

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature ENGL 21: Mystery and Detective Fiction, Section 01, Spring 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Colton Saylor
Office Location:	NA
Telephone:	NA
Email:	colton.saylor@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00AM-11:00AM (or by appointment if necessary)
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday, 3:00PM-4:15PM
Classroom:	Zoom
Prerequisites:	It is recommended that students complete A2 (such as English 1A) before taking this course.
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	C2 (Letters)

Course Learning Management and one.SJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through one.SJSU to learn of any updates.

Online Format

Our course will be meeting synchronously during our assigned course meeting time unless otherwise noted by myself. You can access our Zoom sessions via the course Canvas page. On certain days, class will break out early so that you can complete an online assignment. These days are marked on the course schedule at the end of this document. Please contact me immediately if you have any concerns about connecting to Zoom.

ENGL 21 Course Description

This course will investigate the unique place that detective fiction and the crime novel holds in American culture. This course's main interest is in how detective fiction creates a critical space in which society can work through issues of justice and violence. In tracking

the evolution of the detective genre from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, we will discuss how the attraction of detection in fiction has led us to seek out these same narratives in the crimes that take place in reality. At the same time, we will observe how contemporary detective narratives have complicated notions of justice and truth.

ENGL 21 Learning Outcomes

For The Department of English and Comparative Literature, students will demonstrate the ability 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.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, context, and nature of the subject.
4. Articulate relations among culture, history, and texts.

For General Education Area C2 (Letters), Students shall be able to:

1. Recognize how significant works illuminate enduring human concerns.
2. Respond to such works by writing both research-based critical analyses and personal responses.
3. Write clearly and effectively.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO): Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Examine significant works of the human intellect and imagination
2. Understand the historical and cultural contexts in which such texts were created
3. Recognize the accomplishments and issues related to women and diverse cultures reflected in such texts

ENGL 21 Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, you are expected to 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.

All assignments due to Canvas unless otherwise instructed.

Assignment Word Count and Assignment GELO

Assignment	Word Count	Learning Goals	Final Grade %
Essay # 1 (Close Reading)*	500-750	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3	20
Essay # 2 (Final Paper)*	1,250-1,500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	25
Diagnostic	500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>Witness for the Prosecution</i> Activity	250	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>ARiH</i> Character Arc Activity	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>IALP</i> Activity	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>ICB</i> Conclusion Activity	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
Group Detective Profile Presentation	-	GE 1, 2; E 1, 2, 3, 4	10
Podcast Response	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>GG</i> Character Comparison	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
<i>Chan is Missing</i> Response	250-500	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	2.5
Final Exam	-	GE 1, 2, 3; E 1, 2, 3, 4	25%

* - assignment requires rough draft and final draft

Bolded – letter-grade assignments

Required Texts

Available for Purchase through Canvas page

A Rage in Harlem, Chester Himes, **ISBN-10:** 9780679720409; **ISBN-13:** 978-0679720409

In A Lonely Place, Dorothy B. Hughes **ISBN-10:** 1681371472; **ISBN-13:** 978-1681371474

In Cold Blood, Truman Capote, **ISBN-10:** 9780679745587; **ISBN-13:** 978-0679745587

Gone Girl, Gillian Flynn, **ISBN-10:** 0307588378; **ISBN-13:** 978-0307588371

Other required readings/films can be found either linked in the syllabus or as PDFs in

in Canvas.

Grading Policy

Late papers (including drafts) will be docked half a letter grade each day they are late. Students must receive a C- or higher to pass the course

Extension Policy

I will grant extensions (no questions asked) for the following assignments:

Essay # 1 (Close Reading)

Essay # 2 (Final Paper)

All other assignments must be submitted by the times listed on this syllabus and Canvas.

Peer Review Workshops: The revision process is central to this class, so you will be responsible for writing a rough draft for each essay. While only the final draft will be graded, not completing a rough draft and participating in peer review workshops will result in a deduction of one letter grade to the paper's final grade.

About Grades

Requirements for particular assignments will vary, but in all cases essay grades will reflect the paper's effectiveness, which is broken down into three major areas: argument (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and analysis.

An "A" range essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.

A "B" range essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.

A "C" range essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.

A "D" range essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.

An "F" essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

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

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

Classroom Protocol

You need to participate, be on time, and be courteous to your peers and to your teacher. When we are discussing the readings, you should either have a physical copy or a copy pulled up on a laptop or tablet. Your cell phone should remain in your pocket or bag unless you offer me a convincing argument as to why you need to have it out.

University Policies

University Policies: the link below contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.: <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>.

Note on Course Readings and Projects:

Sometimes projects and class discussions include material with a sensitive nature. In this course, students encounter materials that differ from and perhaps challenge their understanding of reality. Students are encouraged to discuss issues that may arise from materials with their instructor.

ENGL 21, Section 01, Mystery and Detective Fiction, Spring 2022

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice: you are responsible for any changes made in class or through email.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/26	Zoom Session: Introduction On Canvas: Detective Diagnostic due 1/28, 11:59PM
2	1/31	Read: Edgar Allan Poe, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” Zoom Session: Discuss Reading; Introduce ‘Whodunit’
2	2/2	Read: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, “The Adventure of the Dancing Men” Zoom Session: Discuss Reading; Observation/Inference

3	2/7	Watch Before Class: Billy Wilder Witness for the Prosecution Zoom Session: discuss <i>Witness for the Prosecution</i> On Canvas: Complete <i>Witness for the Prosecution</i> Activity (Due 2/9, 11:59PM)
3	2/9	Read: Raymond Chandler, The Simple Art of Murder Zoom Session: Discuss Readings; Introduce Noir
4	2/14	Read: Chester Himes, <i>A Rage in Harlem</i> , pp. 1-50 Zoom Session: Introduce Himes
4	2/16	Read: Chester Himes, <i>A Rage in Harlem</i> , pp. 51-100 Zoom Session: Discuss Reading; Assign Close Reading Essay
5	2/21	Read: Chester Himes, <i>A Rage in Harlem</i> , pp. 101-151 Zoom Session: Finish <i>ARiH</i> On Canvas: Complete <i>ARiH</i> Character Arc Activity (Due 2/23, 11:59PM)
5	2/23	Read: Dorothy B. Hughes, <i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 1-75 Zoom Session: Introduce Hughes
6	2/28	Read: Dorothy B. Hughes, <i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 76-150 Zoom Session: Discuss Reading
6	3/2	Read: Dorothy B. Hughes, <i>In A Lonely Place</i> , pp. 151-225 Zoom Session: Finish Discussing <i>IALP</i> On Canvas: Complete <i>IALP</i> Activity (Due 3/4, 11:59PM)
7	3/7	Zoom Session: Extra Credit Mystery #1
7	3/9	Zoom Session: Peer Review Workshop # 1 On Canvas: Close Reading Paper Final Draft Due 3/13 11:59PM
8	3/14	Read: Joan Didion, “Some Dreamers of the Golden Dream” Zoom Session: Introduce True Crime
8	3/16	Read: Truman Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> , pp. 1-85 Zoom Session: Introduce Capote
9	3/21	Read: Truman Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> , pp. 86-256 Zoom Session: Discuss Reading
9	3/23	Read: Truman Capote, <i>In Cold Blood</i> , pp. 257-343 Zoom Session: Finish <i>ICB</i> On Canvas: Complete <i>ICB</i> Conclusion Activity (Due 3/25, 11:59PM)
10	3/28	SPRING BREAK

10	3/30	SPRING BREAK
11	4/4	Zoom Session: Assign Group Detective Profiles
11	4/6	Zoom Session: Group Detective Profile Work Day
12	4/11	Zoom Session: Group Detective Profile Presentations
12	4/13	Zoom Session: Group Detective Profile Presentations
13	4/18	Listen to: Serial, Season 1, Episode 1 ; Dirty John, Episode 1 Read: Soraya Roberts, “True Crime and the Trash Balance” Zoom Session: Discuss Podcasts On Canvas: Podcast Response Due 4/20, 11:59PM
13	4/20	Read: Gillian Flynn, <i>Gone Girl</i> (pp. 1-108) Zoom Session: Introduce Flynn
14	4/25	Read: Gillian Flynn, <i>Gone Girl</i> (pp. 109-216) Zoom Session: Discuss Reading
14	4/27	Read: Gillian Flynn, <i>Gone Girl</i> (pp. 217-324) Zoom Session: Discuss Reading; Assign Final Paper On Canvas: Complete GG Character Comparison Activity (Due 4/29, 11:59PM)
15	5/2	Read: Gillian Flynn, <i>Gone Girl</i> (pp. 325-423) Zoom Session: Finish GG
15	5/4	Watch on Youtube Before Class: Chan is Missing Zoom Session: Discuss Film On Canvas: Complete Chan is Missing Response Due 5/6, 11:59PM
16	5/9	Zoom Session: JSTOR Research Exercise
16	5/11	Zoom Session: Extra Credit Mystery # 2
17	5/16	Zoom Session: Peer Review Workshop # 2 On Canvas: Final Paper Final Draft Due 5/20, 11:59PM
Final Exam	5/24	Canvas: Final Exam, Due 2:30PM