Your assignment for this semester is to write a short essay (750 to 1000 words, or three to four pages typed and double-spaced) describing your reaction or response to the following experiences. The idea is to describe elements of that experience as clearly as possible, putting them in the context of materials we have covered this semester, and then to discuss your personal reaction to those elements; your reaction will probably serve as your thesis, and should certainly serve as the central focus of the essay. Be sure to take notes during and after your visit to the exhibit or collection, including descriptions of works that interest you as well as discussions of your reaction to them. Record the titles of the works and the names of the artists you are describing, as well as the date and place you encountered them. Revise for content and to strengthen your thesis and transitions; proofread thoroughly, even if you use a spell-checker first; and follow the MLA or APA style in quoting from and citing any printed or web sources you use. (You can find guidelines for both APA and MLA style in your Everyday Writer or online at Purdue’s OWL—Online Writing Lab—at owl.english.purdue.edu.)

Topic: Describe and discuss two prints from the “Goya: Disasters of War” exhibition we attended (last day on campus: November 6th), as well as two Japanese woodblock prints from the SJSU Library’s Special Collections (access by prior arrangement only). These two collections of prints differ in almost every way – style, use of color, printmaking technology, subject matter, and so on – except two: first, their relatively inexpensive medium, and, second, their grouping (often but not always) in a series of one kind or another. Having described the four prints, and having discussed your appreciation, evaluation or interpretation of them, be sure to conclude with some thoughts on this art as a salable commodity in nineteenth-century Europe and Asia.