass' Slave Narrative, **Assessment activity: second midterm.***

LO 2 Describe historical, social, political, and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S.;

*Numerous written assignments with feedback help meet this objective, including group discussion work on books such as *The Working Poor*; you are encouraged to formulate your own questions and discuss them in class. **Assessment activity: final examination, embedded questions.***

LO 3 Describe social actions by religious, gender ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age groups leading to greater equality and social justice in the US;

*Several homework assignments and the midterms are designed to meet this goal reflecting readings such as those by Zitkala-Sa, *Black Elk* and, again, *The Working Poor*. As with all the criteria listed here, these themes should also be reflected in the term paper (or papers, as below). **Assessment activity: final paper and examination, review***

LO 4 Recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial and ethnic groups in the U.S.;

*Everyone is directed to see these interactions throughout the course using diverse sources such as Winthrop, Jefferson and Franklin along with several of the immigrant narratives. You will be asked to respond in multiple frameworks: homework midterm, final and group discussion work **One Assessment activity out of many: the first midterm.***

Course Learning Objectives:

CLO 1 The students should develop good writing and research techniques that uphold the standards of the Humanities.

CLO 2 This includes thoroughness on the part of the student as well as showcasing his or her ability to take the basic ideas of a course and imaginatively and creatively applying same. *The writing and in-class assignments are designed around this basic set of goals.*

Required Texts/Readings (note where available)

Textbooks

Andrews, William L. *Classic American Autobiographies*; A Mentor Book (CAA)

Cullen, Jim *The American Dream*; Oxford (AD)

Fitzgerald, F. Scott *The Great Gatsby*, Scribner (GG)

Shipler, David K. *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*; Vintage (WP)

Steinbeck, John *The Grapes of Wrath*; Penguin (GW)

Whitman, Walt *Leaves of Grass*, Bantam Classic, (LOG)

Other readings (or recommended readings)

Several texts that previously were in a reader I used are available as links online at my main web page. Also, on reserve at MLK for your consultation are the two chapters from Patricia Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*, as well as Thomas Dublin's book, *Immigrant Voices: New Lives in America 1773-1986*; University of Illinois Press. Also *The Portable Thoreau* an optional text. They are for those who wish to explore some similar themes and, in the case of Thoreau, to read more of him. Another book I have found useful is Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*.

Classroom Protocol

There is a separate sheet detailing my specific requirements for class decorum, incompletes and other related issues.

Dropping and Adding

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. You should be aware of the new deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Course Structure:

Please note the following from the Academic Senate, S12-3, in compliance with Federally mandated standards:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

It follows that:

a. *Reading*

You should be able to engage the issues by reading the texts thoroughly in advance of the lectures covering the readings. Please come to class prepared and make sure to read the material thoroughly in advance. Everyone in the class will get far more from the course by doing so.

b. *Writing*

The course has a minimum of 3000 words of written work, per advanced GE course standards. I will be working with you on all written work.

papers There are two papers. The first paper will have lower points and will be shorter, 3-5 pages max. There are no provisions for rewrites but the incremental points will be weighted towards the last paper, so the student will have the chance to incorporate my feedback from previous paper and other work. I will make available on the course web site separate sheets detailing both guidelines and topics. However, students are encouraged to think about their own topic. Library research is mandatory on the last paper and advisable on the first. Only academically sound sources should be used. And, as is apparent from the reading list, the

professor likes to see students using books, not just electronic resources. You should at all times conform to the tenets of correct English grammar. Sloppy grammar, incorrect punctuation and spelling will affect your grade. When in doubt, keep your sentences simple.

Papers should be submitted to me in hardcopy in class and an electronic copy sent to Turitin.com. The course number and password TBA.

homework I may assign a few assignments as part of the review for the written portion of the exams.

midterms and final Both midterms and final are a mixture of true/false, multiple choice and short-essay format. The first midterm is closed book. The second may be the same or it might be a mixture of open and closed book for the essays. The final is typically open and closed book; it is cumulative with an emphasis on everything not already tested on in the previous midterms. In the past I used homework for the purposes of review. This semester I will use review sheets as well as in-class preparation; e.g.: doing a short essay answer together and then reviewing it to provide you with an example of what constitutes a good essay.

Active Learning I rarely just lecture. I like to engage in discussion with students. Come prepared for discussion. This will help you improve your comprehension of the material

i. **participation** I give 25 basic participation points reflecting your overall performance in the class. Make yourself noticed by speaking up, positively and constructively, please. Please note this is not an attendance grade. Consult the SJSU policy below.

ii. **group activities** The course provides the student with the opportunity to explore ideas in our texts in discussion groups on a regular basis. I hand out a separate sheet of guidelines for discussions and presentations. I will also provide a grading rubric for the presentations on a separate sheet. You can develop material for the first or second paper as part of what you do in a group, they need not be entirely separate. I am hoping for some stimulating presentations. Be creative, many students have done so in the past. This activity is worth 50 points.

NOTE that [University policy F69-24](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

d. **Grade Breakdown:**

homework	50
papers ttl	100
midterms 2	100 @50 points each
participation	25
group work	50
final	<u>125</u>
	450 Total

Grading is done on a strict 10% scale on all assignments; no curve is applied. All final grades are final, no exceptions except in the event the professor omitted some points or entered them wrong and that affected the final grade.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.” In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well. This can be verbally cleared with me and the class with written permission, if applicable.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Please review this at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. “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.”

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.”

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 Accessible Education Center to establish a record of their disability.

Special accommodations for exams require ample notice to the testing office and must be submitted to the instructor well in advance of the exam date.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

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

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The Learning Assistance Resource Center is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is staffed by professional [instructors](#) and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the [seven SJSU colleges](#). Our 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.

AMS/Hum. 169-01 Spring '14 Course Schedule

The following is subject to change with fair notice.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/22	Introduction; For next week: “What is your American Dream”? Answers and discussion. Introduction to Cullen as soon as you can. I’d like to show in the following week or so Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.
2	1/27, 1/29	Read for this week the John Winthrop speech, “Modell of Christian Charity” (see my links) and consult the Patricia Williams excerpts at Reserves in MLK. Read Chapter 1 in Cullen (AD).
3	2/3, 2/5	Begin the Franklin (CAA), concentrate on pgs. 71-(roughly) 158. Also take a look at the Introduction to CAA. Read Chapter 2 in Cullen (AD). 2/4 is the last day to drop; it is your responsibility to drop.
4	2/10, 2/12	Continue with Jefferson; his writings are available on my home web page as a link. Look up a copy of the Declaration of Independence, preferably one that has the original and edited versions.) Also read Introduction, Chapters One and Two of <i>The Working Poor</i> . 2/11 is the last day to add
5	2/17, 2/19	Continue and group work this week or next. (This group reviews for the midterm by reviewing weeks 1-4 readings and lecture.)
6	2/24, 2/26	<i>First midterm this week or beginning of next.</i> Begin the next section if possible.
7	3/3, 3/5	Slavery, the Civil War and Native Americans. Read in CAA the “Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass” and the Zitkala-Sa selection. In AD, Cullen, read Chapters 3 and 4. <i>First paper due.</i>
8	3/10, 3/12	Continue; read the Thoreau (link) “A Winter’s Walk” and “Life Without Principle” Selections here and over the next several weeks from Whitman, LOG.
9	3/17, 3/19	Continue and group work this week (This group will review the preceding weeks after the First Midterm.)
10	3/24, 3/26	<i>Spring Recess; 3/23-27</i>
11	3/31, 4/2	3/31 <i>Cesar Chavez Day no class</i> ; Review and <i>second midterm this week or beginning next.</i> Group work from here on out with some possible lecture from me; this includes <i>The Working Poor and Grapes of Wrath</i> and groups that may cover other material on the Great Depression or <i>The Great Gatsby</i> We will cover <i>Great Gatsby</i> first

12	4/7, 4/9	Continue groups; <i>The Great Gatsby</i>
13	4/14, 4/16	Continue groups <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> and Chapters Three, Four and Seven of <i>The Working Poor</i>
14	4/21, 4/23	Continue groups; <i>Grapes</i> cont'd and begin remainder of <i>Working Poor</i> .
15	4/28 4/30	Continue groups;
16	5/5, 5/7	Continue groups and begin review this week;
17	5/12	Last Day; <i>final paper due the last day of class or the day of the final.</i> Final Exam: Thursday 0715-0930 same room