

# Senior Seminar: Literary South Jersey

“The past is never dead. It’s not even past.” William Faulkner

Litt-4610-01

MW 3:35 p.m.–5:25 p.m. – F-215

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Office Hours: MW 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. and by appointment. I am on campus nearly every day. I’m also available to Zoom when not teaching or off campus and am willing to Zoom after dinner hours—just shoot me an email.

This is a W2 Writing-Across-The-Curriculum-Course. We will be writing.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

There is only one required text for this course. You will receive it at the first class meeting. Other texts will be provided as necessary.

Please pay special attention to *this syllabus* and *the course blog*. It is in these documents that you will find information that you need. We are *not* on Blackboard.

<https://blogs.stockton.edu/southjerseyseminar/>

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

*HarperCollins College Outline: English Grammar*, by David Daniels and Barbara Daniels. Available rather cheaply on Abebooks.com and other used book sites.

*Artful Sentences: Syntax as Style*, by Virginia Tufte. A smart, writer’s book. Available on Abebooks, Amazon, and other book sites.

An excellent, comprehensive dictionary of the English Language (paper or digital). You should get in the habit of consulting your dictionary, less for spelling (although that’s important) and more for precise meanings and grammatical uses of words.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

I expect you to show up for class. If you cannot attend, you should have a good reason. I will be taking attendance. This class depends on classroom discussion and your thoughtful contributions. If you are not in class, you are not learning or helping others learn. This course will move in several interrelated directions. I will be asking for your smartest, most engaged work. I expect you to be active partners, helping to direct the major class projects described below. Three absences, while not recommended, will be permitted.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

This is a course about editing, writing, and content creation. I have many good ideas in mind for our work this semester, but I expect—in fact, I depend upon—your improving my ideas and bringing your own great thinking to our work.

## **CLASS PROJECT**

Starting in summer 2024, Stockton's Bjork Library will be closed for renovation for two and a half years. Library services and other centers housed in E-wing will be distributed across campus during the project. In recognition of this dramatic reworking of our campus, we will create a retrospective volume describing the Stockton library past, present, and future. We will be creating a history, albeit an unusual history, of the "heart of our campus."<sup>1</sup>

In order to do this we will need to improve our editing skills; learn book design and layout skills; complete research on the library's history; write essays on representative South Jersey works; write brief, smart descriptions of representative special collections; interview former and current library staff, students, faculty, etc.; and more, as we come up with coherent ideas.

## **OUR FOCUSES FOR THIS SEMINAR**

- South Jersey Literature
- Editing / with an appropriate dose of grammar
- Book Writing
- Layout and Design
- The Stockton Library

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<sup>1</sup> Both former President Harvey Kesselman and former Provost Leamor Kahanov referred to the Stockton Library as "the heart" of Stockton University. President Kesselman went so far as to remark, "Why do you think it was placed at the center of the campus?"

## **Titles published by the South Jersey Culture & History Center**

(available in the library and from Kinsella)

[https://stockton.edu/sjchc/publications/documents/Fall\\_Catalog\\_2023.pdf](https://stockton.edu/sjchc/publications/documents/Fall_Catalog_2023.pdf)

## **Special Collections**

<https://library.stockton.edu/aboutspecialcollections>

## **People You Need to Know**

- Heather Perez, Curator of the Bjork Library Special Collections & Archives
- Louise Tillstrom, Principal Library Assistant, Special Collections
- Pat Thatcher, Associate Provost for the Library and Learning Commons, Richard E. Bjork Library
- Ian Marshall, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities
- Robert Gregg, Dean of the William T. Daly School of General Studies

## **Special Collections and Archives**

Most of you have spent time researching in Stockton's Special Collections and Archives on the lower level (don't say basement) of the library. Many of us (perhaps all) will be spending time there completing further research. If you have somehow made it to this stage in your academic career without visiting Special Collections, please let me know. We can arrange brief introductions.

## **The Schedule**

### **WEEK 1**

January 17.

- Editing. A sample
- Bookmaking. Creating a pamphlet (and a homework assignment)
- Shilo Previti's book as exemplar
- Initial ideas for book content:
  - Students will be given SJCHC titles to read and describe in essays. [Discuss: 1) One student per book or should we have two students assigned to one title, each writing an essay? Only one will make it in our volume. 2) How long? 600 words, which is two double space pages? 3) What sort of essays?]
  - Students will be assigned to describe one Special Collection. [Discuss: 1) team work on this or individual efforts? 2) Length?]
  - Some students will be assigned to research extant plans for the original library construction, c. 1973; plans for the first renovation in 1995; and plans for the current renovation.

- Interviews:
  - Pat Thatcher
  - Heather Perez
  - Charla Comer
  - Bill Bearden
  - Past students
  - Current students
  - Deans
  - Community members?
  - Former *Stockpot* and *Crying Voice* authors.
  - Others?
  - [Discuss: Does everyone do an interview?]
- Creative pieces: haunted stairwell; haunted elevator; poetry; AI piece
- Other ideas?
- Overarching thread. Some ideas should hold our work together. What are we trying to preserve? To say? What is our grand windup?

## WEEK 2

January 22.

- Short Grammar introduction. Review Handout 1 on course blog.
- Are you reading your punctuation pamphlet? Comments or questions?
- Ideas for our library book. What are our thoughts so far (on the board). We will need a working title.
- Discussion and selection of South Jersey titles.
- Quick editing practice.

January 24.

- Brief work on Handout 2.
- Examples of Punctuation pamphlet.
- Discussion of semicolons and colons.
- Library ideas.
- Further discussion of South Jersey titles. Agree upon due date for first readings.
- Quick editing practice.

## WEEK 3

January 29.

- “Crossing the Bar”
- Brief work on Handout 3: how to find subjects and direct objects

- Comma work
- Special Collections projects
- Editing Practice
- Introduction to Handout 4 (to be done for next time)

January 31.

- Brief work on Handout 4
- Discussion of Special Collections projects
- More comma work
- Editing Practice
- Introduction to Handout 5 (to be done for next time)

**February 1** – Thursday. Deadline to file spring 2024 graduation application without financial penalty.

#### WEEK 4

February 5.

- Brief work on Handout 5
- Discussions of readings begin
- Discussion of Interviews for Library book
- Editing practice
- Discussion of Library Book.

February 7.

- Field trip. Meet in our classroom and prepare for adventure.
- Alumni outreach: Develop compelling “call to action” for us to send out using Qualtrics and social media.
- Initial formal discussion of South Jersey title reading.

#### WEEK 5

February 12.

- Assignment of interviews.
- More discussion of South Jersey reading.

February 14.

- NO CLASS. Instead, I encourage you to attend the Visiting Writer's Series: faculty/alum reading with Emily August, Emily Van Duyne, Liz Myers, and Moneeba Khan at 3:30pm in CCMR5. Zoom option available.
- You should be reaching out to your interviewees.

## WEEK 6

February 19.

- First draft of 600-word essay on your South Jersey reading piece.
- Workshopping of 600-word South Jersey essays.

February 21.

- Workshopping of 600-word South Jersey essays.

## WEEK 7

February 26.

- Dayna DeFiore, M.A., GCDF, Assistant Director, Career Education and Development Stockton University, discussing resume writing, career fair prep/networking and job searching along with, perhaps, writing cover letters.
- Second draft of 600-word essay on your South Jersey reading piece.

February 28.

- Update on contact with interviewees.
- Formal selection of Special Collections / Archives topic.

## WEEK 8

March 4.

- Discussion of Book structure.

March 6.

- Work on Book ideas.

March 10, Sunday, Lines on the Pines in the Stockton University Campus Center.

## WEEK 9

March 18.

- No Class. Kinsella will be out of State. Continue to work on book projects.

March 20.

- Catching up.

## **WEEK 10**

March 25.

- First draft of 600-word essay on your Special Collections/Archives.

**March 26** — Tuesday

Preceptorial advising day; no classes

March 27.

- Workshopping of 600-word Special Collections/Archive essays.

## **WEEK 11**

April 1.

- Small group meetings to discuss work so far.

April 3.

- Preceptorial Advising Day; No classes

## **WEEK 12**

April 8.

- Draft of interview work.

April 10.

- Pulling together our work.

## **WEEK 13**

April 15.

- Pulling together our work.

April 17.

- Pulling together our work.

## **WEEK 14**

April 22.

- Preparing for program introduction to our work.

April 24.

- Introduction of our work to the Literature Program.

**April 27-May 3**—Saturday-Friday

Finals week

### **Evaluation**

Rubrics will be provided for each project. The details of your evaluation should be clear to you. If they are not, please contact me and I will explain further.

- South Jersey Literature Essay Project 25%
- Special Collections and Archives Essay Project 25%
- Library Interview projects (an approved creative writing piece may be substituted) 25%
- Attendance and class participation 25%
- Extra Credit: additional writing opportunities; editing opportunities; design and layout opportunities.

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### **Expectations and Policies**

Expectations for this course are high. All writing should be error-free. You are expected to proofread for typographical, spelling, mechanical, and grammatical errors. Proofread and revise vigorously.

You will note that not every day on the syllabus calendar has an assigned lesson. We will meet each day in our classroom to share progress, discuss issues, and review pertinent materials. Because of this, attendance is imperative. More than 3 absences and your grade will drop one mark; more than 5 and it will drop two marks; more than 6 and you will not



pass. Your grades will be determined on the basis of your writing, attendance, and participation. If you fail to attend class or participate actively, you will not pass with a “C” or better.

### **Academic Honesty**

The Literature program expects students to maintain the highest standard of academic honesty. Please review Stockton’s Academic Honesty Policy, which can be found in the Student Handbook. You should also make yourself familiar with the penalties for violations of the policy and your rights as a student.

### **Email**

Email is an excellent way to contact me. Remember to provide a coherent subject line. Also, remember to include your name in the text of the email.

### **A Final Word of Encouragement & Caution**

Work hard and keep on top of your projects. In the past, a percentage of students who have not worked up to expectations have not received the requisite grade of “C.” They have had to take the seminar again. If you need help, ask for it.