

San José State University

Department of English and Comparative Literature

English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Section 61, Fall 2013

Instructor:	Mark Dowdy
Office Location:	Faculty Offices 109
Telephone:	(408) 924- 4447
Email:	mark.dowdy@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	TTh 1:00 – 2:30, or by appointment
Class Days/Time:	TTh 3:00 – 4:15
Classroom:	Boccardo Business Center 120
Prerequisites:	Passage of the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT
GE Category:	Written Communication A2

Canvas Messaging

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on the course's Canvas site. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through Canvas. You may access the [Canvas](https://sjsu.instructure.com) site for English 1A at <https://sjsu.instructure.com>.

Course Description

English 1A is the first course in SJSU's two-semester lower-division composition sequence; it provides an introduction to baccalaureate-level composition, with attention to the "personal voice" and personal experience, on the one hand, and the more formal attitudes and demands of writing at the university (expository and argumentative essays), on the other. Students will develop college-level reading abilities, rhetorical sophistication, and writing styles that give form and coherence to complex ideas and feelings.

Prerequisites: Placement by the English Proficiency Test (EPT), or passage of an approved substitute course for the EPT.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Students shall achieve the ability to write complete essays that demonstrate college-level proficiency in all of the following:

- Clear and effective communication of meaning.
- An identifiable focus, tailored to a particular audience and purpose (argumentative essays will state their thesis clearly and show an awareness, implied or stated, of some opposing point of view).
- The ability to perform effectively the essential steps of the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).
- The ability to explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively.
- Effective use within their own essays of supporting material drawn from reading or other sources.
- Effective organization within the paragraph and the essay.
- Accuracy, variety, and clarity of sentences.
- Appropriate diction.
- Control of conventional mechanics (e.g., punctuation, spelling, reference, agreement).

Student Learning Objectives:

SLO 1: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to perform effectively the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing).

SLO 2: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively.

SLO 3: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to use correct grammar (syntax, mechanics, and citation of sources) at a college level of sophistication.

SLO 4: Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate the ability to write for different audiences.

Information available online

You are responsible for reading the following [information](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html) online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policy/index.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Estimation of Per-Unit Student Workload
- Recording policies
- Adding and dropping classes

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

- *Best American Essays of the Century*, Joyce Carol Oates (editor) (Mariner Books)
ISBN-13: 978-06181-5587-3
- *The Everyday Writer*, free SJSU electronic edition, Andrea Lunsford (Bedford/St. Martin's) ISBN-13: 978-14576-6712-1
- A Dictionary
- Blue/Yellow Books

Other Readings

- *The Everyday Writer with Exercises*, 5th Edition, Andrea Lunsford (Bedford/St. Martin's) ISBN-10: 1457612674 (Recommended)

Library Liaison for English courses

Toby Matoush, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library

Voice: 408-808-2096

Email: Toby.Matoush@sjsu.edu

Website: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/profile.php?uid=14949>

Classroom Protocol

To help foster a classroom environment in which everyone feels comfortable enough to participate, I will not tolerate blatant displays of disrespect towards your peers or towards me. There are ways to disagree with others respectfully and sincerely. In the unlikely event that anyone should exceed the boundaries of civility, he or she will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session.

“Smart” Phone Usage

Attendance is both a physical AND mental state of being. Use that nifty gadget at your own risk. I won't interrupt class if I see you engaged in a spirited parley with your little electronic friend, but I will take note of it. ***Each time I see you texting/surfing/gaming/talking etc., I'll lower your participation grade by one letter grade.***

Laptops

There is no need to use a laptop during class. Please keep yours closed.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Grading: A-F. This class must be passed with a C or better to move on to CORE GE Area C3 and to satisfy the prerequisite for English 1B. 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.

Letter grades will be translated into the following percentages:

Essay and Course Grades

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A+	98-100	B	84-87	C-	70-73
A	94-97	B-	80-83	D+	68-69
A-	90-93	C+	78-79	D	65-67
B+	88-89	C	74-77	F	64-0

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU *Catalog* (“The Grading System”). Grades issued must

represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A,B,C,NoCredit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for NoCredit, shall replace a C-, D, or F. In A,B,C,NoCredit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdraw) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point averages.

In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. Note: This includes email notes to the instructor!

The Grade

Three Formal Essays (2,000 words each; SLOs 1-4)	60%
Two In-Class Essays (500-800 words; SLOs 2-4)	20%
Final Portfolio Assignment (800-1200 words; SLOs 1-4)	10%
Participation (SLO 1)	10%

Three Formal Essays (20 percent each; 60 percent of overall grade): Critical reading habits are essential to anyone who wants to write well. Consequently, each formal writing assignment will require you to respond to one or more essays from *Best American Essays of the Century*, to summarize the arguments you encounter in these writings, and to develop your own claims. Essays will be 3-5 pages long, with 1 inch margins and a 12-point standard font (i.e. Times-New Roman or something similar). In order to receive credit for the essay, you will have to complete a first and final draft, both of which must be submitted via hard copy as well as electronically to Turnitin.com. I will respond to the hard copy of your first draft, providing comments and suggestions that you will be able to review before submitting your revision. Your final draft will get fewer comments from me, but it will receive a letter grade. Important: This graded final draft must include significant revisions. It is not enough to correct mechanical errors; you must also strive to improve the essay's content and organization and to refine its language. In short, even papers that have few errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation can be made better.

To sign up for the [Turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com), click the the link <http://turnitin.com> and enter the following information:

Class ID: 6760531

Password: Scholar

Due dates for formal essays:

Formal Essay #1: first draft, 9/5; revised draft, 9/26

Formal Essay #2: first draft, 10/10; revised draft, 10/31

Formal Essay #3: first draft, 11/14; revised draft, 12/5

Two In-class Essays (10 percent each; 20 percent of overall grade): In addition to the ungraded diagnostic essay that you will take on the first day of class, there are two more in-class essays, both of which will be graded. These in-class essays will be based on class readings. On the days in which these in-class essays are scheduled, please bring a yellow examination booklet.

In-class essay dates:

In-class Essay #1: 10/3

In-class Essay #2: 11/7

Final Portfolio Assignment (20 percent of overall grade): During this course, you will create a portfolio of your work, including a written reflection of 1,000 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.

Due date for Final Portfolio Assignment: 12/12

Participation (10 percent of overall grade): Your contributions to class discussions help me determine whether you've done your required reading. Moreover, such contributions foster a deeper understanding of the text at hand for *all* of us. For this reason you will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading for the day. Moreover, you should strive to contribute to most class discussions, demonstrating an ability and willingness to listen to myself and your peers as well as the capacity to bring yourself and your experiences to the reading assignment.

In addition to your level of engagement in classroom discussions, the following factors also affect your participation grade:

*** Peer Review (required component of Formal Essay assignments):** There will be three peer review sessions this semester. **They are scheduled for 9/10, 10/15, and 11/19.** On the class day before the scheduled peer review session, bring four photocopies of your formal essay. Distribute these among your assigned group members as well as myself. At this time, you will also receive essays from your peers (groups will be no larger than four members). Before the next class, read and evaluate those essays you received in return. I will provide you with an evaluation sheet, but feel free to write comments in the bodies of the essays themselves. During the peer review session, take turns discussing your essays with one another. At this time, you will return the marked up essays to one another, along with the evaluation sheets. Do not lose your peers' marked up essays and evaluation sheets. Not only will they prove helpful during the revision

process, but I will require you to submit them to me on the same class when the final draft is due.

There are three important things to keep in mind about Peer Review sessions:

1. You owe it to your peers not to lose marked up copies of your essays. If a group member does not provide you with a review copy of your essay, please let me know.
2. Failure to attend peer review sessions or to participate in them will result in a drop of one letter grade for the formal essay.
3. Your work in Peer Review sessions directly influences your participation grade.

*** Peer Mentor Conferences:** You are required to meet with your Peer Mentor, Keith Lewis, at least twice during the semester. During these conferences, you may discuss your course work, but keep in mind that Mr. Lewis's main role is to serve as a role model for you as you make the transition into the college process. He is available to hear any concerns you have about college life, whether academic, personal, or social. **Failure to meet with Mr. Lewis at least two times this semester will result in a lowering of your participation score by one full letter grade.** For more information about Peer Mentor program, please see below.

*** Extra Credit.** There are numerous opportunities each semester to attend educational events sponsored by various groups here at SJSU. Many prominent or notable writers, scholars, politicians, and activists visit our campus each year to share their ideas. If you would like to attend one of these events in order to receive extra credit, please inform me ahead of time to determine whether the event you have in mind meets my approval. If it does, please attend the entire event. It is rude to walk out on speakers in the middle of their presentations. Afterwards, write a 300-word summary/review of the talk, presentation, symposium, etc. that you attended. **Completion of this extra credit credit assignment will raise your participation grade by one full letter. You are allowed to attend no more than two events for extra credit.**

Late Work: Unless you approach me in advance, late papers will be penalized 1/2 letter grade for each day late.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

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, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

SJSU Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. Our staff is here to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

This semester, English 1A will have designated Peer Mentor, Keith Lewis, who will attend classes on Tuesdays. I encourage you to make use of Mr. Lewis as a resource.

English 1A, Fall 2013, Course Schedule

Below is the agenda for English 1A this semester. Please note that this schedule is subject to change. If changes do indeed occur, I will notify you ahead of time during class and on the course's Canvas page.

Week 1		Thursday, 8/22
Activities		Ungraded diagnostic in-class essay (500 words)
Week 2	Tuesday, 8/27	Thursday, 8/29
Activities	Overview of course syllabus "Writing for College and Beyond," Andrea A. Lunsford, <i>The Everyday Writer (EW)</i> , pgs 1-19	"Aria: a Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood," Richard Rodriguez, <i>Best American Essays of the Century (BAEC)</i> , pg. 447
Week 3	Tuesday, 9/3	Thursday, 9/5
Activities	"Strickeen," John Muir, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 28	First draft of Formal Essay #1 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4): Bring four copies of your draft to class.
Week 4	Tuesday, 9/10	Thursday, 9/12
Activities	"The Writing Process," Lunsford, <i>EW</i> , pgs. 48-124 Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay score by one full letter grade (SLOs 1-4).	"Notes of a Native Son," James Baldwin, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 220
Week 5	Tuesday, 9/17	Thursday, 9/19
Activities	"The Marginal World," Rachel Carson, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 214	"No Name Woman," Maxine Hong Kingston, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 383
Week 6	Tuesday, 9/24	Thursday, 9/26
Activities	"The Way to Rainy Mountain," N. Scott Momaday, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 313	Revised Draft of Formal Essay #1 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4)
Week 7	Tuesday, 10/1	Thursday, 10/3
Activities	"Critical Thinking and Argument," Lunsford, <i>EW</i> , pgs. 129-84 Mark Twain, "Corn-pone Opinions," <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 1	In-class Essay #1 (500 words; SLOs 2-4)
Week 8	Tuesday, 10/8	Thursday, 10/10

Activities	“The Future Is Now,” Katherine Anne Porter, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 193	First draft of Formal Essay #2 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4): Bring four copies of your draft to class.
Week 9	Tuesday, 10/15	Thursday, 10/17
Activities	Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay score by one full letter grade (SLOs 1-4).	“Resistance to Civil Government,” Henry David Thoreau (handout)
Week 10	Tuesday, 10/22	Thursday, 10/24
Activities	“Resistance to Civil Government,” continued	“Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Martin Luther King, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 263
Week 11	Tuesday, 10/29	Thursday, 10/31
Activities	“Letter from Birmingham Jail,” continued	Revised Draft of Formal Essay #2 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4)
Week 12	Tuesday, 11/5	Thursday, 11/7
Activities	“The Apotheosis of Martin Luther King,” Elizabeth Hardwick, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 319	In-class Essay #2 (500 words; SLOs 2-4)
Week 13	Tuesday, 11/12	Thursday, 11/14
Activities	“Sentence Style,” Lunsford, <i>EW</i> , pgs. 287-312	First draft of Formal Essay #3 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4): Bring four copies of your draft to class.
Week 14	Tuesday, 11/19	Thursday, 11/22
Activities	Mandatory Peer Review: Failure to attend will result in a lowering of essay grade by one full letter (SLOs 1-4).	“The White Album,” Joan Didion, <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 421
Week 15	Tuesday, 11/26	Thursday, 11/28
Activities	“The White Album,” continued	Thanksgiving holiday, no class
Week 16	Tuesday, 12/3	Thursday, 12/5
Activities	John Updike, “The Disposable Rocket,” <i>BAEC</i> , pg. 549	Last day of in-class instruction Revised Draft of Formal Essay #3 due (1,000 words; SLOs 1-4)
Finals Weeks	Tuesday, 12/10	Thursday, 12/12

Activities	Study/Conference Day (no classes or exams)	Reflective Essay due in my office (Faculty Offices 109) by 5 p.m. (1,000 words; SLOs 2-4)
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Important SJSU dates Fall 2013

Wednesday	August 21	First Day of Instruction – Classes Begin
Monday	September 2	Labor Day - Campus Closed
Tuesday	September 3	Last Day to Drop Without Entry on Permanent Record
Tuesday	September 10	Last Day to Add Courses & Register Late
Wednesday	September 18	Enrollment Census Date
Monday	November 11	Veteran's Day - Campus Closed
Wednesday	November 27	Classes that start at 5:00 PM or later will not meet.
Thursday	November 28	Thanksgiving Holiday - Campus Closed
Friday	November 29	Rescheduled Holiday - Campus Closed
Monday	December 9	Last Day of Instruction - Last Day of Classes
Tuesday	December 10	Study/Conference Day (no classes or exams)
Wednesday-Friday	December 11-13	Final Examinations (exams)
Monday-Tuesday	December 16-17	Final Examinations (exams)
Wednesday	December 18.	Final Examinations Make-Up Day (MU)
Thursday	December 19	Grade Evaluation Day