

**San José State University
Communication Studies Department
Comm 100W, Section 9: Writing for Influence**

Instructor:	Mary Anne Sunseri
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 AM to 8:45 AM
Classroom:	HGH 221
Prerequisites:	A grade of “C” or better in English IB, passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST), upper division standing, and completion of Core GE.
GE/SJSU Studies Category	Z

Catalog Description

Current conventions and forms of exposition, argument and persuasion. Writing for the general and specialized audience from the thesis statement approach.

Course Description

It is not uncommon that when we set out to improve our writing skills our aim is to write clear, concise, and sincere prose. Our goal, most of the time, is to convey our ideas without those ideas becoming muddled or falling prey to manipulation. We tend to believe that the best prose for the job leaves no room for misinterpretation and takes the most direct route to get to the point.

This course offers a different perspective on writing. It takes as its premise the idea that the practice of writing is always an act of persuasion and that often we mistake a writer’s persuasiveness for “clarity” or “sincerity.” The objective of COMM 100W is to give you the opportunity to practice persuasive writing techniques so that you can make informed decisions about all aspects of your writing from grammatical rules and citations to composition of a thesis statement.

The assignments and exercises specific to COMM 100W are designed to show you how the stylistic conventions of your audience influence your choices and how your language and compositional choices influence your message. This course will help even confident writers tailor their writing style for different audiences and write to influence.

Canvas Class Website

Copies of the course syllabus, lecture material, and major assignments may be found on the [class Canvas site](#) at <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>. The syllabus and other materials will also be posted to [my faculty webpage](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/mary.sunseri/>.

You are responsible for regularly checking class materials and messages sent via Canvas. The announcement page will be used for updates and other important alerts about the class. For [Canvas student resources and tutorials](#), go to http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/student_resources/index.html.

Succeeding in this Class

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities.

Because this is a three unit class, you can expect to spend nine hours per week for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses.

Course Learning Objectives for 100W

CLO 1 Refine the competencies established in Written Communication 1A and 1B;

CLO 2 Express (explain, analyze, develop and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;

CLO 3 Organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences, including appropriate editorial standards for citing primary and secondary sources.

Additional Course Learning Objectives for COMM 100W

CLO 4 Develop appreciation for the persuasive capacity of all elements of written communication including grammar, composition, and use of citations;

CLO 5 Develop grammar, composition, research, and other general writing skills that enable you to make strategic choices in your use of language.

Required Course Materials

1) Trimble, John R. *Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing*. New York, NY: Pearson, 2011. Third Edition.

2) Lanham, Richard A. *Revising Prose*. New York, NY: Pearson, 2007. Fifth Edition. Chapters. 1-4.

While you could purchase each physical book separately, I strongly recommend purchasing the customized course reader, which includes both textbooks, directly from the [VitalSource Store Online](#) at <http://store.vitalsource.com/show/9781256487562> for \$38.72.: Title: Comm 100W VitalSource eBook; Publisher: Pearson; ISBN: 9781256487562.

You will need to [establish a free account with VitalSource](#) at the following website <http://www.vitalsource.com/online/> and download the VitalSource bookshelf software. Once you

have downloaded the software, you will have three options for accessing your ebook: you can download it to your desktop, read it online, or read it on your iPhone or iPod Touch.

If you need help with the software, direct your questions to [VitalSource tech support](http://support.vitalsource.com/) at the following website: <http://support.vitalsource.com/>.

3) A collection of essays (see list below). Electronic copies of all the essays are available on our [Canvas course site](https://sjsu.instructure.com/) at <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>. If you have any problems locating, opening, or reading these files, let me know as soon as possible.

4) A lined composition notebook (standard 8 ½ x 11 pages will do nicely) that you can dedicate exclusively to in-class writing exercises. You will turn in this notebook several times throughout the course of the semester. Please have a notebook by our second class at the latest and bring it with you to all class meetings.

Required readings in alphabetical order

Bayh, Evan. "Why I Am Leaving the Senate." Open letter. February 22, 2010.

Baldwin, James. "If Black English Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?" *The Real Ebonics Debate: Power, Language, and the Education of African American Children*. Ed. Theresa Perry, Theresa and Lisa Delpit. Boston: Beacon Press, 1998. pp. 67–70.

Brown, Tessa. "In Reference to Your Recent Communications." *Harper's Magazine* May 2005: 142–49.

Borges, Jorge Luis. *The Book of Imaginary Beings*. New York, NY: Viking Adult, 2005.
[Selections]

Fish, Stanley. "The Writing Lesson." *New York Times* 4 May 2006.

Kirsch, Sharon J. "'Suppose a Grammar Uses Invention': Gertrude Stein's Theory of Rhetorical Grammar." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 38.3 (2008): 283–310.

Lanham, Richard. "Introduction: The Domain of Style." *Analyzing Prose*. New York, NY: Continuum, 2003. pp. 1–10.

Stein, Gertrude. "Sentences and Paragraphs." *How to Write*. New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1975. pp. 25–35.

Trinh T. Minh-ha. "Vertically Imposed Language: on Clarity, Craftsmanship, and She Who Steals Language." *Women, Native, Other*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989. pp. 15–17.

Wallace, David Foster. "Tense Present: Democracy, English, and the Wars over Usage." *Harper's Magazine* April 2001: 40–58.

Additional Readings and Resources

A collection of popular press articles on the State of California's use of capital punishment and on the 2005 execution of an Australian citizen in Singapore. The first file is titled "California Execution Debate," the second is titled "Nguyen Execution," and the third is titled "Anti and Pro Death Penalty."

[Paul Brian's Common Errors in English Usage: http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html](http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/index.html)

[Jack Lynch's Guide to Grammar and Style: http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/](http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/)

[The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)

[SJSU Library Guide for COMM 100W: http://libguides.sjsu.edu/COMM100W](http://libguides.sjsu.edu/COMM100W)

Student Resources

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. In addition, computers are available in the Martin Luther King Library. The Communication Center, located in Hugh Gillis Hall 229, also has a few computers available for student use. 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.

Communication Center

The Communication Center is located in Hugh Gillis Hall 229 and is open Monday through Thursday 10:30AM to 4:30PM, from February 4th to May 9th. The Center provides support for all students interested in developing their personal and professional communication skills, and offers specialized support for those enrolled in Communication Studies courses. Services include in-person workshops and self-paced online modules via Canvas. Upper-division Communication Studies students staff the Center and are trained in coaching students on a variety of topics related to our department courses. Enrollment in COMM 80 provides support for the Center. More information can be found through the [center's website](http://commcenter.sjsu.edu/) at <http://commcenter.sjsu.edu/>.

Writing consultants offer writing tutoring through the SJSU COMM Center, individual appointments, and class visits. Consultants offer in-person and online tutoring seven days a week! For more information about the individual writing consultants, their availability, and to schedule an appointment, please visit their [blog](http://sjsuwritingconsultants.blogspot.com/) at <http://sjsuwritingconsultants.blogspot.com/>.

Academic Counseling Center for Excellence in the Social Sciences (ACCESS)

Office location: Clark Hall Room 240, Telephone: 924-5363, Email: socsci-access@sjsu.edu

Dr. Hien Do, Faculty Director, Email: Hien.Do@sjsu.edu, Telephone: 924-5461

Valerie Chapman, Academic Advisor, Email: Valerie.Chapman@sjsu.edu, Telephone: 924-5364

All COSS students and interested students are invited to stop by the Center for general education advising, help with changing majors, academic policy related questions, meeting with peer

advisors, and/or attending various regularly scheduled presentations and workshops. Call or email for an appointment, or just stop by.

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 in Clark Hall 126 is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. The 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. More information is available at the [SJSU Writing Center's Web site](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter.

Library Liaison

The Communication Studies Department encourages vigorous and ethical research as part of information literacy for all of its students. For assistance in the library go to the King Library Reference Desk (2nd floor; 408-808-2100) and/or utilize the [Communication Research Guide](http://libguides.sjsu.edu/communication) available at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/communication>. For major research consultations contact Crystal Goldman at Crystal.Goldman@sjsu.edu.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information you feel you should share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case this 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 register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability.

Academic Integrity

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Plagiarism consists of the use of the work of others as if it were your own without properly acknowledging their contributions through the use of quotations (where appropriate) or citations in footnotes and endnotes. Ignorance of the rules and regulations regarding plagiarism and student conduct is not a defense against indiscretions. Be aware that I am required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development and I will uphold San José State University's policy on academic honesty. The policy on academic integrity can be found at the [Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development web site](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentaffairs/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentaffairs/>.

You should, therefore, submit your own, original work for this course. I will uphold San José State University's policy on academic honesty. Consequently, an instance of academic

misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, taking credit for others' work, submitting work for another course as work for this one, etc.) will likely result in a failing course grade.

Dropping and Adding

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, and similar topics found at the [Division of Student Affairs website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentaffairs/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentaffairs/>.

Assignments

Detailed instructions for all assignments can be found on our course website. The total word count for this course's assignments is no less than 8000 words.

Unit 1: Facts, Citations, Composition, and Vivid Language

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Word Count</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>CLOs</i>
Self-introduction or cover letter	500 words	25 points	CLOs 3 & 4
Entry for <i>Fictspedia</i>	250 words	35 points	CLOs 2 & 3
The Fact Paper	1000 words	75 points	CLOs 1 – 5

Unit 2: Writing with Voice, Adapting for Audience, and Advancing an Opinion

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Word Count</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>CLOs</i>
Letter to an editor	250 words	25 points	CLOs 3 & 5
The Meaning Of...	1500 words	75 points	CLOs 1 – 5

Unit 3: Putting All The Pieces Together and Revising Your Prose

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Word Count</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>CLOs</i>
Revising Prose	350 words	25 points	CLOs 2 & 5
Final Project	2500 words	100 points	CLOs 1 – 5
Final Presentation	N/A	25 points	CLO 2

Additional Assignments

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Word Count</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>CLOs</i>
In-class writing exercises/reading, worksheets	1500 words	75 points	CLOs 1 & 5
Peer Reviews	150 words	40 points	CLOs 1 & 5
Course Total	8000 words	500 points	CLOs 1 – 5

Grade Distribution

Your final grade is based on the following point scale:

A = 500-465 points	A- = 464–450 points	B+ = 449-435 points
B = 434-415 points	B- = 414-400 points	C+ = 399-385 points
C = 384-365 points	C- = 364-350 points	D+ = 349-335 points
D = 334-315 points	D- = 314-300 points	F = 299 and fewer points

Note: Please remember that in order to receive general education credit for this course, you must complete it with a grade of C or better.

Course Requirements

Formatting instructions

Unless instructed otherwise, all written work including rough drafts should be typed, double-spaced, printed on paper, with one-inch margins all around, in standard 12-point Times New Roman font, and *stapled*. Please do not include a title/cover page. Citations should be formatted in accordance with either MLA or APA guidelines.

Technology requirements

Several assignments in this class require you to use online technology environments such as discussion boards and wikis. It is expected that you learn how to navigate these environments effectively as part of completing the assignment. Technical difficulties, which are a fact of life in the modern world, are not an excuse for late or incomplete work. Be sure to leave yourself time to learn the technology so that you can successfully post your work. If you encounter technical difficulties that you cannot solve, please contact me and/or the [University Help Desk](http://www.sjsu.edu/helpdesk/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/helpdesk/>.

Again, leave yourself enough time to troubleshoot unexpected (and inevitable) technical problems before an assignment comes due.

Participation

I strongly encourage you to make a habit of attending class. Your ability to navigate the course materials and master the course concepts will be greatly compromised without the aid of our in-class discussions and activities. Past experience suggests that students who miss even three classes are disadvantaged on assignments. In the rare event that you are unable to attend class, it is your responsibility to catch up on course materials in a timely and responsible manner. It is always best to assume that you have, indeed, missed something important.

Late Work Policy

Late work will drop a letter grade (“A-“ becomes a “B –“) for each *day* it is late. If you wish to turn in work *early*, or should you need someone to submit it for you, please make arrangements with me no later than the class meeting before the due date listed on the syllabus.

Success in the Course

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 practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Instructor Material Protection

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.

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.

COMM 100W, Writing for Influence, Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice. For full citations, see the “required readings” list on page 3 and “recommended readings” on page 4.

Week	Date	Description	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Week 1	1/24/2013	Introduction and course overview		
Week 2	1/29/2013	Unit One: Facts, Citations, Composition, and Vivid Language	Trimble, John. Chapter 1: Thinking Well. pp. 2–11.	
	1/31/2013		Lanham, Richard. “Introduction: The Domain of Style.” Vocabulary Guide and Reading Notes.	<i>Self-introduction assignment due.</i>
Week 3	2/5/2013	The proposition of fact (overview of the Fact Paper assignment)	Fish, Stanley “The Writing Lesson”	
	2/7/2013	The grammar of facts	Borges, Jorge Luis. <i>The Book of Imaginary Beings</i> . “California Execution Debate” and “Nguyen Execution”	
Week 4	2/12/2013	Citations	Brown, Tessa. “In Reference to Your Recent Communications” Trimble, John. Chapter 14: Quoting, pp. 147–162.	In-class exercise: Adventures in Citationland. <i>Fictspedia assignment due.</i>
	2/14/2013	Composition	Trimble, John. “Chapter 4: Middles.” pp. 29–43.	
Week 5	2/19/2013	Research	Trimble, John. Chapter 2: Getting Launched. pp. 12–22.	
	2/21/2013	Vivid Language	Trimble, John. “Chapter 3: Openers.” pp. 23–28 and “Chapter 5: Closers.” pp. 44–47.	
Week 6	2/26/2013	Peer Review of Fact Papers	Trimble, John. “Chapter 6: Diction.” pp. 48–57	Peer Review of Fact Papers
	2/28/2013	Peer Review of Fact Papers		Peer Review of Fact Papers
Week 7	3/5/2013	Unit Two: Writing with Voice, Adapting for Audience, and Advancing an Opinion	Trimble, John, “Chapter 7: Readability.” pp. 58–75	In-class exercise: What’s your lexicon? <i>Fact Paper Assignment due.</i>
	3/7/2013			Lexicon assignment, continued.
Week 8	3/12/2013	Adapting for Audience.	Wallace, David Foster. “Tense Present” (and reading notes) Trimble, John. “Chapter 8: Superstitions.” pp. 76–87	

Week	Date	Description	Reading Due	Assignments Due
Week 8	3/14/2013	Adapting for Audience, continued. Overview of “The Meaning of...” Essay.	Trinh T. Minh-ha, “Vertically Imposed Language” Baldwin, James, “If Black English Isn’t a Language” Stein, Gertrude. “Sentences and Paragraphs” (supplement with Kirsh)	
Week 9	3/19/2013	Advancing an Opinion	Bayh, Evan. “Why I Am Leaving the Senate.” “Anti and Pro Death Penalty” articles	In-class exercise: Letter to an Editor.
	3/21/2013		Trimble, John. “Chapter 9: Critical Analysis” pp. 88–100.	<i>Letter to an Editor assignment due.</i>
	3/27/2013	Spring Break!	No Class.	
	3/29/2013	Spring Break!	No Class.	
Week 10	4/2/2013	Peer Review, “The Meaning of...” Essays		Peer Review, “The Meaning of...” Essays.
	4/4/2013	Peer Review, continued.		Peer Review, continued.
Week 11	4/9/2013	Unit Three: Putting All The Pieces Together and Revising Your Prose. Overview of Final Project Assignment.	Trimble, John. “Chapter 10: Dramatizing Your Ideas.” pp. 101–116.	<i>“The Meaning Of...” Essay due.</i>
	4/11/2013	Developing Your Final Project.		
Week 12	4/16/2013	Calculating the “LF”	Lanham, Richard, “Chapter 1: Action.” pp. 1–20.	In-class exercise: Revise someone else’s writing
	4/18/2013		Lanham, Richard, “Chapter 2: Attention.” pp. 21–34.	In-class exercise: Revise someone else’s writing
Week 13	4/23/2013	Writing to be Read	Lanham, Richard, “Chapter 4: Skotison.” pp. 56–67.	
	4/25/2013	Revising Your Own Work	Lanham, Richard, “Chapter 3: Voice.” pp. 35–55.	
Week 14	4/30/2013		Trimble, John, Chapter 12: Proofreading.” pp. 118–119; Chapter 13: Punctuation.” pp. 121–146; and “Chapter 16: Tips on Usage.” pp. 165–172.	
	5/2/2013	Peer Reviews		<i>Revising Prose assignment due. Peer Reviews</i>
Week 15	5/7/2013	Peer Reviews		
	5/9/2013	Final Presentations		Final Presentations and Projects
Finals Week	5/20/2013	<i>Monday, May 20th, 7:15 – 9:30</i> Final Presentations		Final Presentations and Projects