

Literatures of the Pacific

ENGL 123C

Fall 2025 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 09/02/2025

Course Information

Perspectives

This section of ENGL 123C, Literatures of the Pacific, will focus on the island and Pacific Rim nations of Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam. We will explore a variety of perspectives – and literature which itself thematizes the complexity of perspectives. It will be a brief sampling from each nation, giving you a taste rather than a “mastery” of any one literature.

Course Description and Requisites

Examines the literatures of the Pacific Rim, including Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa, and the historical, cultural, and political contexts from which they emerge.

Satisfies SJSU Studies Area V: Cultures and Global Understanding.

Prerequisite(s): Completion of Core General Education and upper division standing are prerequisites to all SJSU studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended.

Letter Graded

Classroom Protocols

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 and laptops need to be put away if they are not being used directly for class work, coming to class late is unacceptable. 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 MLA format for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation. The professor will be happy to discuss issues related to writing and composition in office hours. Our 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.

Plagiarism includes:

1.2.1 knowingly or unknowingly incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, parts of sentences or paragraphs, or the specific substance of another's work without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one's own work; 1.2.2 representing another's artistic or scholarly works, such as computer programs, instrument printouts, inventions, musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculptures, novels, short stories, poems, screen plays, or television scripts, as one's own. (SJSU Academic Senate Policy "F15-7" page 5)

In this class we will only use AI as directed by the instructor. If you use anything generated by an AI in the creation of your paper (including building on the in-class tasks in which we will engage AI), you will need to cite that in your paper. All formal assignments submitted in this class via Canvas will be run through the Turnitin plagiarism and AI detection tool. If you misrepresent anything as your own work without clearly placing borrowed language in quotation marks or referencing from whom or what an idea or fact has come, that is considered plagiarism, and you will A) Fail the assignment and B) the instructor will be forced to make a report to the Office of Student Conduct. Please note that Turnitin sometimes produces false positives when it believes it has detected AI. One way of protecting yourself from a misrepresentation of your work as AI is to document the steps you took in finding the research and drafting their argument – steps which we will work on in the course of the class.

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](#).

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 Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area V Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area V course, students should be able to:

1. Analyze historical, social, and/or cultural significance of creative works of human expression (examples include, but are not limited to, written works, images, media, music, dance, technologies, designs), from at least one cultural tradition outside the United States;
2. Examine how creative works of human expression [as defined in #1] outside the United States have influenced the United States' cultures;
3. Explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external influences;
4. Appraise how the study of creative works of human expression from outside the United States shapes one's own understanding of cultural experiences and practices.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 3000 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

Seven required texts to purchase or borrow plus additional texts to read on Canvas:

Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters* (Penguin, 1991)

- ISBN-10: 014014904X,
- ISBN-13 : 978-0140149043

Duong Thu Huong, *Paradise of the Blind* (Harper Collins 1988/1993)

- ISBN-10 : 0060505591
- ISBN-13 : 978-0060505592

Han Kang, *Human Acts* (Hogarth 2014/English Trans 2016)

- ISBN-10 : 110190674X
- ISBN-13 : 978-1101906743

Yasunari Kawabata, *Palm of the Hand Stories* (North Point Press Trans 1988/2006)

- ISBN-10 : 0374530491
- ISBN-13 : 978-0374530495

Andrew Lam, *Stories From The Edge of The Sea* (Red Hen Press, 2025)

- ISBN-10 : 1636282423
- ISBN-13 : 978-1636282428

Haruki Marukami, *Men Without Women* (Vintage, 2014/2017)

- ISBN-10 : 1101974524
- ISBN-13 : 978-1101974520
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Shigeru Mizuki, *Onward Towards Our Noble Deaths* (Drawn and Quarterly, 2011 Trans.)

- ISBN-10 : 1770466304
- ISBN-13 : 978-1770466302

Four blue or "green books." You can also use small packs of clean, stapled paper for our in-class exams.

Course Requirements and Assignments

For how individual assignments will be graded, see the rubrics for each major assignment in Canvas.

Research Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography. (PLO 1-5, CLO 1,3,4)	1-page proposal (about 350 words) plus an annotated bibliography of 3 sources	10%
Research Paper PLO1-5, CLO 1,3,4	8-12 page analysis w/ research 2,800-4,200 words	30%
Midterm (PLO 1,2,3,5, CLO 1,3,4)	Three short answer and one comparative essay-1 hr, 15 min	20%
Final Exam (PLO 1,2,3,5, CLO 1,3,4)	Five short answer & one comparative essay—2 hours	30%

Participation various (PLO and CLO)	Bring present and engaging in class discussions, reading quizzes, at least 7 discussion posts, etc. With the exception of in-class reading quizzes, these are generally "check off" assignments in that if you do all that is required, you get 100% credit. Thus these are lower stakes than the other major assignments and allow you space to try out ideas before you work them into lengthier assignments.	10%
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✓ Grading Information

Criteria

In written assignments for English 123C, 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 that 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.

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

Fall 2025 Course Reading and Viewing 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. Shared class notes can be found here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V0zS_Dtexc_CM4c_3OvwCQ10zpnoOwcJMdxPqDnMELY/edit?usp=sharing

Week	Readings & Assignments
1: August 21 Introduction	Introduction to course and brief intro to the literature of Japan
1: August 26 Rashomon	Have read Ryunosuke Akutagawa's "The Grove" and "Rashomon" (in Canvas). We will watch part of <i>Rashomon</i> on Kanopy during class (1 hr 28 min running time)
1: August 28	<i>Rashomon</i> continued Posts on Canvas discussion due Friday (#1).

2: September 2 <i>3 ways of looking at umbrellas</i>	Selection from the <i>Palm-of-the-Hand Stories</i> by Kawabata, Yasunari: <i>Read "Rainy Station," "Umbrella," and The Silver Fifty-Sen Pieces"</i>
2: September 4 The artist's perspective	Selection <i>Palm-of-the-Hand Stories</i> by Kawabata, Yasunari: "A Sunny Place" (1923), "The Incident of the Dead Face" (1925) "Glass" (1925), "Yuriko" (1927), and "The Man Who Did Not Smile" (1929).
3: September 9 Love and Duty	Selection <i>Palm-of-the-Hand Stories</i> by Kawabata: "A Child's Viewpoint" (1926), "The Sparrow's Matchmaking" (1926), "One Person's Happiness" (1926), "The Blind Man and the Girl" (1928), "The Younger Sister's Clothes" (1932), and "Immortality" (1963). Posts on Canvas discussion due Wednesday (#2).
3: September 11 Murakami and realism	Have read Haruki Murakami, "Drive My Car"
4: September 16	Add/Drop Deadline
Murakami and the supernatural	Have read Haruki Murakami, "Kino" Posts on Canvas discussion due Wednesday (#3).
4: September 18 Manga vision of WWII	Add/Drop Deadline Have read the first half of Shigeru Mizuki's <i>Onward Towards our Noble Deaths</i> (to "HQ's Near Destruction").
5: September 23 A pacifist Perspective on war	Have completed <i>Onward Towards Our Noble Deaths</i> Posts on Canvas discussion due Wednesday (#4).

5: September 5 A sample from Korean literature's most famous current author	Have read Han Kang's <i>Human Acts</i> (to page 66/first two chapters)
6: September 30 Novel laureate's take on 1980 Gwangju massacre	Have read Han Kang's <i>Human Acts</i> (to page 134/ chapters three and four)
6: October 2	Have completed Han Kang's <i>Human Acts</i> (to page 212). Posts on Canvas discussion due Friday (#5).
7: October 7 Korean cinema	Watch film, <i>Parasite</i> , in class.
7: October 9 What makes a film the "best in the last 25 years?"	Complete watching the film, <i>Parasite</i> , in class. Posts on Canvas discussion due Friday (#6).
8: October 14	Additional time to discuss Korean texts, prep for midterm. Proposals for final research paper due (PLO1-5, CLO 1,3,4)
8: October 16	Midterm (PLO 1,2,3,5, CLO 1,3,4)
9: October 21	Have read excerpts from Carlos Bulosan, <i>America is in the Heart</i> .

9: October 23	Have read Jessica Hagedorn's <i>Dogeaters</i> (to page 66).
10: October 28	Have read Jessica Hagedorn's <i>Dogeaters</i> (to page 125).
10: October 30	Have read Jessica Hagedorn's <i>Dogeaters</i> (to page 187).
11: November 4	Have completed Jessica Hagedorn's <i>Dogeaters</i> (to page 251). Posts on Canvas discussion due Wednesday (#7).
11: November 6 Vietnamese literature and diaspora	Selection of short texts by Vietnamese authors.
12: November 11 Veteran's Day: Campus Closed	No Class
12: November 13 A View from the north	Have read Duong Thu Huong's <i>Paradise of the Blind</i> (to page 68/through chapter four).
13: November 18 Family and obligation	Have read Duong Thu Huong's <i>Paradise of the Blind</i> (to page 131/through chapter seven).

<p>13: November 20</p> <p>How is this a coming of age novel?</p>	<p>Have read Duong Thu Huong's <i>Paradise of the Blind</i> (to page 197/through chapter ten).</p>
<p>14: November 25</p> <p>What kind of resolution is given?</p>	<p>Have completed Duong Thu Huong's <i>Paradise of the Blind</i> to page 258)</p> <p>Posts on Canvas discussion due no later than Wednesday (#8).</p>
<p>14: November 27</p>	<p>Happy Thanksgiving! Campus closed.</p>
<p>15: December 2</p> <p>A view from the south</p>	<p>Have read a selection of stories by Andrew Lam (TBA).</p> <p>Research Paper due (PLO1-5, CLO 1,3,4) due by 11:59 December 3</p>
<p>15: December 4</p> <p>Exile and return</p>	<p>Have read a selection of stories by Andrew Lam (TBA).</p> <p>Review for Final.</p>
<p>Final Exam:</p> <p>December 11 1-3 PM</p>	<p>Final Exam (PLO 1,2,3,5, CLO 1,3,4); Bring "blue" or "green books."</p>