**English 1B Section 39**

**Composition II**

Spring 2011

Course Days/Time: Tuesday/Thursday 12 noon-1:15pm

Course Location: BBC 124

Course Instructor: Sarah Prasad

Instructor Email: [instructorsarah@gmail.com](mailto:instructorsarah@gmail.com)

Mailbox: English Department, Faculty Offices (FO) 102

Office Location: Faculty Offices (FO) 117

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:30pm, and by appointment starting 2/1

Office Phone: (408) 924-4453 (checked approx. once a week)

**Course Overview and Description**: English 1B is the second course in SJSU’s two-semester lower-division composition sequence. Beyond providing repeated practice in planning and executing essays, and broadening and deepening students’ understanding of the genres, audiences, and purposes of college writing, English 1B differs from English 1A in its emphasis on persuasive and critical writing (with less attention paid to the personal essay), its requirement for fewer but longer essays, and its introduction to writing informed by research. Students will develop sophistication in writing analytical, argumentative, and critical essays; a mature writing style appropriate to university discourse; reading abilities that will provide an adequate foundation for upper-division work; proficiency in basic library research skills and in writing papers informed by research; and mastery of the mechanics of writing.

**Prerequisites**: Passage of Written Communication 1A or approved equivalent course and passage of the English Proficiency Test (EPT), unless exempt.

**Required Texts**

* The New Yorker magazine (to be purchased in class)
* Everything’s an Argument*,* by Andrea Lunsford and John Ruszkiewicz

**Recommended Materials**

* The American Heritage College Dictionary, 4th Ed.

**Objectives**

Students will develop:

**Learning Objective 1**: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to refine the competencies established in Written Communication 1A (as summarized below).

1A Student Learning:

* Students should be able to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
* Students should be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.
* Students should be able to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.
* Students should be able to write for different audiences (both specialized and general)

**Learning Objective 2**: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to use (locate, analyze, and evaluate) supporting materials, including independent library research, and identify key concepts and terms that describe the information needed.

**Learning Objective 3**: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to synthesize ideas encountered in multiple readings.

**Grading Scale:** Essays 60%

Homework/Participation 20%

Two midterms (2/24 and 4/21) 10%

Final Portfolio 10%

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| **Essay and Course Grades** | | | |
| Grade | Percentage | Grade | Percentage |
| A+ | 98-100 | C | 72-77 |
| A | 92-97 | C- | 70-71 |
| A- | 90-91 | D+ | 68-69 |
| B+ | 88-89 | D | 65-67 |
| B | 82-87 | F | 64-0 |
| B- | 80-81 |  |  |
| C+ | 78-79 |  |  |

**English 1B Content Objectives**: (specific to Area C3)

* This course should emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce 1) the persuasive argument, and 2) the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.
* Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in pre-writing, organizing, writing, revising, and editing.
* The number of writing assignments and their careful sequencing are as important as the total number of words written. Six to eight essays totaling a minimum of 8000 words are required. This minimum requirement excludes the final exam, journal writing, quizzes, and other informal or brief assignments.
* Although the majority of papers will be written outside of class, at least three essays shall be written in class.
* Students shall receive frequent evaluations from the instructor. Evaluative comments must be substantive, addressing the quality and form of writing.
* Reading for the course shall include useful models of writing for academic and general audiences; readings shall be used consistently with the course goal of enhancing ability in written communication and reading. A substantial portion of the reading should be devoted to analytical, critical, and argumentative essays. Instructors should help students develop and refine strategies for reading challenging material.
* The course shall include an introduction to the library and to basic research strategies, including locating materials, evaluating them, using them effectively (e.g., quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing), and citing them properly. Instructors shall assign a traditional research paper or a series of short essays in which library research informs the student's position or thesis.

**Writing:** Assignments shall emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce 1) the persuasive argument, and 2) the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. Six to eight essays, appropriately sequenced throughout the semester and totaling a minimum of 8000 words, are required; at least one of these essays shall be informed by research. This minimum requirement excludes the final examination, journal writing, quizzes, and any brief or informal assignments. However, it can include the diagnostic essay and assignments that require major revisions to a previously graded or reviewed draft. A major revision is defined as a rethinking or reworking of an assignment and not a simple “correcting” of mechanical errors noted on the original. At least three (but no more than four) essays shall be written in class. How the 8000 word minimum will be met and distributed must be clearly indicated on greensheets/syllabi.

Students shall receive frequent evaluations of their writing from the instructor. In evaluating student writing, instructors shall comment on specific features of individual papers. Comments shall encourage and acknowledge student success as well as note errors and suggest ways to correct them.

**Reading**: Reading shall include useful models of writing for academic, general, and specific audiences; readings shall be used consistently with the course goal of enhancing ability in written communication and reading. The majority of the reading shall be devoted to analytical, critical, and argumentative essays. Other types of texts, including poetry, drama, and fiction, may also be assigned, but shall not constitute more than the equivalent of four class sessions for classes that meet two days a week and two class sessions for classes that meet once a week. Instructors shall help students develop and refine strategies for reading challenging, college-level material.

**Research:** English 1B shall include an introduction to the library and to basic research strategies, including locating materials, using them effectively (e.g., quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing), and citing them properly using MLA. A traditional research paper or a series of short essays in which library research informs the student’s position or thesis is required. As part of this requirement, at least one class session of English 1B shall be led by a university librarian.

**Peer review**: Part of your grade for participation is your involvement in and commitment to peer review. Peer review is a chance for you to get some valuable feedback from your peers on your rough drafts before turning them in. If you don’t come to a workshop for a given paper, or if your essay is not a “good faith” draft, your grade on the final draft will be marked down one full grade. A “good faith” draft is typed, fulfills the word requirement, and shows careful thought and planning even though it may be unpolished.

**Assignments/Tests/Quizzes:** Assignments can be turned in on time in class or they can be turned in early to the instructor during office hours or in class. Assignments cannot be turned in to the English Department office. No late work is accepted, nor is any work accepted via email. Assignments should be printed on 8.5 x 11 clean-cut paper, in black ink, in a standard 12-point font such Times New Roman, and double spaced unless the assignment dictates otherwise. The appropriate format is MLA. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting updated on what was missed as well as what is due when you return. Not all assignments will be collected. Ideally, you should come to class prepared; however you should come to class even if you aren’t. Tests and quizzes will be given on the assigned day and can be taken early under special circumstances.

**Final Portfolio Assignment**: During this course, you will create a portfolio of your work, including a written reflection of 1000 words, that is worth ten percent of your grade. Think of it as a scientific study of your progress as a writer over the next four months. What you include in your portfolio doesn’t have to be perfect. Remember, writing is a *process*. Collecting your work and then reflecting on that work is part of the process. The portfolio project is designed to get you thinking about your specific challenges, your strategies for improvement, your successes and failures, and your goals for the future. Every writer, no matter how accomplished, has room for improvement. This portfolio is your culminating experience. This course does not have a final exam.

**Grading**: Assignments will be assessed on each of the following areas. If you are unclear about where you need to improve, please speak with me for clarification.

1. **Assignment Fulfillment**

An essay should fulfill all the elements specified in the writing assignment.

1. **Thesis/Central Idea**

An explicitly stated and clear thesis statement or central idea placed at the end of the introduction creates the focus for what you say in the body of the essay.

1. **Organization/Focus**

A well-organized essay “makes sense” because it creates a logical, smooth, clear form in which parts “go together” and ideas are easy to follow. Paragraphs and sentences within each paragraph are sequenced and grouped so it’s easy for a reader to track your ideas. In a well-focused piece of writing, all words and sentences are relevant to the overall purpose or point of the essay: body paragraphs have recognizable and consistent main ideas that are logically related to the thesis and are generally expressed in topic sentences, while sentences within each paragraph relate to their respective topic sentences. The writing as a whole is *coherent,* using concrete nouns and strong verbs (the ones that name actions), even when the topic is complex. The writing is also *cohesive*—that is, the writer makes a point of using words and phrases or clauses that create a relationship between ideas or units of the text.

1. **Development**

Main ideas are illustrated or supported by use of relevant facts, details, examples or anecdotes (short narratives), data, discussion. Ideas and information are analyzed and explained, and connections between ideas and between main points and supporting detail are made clear. The reader is left with no questions about what you want him/her to understand, even if she or he disagrees with you, and has learned something from the essay. Development also means how you support your ideas with details. Use textual evidence (direct quotation or paraphrase) and personal insights or experiences to support your own ideas, interpretation or analysis, and make sure that you can support any claim you make by citing or referring to the work you are writing about. Both paraphrases and quotes are integrated smoothly into the text and appropriately cited using in-text citations and works cited lists. Never let a quote just “hang around.” It must be integrated into your writing and you must fully explain **why** and **how** it relates to the points and ideas you are expressing.

1. **Sentence Craft**

Fluent writing is smooth and shows good use of both words (not necessarily big words!) and different structures. A fluent writer uses a variety of structures seen in mature writing—strong sentence focus, apposition, verbal phrases, concessive subordinators, other modifiers, and so on—and uses them appropriately. Sentences are focused; word choices are concrete where possible and appropriate to the context (purpose and audience).

1. **Proofreading (Grammar, Usage, Punctuation, Spelling)**

These “product quality” issues, although important, are only one aspect of strong writing. If there are many surface problems a reader may have problems paying attention to the content or misunderstand what you are trying to say. Careful proofreading can help you spot and correct most if not all of the surface errors in a paper. Surface errors include: verb tense, subject-verb agreement, fragments, RTS (run-together or “run on” sentences), pronoun agreement, plural forms, homophones (words that sound the same but are spelled differently, such as whether and weather), spelling, word usage, typographical errors.

1. **MLA Compliance**

MLA is an important standard to understand and apply to college level writing. We will be learning about MLA in class and all papers must comply with these standards as they are covered.

**Academic Standards for Assessment:** The grades choices are: A/B/C/D/F. A passing grade in the course signifies that the student is a capable college-level writer and reader of English.

**“A”** work will be well-organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment. It will show the student’s ability to use language effectively and construct sentences distinguished by syntactic constructions at the college level and appropriate to the work’s intended audience and purpose. Such work will be essentially free of grammatical, mechanical, and usage errors. Whether written or oral, “A” work succeeds in communicating ideas clearly and effectively to the target audience.

**“B”** work will demonstrate abilities in the same categories as “A” work. The chief difference is that “B” work will show notable weaknesses in one of these categories. It may inadequately fulfill parts of the assigned tasks, show less facility of expression and communication, or contain some grammatical, mechanical, usage, or delivery flaws that do not impede clear transmission of meaning.

**“C”** work will be generally competent and attempt to complete all tasks set by the assignment but show weaknesses in fundamentals, usually development or clarity, with barely enough specific information to illustrate the subject being addressed. The sentence construction, language, and/or delivery may be less effective and correct than “B” work, but will not seriously impede clear transmission of meaning.

**“D”** work will neglect one of the assigned tasks or directions and be noticeably superficial in development—that is, too brief or simplistic. The work may reveal some problems of development, detail, and/or audience. It will contain grammatical, mechanical, usage, and/or delivery shortcomings that are frequent and/or serious enough to impede clear transmission of meaning.

**“F”** work shows a disconnection with the course and a lack of understanding of the task and the writing conventions that are being taught. The writing is incoherent and riddled with sentence level errors. It is clear in this essay that the writer is not engaged in the class and/or the assignment.

**Diversity:** Assignments (both reading and writing) shall address issues of race, class, and gender when appropriate, and the perspectives of women and diverse cultural groups shall be incorporated into course instruction and materials in an inclusive and comprehensive manner whenever possible.

## Academic policies: You are responsible for reading the SJSU academic polices available online: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

**Participation and Active Learning:** Participation is essential to active learning and to the learning process in general. Participation includes but is not limited to being engaged in small and large group work, bringing materials to class, focusing on the task at hand instead of, for example, other courses or your telephone, and basically contributing to the learning process that will be happening in our workshop style classroom. If you cannot make a particular class, email the teacher or contact a dependable classmate to get updated on what you missed. You are responsible for all homework whether you are in class or not.

**Classroom Etiquette**: Please turn off all pagers, phones, and other noise-making devices before entering the classroom. In addition, we must all treat others with respect and kindness so that we can build a safe and productive learning environment and writing community.

**Email**: When emailing, remember sign your name at the end of the email. I cannot always know who you are just by the email address. Also, remember that I am your instructor, not your IM buddy, so your language should be appropriate and professional, and I will respond in kind.

**WST:** The next step for you, once you have passed English 1B, is to take the WST. Please see more at https://testing.sjsu.edu/twst.html

**Important Dates:**

1/27 First Day Diagnostic

2/7 Last day to drop classes

2/10 Peer Review Essay 1

2/15 Essay 1 due

2/14 Last day to add classes

2/24 Midterm 1

3/3 Peer Review Essay 2

3/8 Essay 2 due

3/22 Essay 3 Peer Review

3/24 Essay 3 due

3/28-4/1 Spring Break

4/14 Essay 4 Peer Review

4/19 Essay 4 due

4/21 Midterm 2

4/26 Revision Essay Plan due

4/28 Plan for Portfolio due

5/3 Revision Essay due

5/5 Peer Review of Portfolio

5/17 Last day of classes

5/19-25 Final examinations

5/31 Grades due

6/11 WST test

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| **Major Assignments** | | | | |
| Diagnostic | | 500 words | | 5% of the total grade |
| Essay 1 | | 1000 words | | 5% |
| Midterm 1 | | 500 words | | 5% |
| Essay 2 | | 1250 words | | 10% |
| Midterm 2 | | 500 words | | 5% |
| Essay 3 | | 1500 words | | 12% |
| Essay 4 | | 1750 words | | 13% |
| Revision Essay | | 2000 words | | 15% |
| Portfolio Project | | 1000 words | | 10% |
| **WEEK** | **TUESDAY** | | **THURSDAY** | |
| 1 | 1/25 | | **1/27**  First Day Diagnostic | |
| 2 | **2/1** | | **2/3** | |
| 3 | **2/8** | | **2/10**  Peer Review Essay 1 | |
| 4 | **2/15**  Essay 1 due | | **2/17** | |
| 5 | **2/22** | | **2/24**  Midterm 1 | |
| 6 | **3/1** | | **3/3**  Peer Review Essay 2 | |
| 7 | **3/8**  Essay 2 due | | **3/10** | |
| 8 | **3/15** | | **3/17** | |
| 9 | **3/22**  Essay 3 Peer Review | | **3/24**  Essay 3 due | |
| 10 | **3/29**  Spring Break | | **3/31**  Spring Break | |
| 11 | **4/5** | | **4/7** | |
| 12 | **4/12** | | **4/14**  Essay 4 Peer Review | |
| 13 | **4/19**  Essay 4 due | | **4/21**  Midterm 2 | |
| 14 | **4/26**  Revision Essay Plan due | | **4/28**  Plan for Portfolio due | |
| 15 | **5/3**  Revision Essay due | | **5/5**  Peer Review of Portfolio | |
| 16 | **5/10** | | **5/12** | |
| 17 | **5/17**  Last Day of Class | |  | |