

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**English 1A, Composition 1 (GE A2), Section 35 and 39, Spring**  
**2012**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Joan McMillan
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<b>Email:</b>	Joan.McMillan@sjsu.edu
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday and Wednesdays, 12:15 to 1:15, and by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Section 35, MW 1:30 to 2:45; Section 39, 3:00 to 4:15
<b>Classroom:</b>	Section 35: Sweeney Hall 315; section 39, BBC 122
<b>GE Category:</b>	Written Communication A2

**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging (Optional)**

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/Joan.McMillan> or accessed through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor).

**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.

English 1A is intended to increase the student's ability to write, read, and think both critically and clearly. I have a conviction that if you have come this far in your educational journey, you have important things to say and can communicate them in both your writing and speaking. English 1A will help you strengthen these skills. We will discuss various modes of composition throughout the semester, all of which will contribute to building strengths for you as a writer. Strong writing skills will help you no matter what career you choose in life, and it is my goal as an instructor to help you gain confidence in communicating ideas. This is a challenging course which I hope will increase and strengthen your skills as both a writer and a critical reader.

## **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 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

**Reader Responses** particularly fulfill the following Learning Objectives: SLO 2, SLO 4 (developing facility of expression and learning to write for different audiences), via semester-long practice in the use of prompts and the analysis of ideas and themes in the course readings.

**Course readings** fulfill SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3, SLO 4 through the illumination of ideas, expressions and varieties of diversity, and sophistication of expression.

**Essays** fulfill SLO 1, SLO 2, SLO 3, and SLO 4 through incorporation of all the learning objectives in the creation, workshop, and revision process of each essay, via peer workshops, prewriting, generation of ideas, and instructor feedback.

**Peer editing workshops** particularly support SLO 1, SLO 2, and SLO 3 though the use of peer feedback to enhance facility in expression, correct grammar and usage, and encouraging clearly expressed concepts and ideas.

**Grammar homework, instruction, and grammar quizzes** particularly support SLO 3 by enhancing the ability to understand and use proper grammar, mechanics, expression, and citation

### **Information available online**

You are responsible for reading the following information online at <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/comp/policyforsyllabi.html>

- Course guidelines
- Academic policies (academic integrity, plagiarism, ADA and DRC policies)
- Adding and dropping classes

### **Required Texts/Readings**

**Please note that the textbook is required.**

**Textbook: The Confident Writer, 5th Edition, Carol Kanar  
ISBN10: 0-618-95846-0, ISBN13: 978-0-618-95846-7**

**Our course reader will be distributed online (available on my website, and sent directly to students). You are strongly encouraged to print the reading for the day and bring it to class.**

A dictionary and a thesaurus are not required, but they are strongly encouraged.

### **Classroom Protocol**

**Essays:** We will do seven required essays, plus one revision for this class (due on the last day). There will thus be four in-class essays and four out-of-class essays. **YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL ESSAYS IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE!** Expect to produce a minimum of 8,000 words this semester.

All out of class essays must be 4-5 pages in length (depending on the assignment), typed (double spaced), in a readable font (no gigantic fonts, 12 point Times New Roman or Ariel works well), with black ink. Follow the MLA guidelines for papers as shown on pages 197-191 of *The Confident Writer*. **LATE PAPERS WILL BE DOWNGRADED ONE FULL LETTER GRADE FOR EVERY DAY LATE. NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED WHICH ARE MORE THAN THREE DAYS LATE. OUT-OF-CLASS ESSAYS MUST BE TURNED IN VIA TURNITIN.COM.**

For in-class essays, please bring a yellow book and a blue or black pen, and don't miss class on these days. In-class essays cannot be made up unless you get permission from me **before** class!

**Reader Responses:** This is a one-page hand-written response, generally assigned during the first ten to fifteen minutes of class. I want you to truly consider and explain what worked for you in the reading, what moved you, disturbed you, inspired you, infuriated you, didn't work, or worked well for you. Many of my former students have told me that writing in class every day really helped them become better writers. Reader Responses are not graded individually, but are tallied as to the amount completed and comprise ten percent of your class grade. Ideal length for a Reader Response is one handwritten page.

**Workshops:** Good writing involves learning good revision skills. Workshops (in which others read and critique your work) are valuable resource in learning revision. We will have several workshop sessions this semester, in small groups with other class members, in which constructive criticism will be given to help improve your paper (you will also be critiquing others' essays). We will also workshop outlines of in-class essays. You will be required to make copies of your essays for the workshop, generally 3-4.

**Presentation:** Beginning early in the semester, I would like to have each student take 5-10 minutes to present a piece of writing (the selection is up to you: it can be a news article, a short piece from a book, a poem, a selection from a play, something you wrote at any time of your life, etc.) You will read the excerpt to the class and talk about it a bit (why you chose the piece, what you think of the writing, what moved you about it, and even constructive criticism if you are inspired to suggest it).

**Other work, handouts, etc.** may be assigned during the semester, occasionally.

**Attendance and Participation:** Since success in life involves showing up, consider this class a good exercise. There is a great deal of work and it is easy to fall terribly behind if

you do not come to class or fail to complete assignments on time. Class participation also figures into your final grade. Please arrive promptly, as late folks disturb the class. If you do happen to be late, please enter the classroom quietly. If you must miss class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make necessary arrangements if you will miss in-class work

Please participate in class discussions; everyone's opinion is important. Ask questions if you don't understand something, and I will do my best to answer.

**Classroom environment:** Courteous behavior towards other students and the instructor is mandatory, as this is a professional environment. If you disagree (or agree) with the opinion of another student, the instructor, or something in the readings, express your opinions respectfully. Some of the readings may express opinions or views that are somewhat controversial; they are presented to show the varied expression of such opinions or views, and no one is required to agree or disagree with them.

**Cell phones and the like must be turned off.** If you forget and it goes off, please muffle it accordingly. Wait until the end of class to check messages (and please refrain from texting under the desk, etc). If you must use a laptop because you have a learning or other disability, please let me know and also bring me a signed note from the Disability Resource Center; otherwise, laptops are to be shut off and kept closed in this class **unless we are using them for a specific assignment, such as accessing the online course reader. Since there is an online course reader this semester, of course this can be accessed via laptop or smartphone for discussion times.**

**Coffee, tea, water, etc.** may be consumed in class, quietly, but no food.

**Contacting your instructor:** My office hours, e-mail address, and phone number are listed at the top of this syllabus. Email or visit me during my office hours if you have questions about the class or your writing, want to go over an essay, etc. I enjoy working with students outside of class and want to help you succeed in English 1A, so don't hesitate to use my office hours! I can arrange other times to meet with you as well, and am always available by email.

## **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.

**Grade break-down:**

Out-of-Class Essays	35%
In-Class Essays	15%
Reader Responses	10%
Final Exam	20%
Participation, incl. final letter and presentation	10%
Grammar, quizzes, etc.	10%

**Grading scale**

A+	97%	100%
A	95%	96.9%
A-	90%	94.9%
B+	85%	89.9%
B	79%	84.9%
B-	75%	78.9%
C+	69%	74.9%
C	65%	68.9%
C-	61%	64.9%
D	58%	60.9%
D-	56%	57.9%
F	0%	55.9%

**Essays in English 1A will be graded as follows:**

**A = Excellent.** This essay is organized, well-constructed, and demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic. The thesis is focused, ideas are clearly presented and supported with specific details. Paragraphs are fully developed and move easily from one to the next. The language is used effectively and sentences are correctly constructed and syntactically correct; the language is lively and a pleasure to read. The “A” paper is as virtually free of mechanical errors as is humanly possible.

**B = Very Good.** This essay shows a clear understanding of the topic, but is less precise and original as the “A” paper. The main difference is that the “B” paper will demonstrate minor weaknesses in aspects such as sentence variety, grammatical errors, typographical errors, or may have less facility of expression as the “A” paper.

**C = Average.** This essay will complete all tasks required by the assignment, but demonstrates weaknesses in fundamental aspects such as paragraph development, supporting ideas, or many mechanical and/or grammatical errors. Word choice and syntax are unvaried and simplistic, and sentence construction is less varied.

**D = Poor.** This essay makes a general attempt to discuss the topic, but will be noticeably superficial in its treatment (generally this is an essay that is far too simplistic or short). The essay may reveal multiple problems in development, or grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors that are serious and frequent.

**F=Unacceptable.** This essay fails to fulfill any requirement of the assignment. It lacks clarity, development, and coherence. This essay does not show a competent or clear understanding of grammar, sentence mechanics, etc.

**Plagiarism:** Your own ideas are valuable and you are in this class to learn to express them effectively. To plagiarize is to present the ideas or writings of another as your own (including purchasing or copying essays from the Internet and turning them in as your own work). This includes paraphrasing another's ideas or writing in your own words also without giving your source proper credit. If you would like to use someone's ideas, writing, or thoughts in your essay, **cite them.** *The Confident Writer* has a large section on proper citation and we will also be covering this in class. **Plagiarism is a very serious offense and will result in automatic failure on the assignment and possible failure in the course and dismissal from the university.** For this and every course at SJSU, be familiar with the "Policy on Academic Integrity" printed in the SJSU Catalog.

I will be using turnitin.com for all out-of-class essays; we will discuss the signup information in class during our first meeting after the primary diagnostic essay. **All out-of-class essays must be uploaded to turnitin on the day the essay is due. I will be using Grademark (a grading program included in turnitin.com) for all responses on the out-of-class essays.**

## **Student Technology Resources**

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Clark Hall and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## **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 WST, improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. We are located in SSC 600 (10th Street Garage), at the first floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. See the Peer Connections website for more information ([peerconnections.sjsu.edu](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu)) and be sure to come see us!

### 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 website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter): <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.



## English 1A, Spring 2013, Course Schedule

**Notes:**

**The syllabus is subject to change with fair notice.**

**All readings are due on the day indicated.**

**Class and outline workshops are mandatory and your paper will be downgraded if you do not attend.**

**Please bring a large yellow exam book to class on the days of the in-class essays.**

**We will do a DAILY handwritten Reader Response, based on the course readings, using prompts supplied by the instructor.**

**There will be no Reader Response on days which are scheduled for in-class essays so as to use the maximum time for essay writing.**

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/23	Introductions; go over the syllabus. Essay #1 assigned, Diagnostic, written in-class 1/28. Turnitin.com information
2	1/28  1/30	Essay #1, Diagnostic, please bring a yellow book and a blue or black pen to class.  Reading: Course Reader: “One Liar’s Beginnings” (Udall)
3	2/4  2/6	Readings: Course Reader: Good Workers (Price); “Silent Dancing” (Cofer).  Readings: The Confident Writer, please read pgs 195-208; pay special attention to “Salvation” by Langston Hughes, 197-198. Mandatory workshop for the narration essay; please bring 3 copies of your rough draft to class
4	2/11	Essay 2, Narration, due today; please upload to turnitin. Essay # 3 assigned, Process Essay, written in-class 2/25. Readings: Course Reader: excerpt from “A Match to the Heart” (Gretel Erich), Confident Writer 225-231; pay special attention to David Levy’s

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	2/13	<p>“When The Big Clouds Gather” (226-229)</p> <p>Readings: Course Reader, “Prison Man Considers Turkey” “The Deck” (Komunyakaa)</p>
5	2/18  2/20	<p>Readings: Confident Writer: p. 233-242; pay special attention to Sarah Colman-Bradley’s “Horses” (233-235).</p> <p>Mandatory outline workshop for the process essay; please bring three copies of your outline to class today. Readings: Confident Writer, 57-70; pay special attention to Leigh Bryant’s “Fifteen Ways to Put More Joy in Life.”</p>
6	2/25  2/27	<p>Essay 3. Process Essay, written in-class today. Please bring a yellow book and a blue or black pen. Essay #4 assigned, Description, due 3/11. <b>Grammar homework assigned</b></p> <p>Readings: Course Reader, “Twigs,” “Artifacts”; Confident Writer: 66-82; pay special attention to “Navajo Dog” (Momaday) 76-77.</p>
7	3/4  3/6	<p>Readings: Confident Writer, 208-221; pay special attention to “A Night to Remember” (Hackney) 217-218.</p> <p>Readings: Confident Writer 381-383, “A Present for Popo” (Wong); Course Reader: “Remembering” (Remen); Mandatory workshop for the description essay; please bring 3 copies of your paper to class today.</p>
8	3/11  3/13	<p>Essay 4, Description, due today. Essay #5 assigned, Compare and Contrast, written in-class 4/3. Readings: Course Reader: “The Word Love” (Divakaruni), Confident Writer: 20-27.</p> <p>Course Reader: “The Story of a Suicide” (Parker); Confident Writer: pay special attention to “Start With One Brick” (Pirsig). <b>Grammar homework due, more assigned</b></p>
9	3/18  3/20	<p>Readings: Confident Writer: 352-356, “My Name is Margaret (Angelou); 381-383; Confident Writer: 276-286; pay special attention to “University of Arkansas vs. Arkansas Tech University” (Stowe)</p> <p>Readings: Course Reader: Two Hearts (Doyle), Confident Writer: p. 266-276; pay special attention to “The Inkblot Test” (Walsh) 268-</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		271. Mandatory outline workshop for the compare/contrast essay; please bring 3 copies of your outline to class.
10	3/25 3/27	Spring Break
11	4/1 4/3	Cesar Essay #5, Compare/Contrast, written in-class today. Essay #6 assigned, Argumentation/Persuasion, due 4/15
12	4/8  4/10	Readings: Course Reader: excerpt from “A People’s History of the United States” (Zinn); Confident Writer: 311-313.”The Perfect Family” (Hoffmann)  Readings: Confident Writer 338-345; pay special attention to Tara Tedrow’s “Everyone’s Business” (345-346); Confident Writer: Martin Luther King Jr.: “The Ways of Meeting Oppression” (384-386) . Mandatory workshop for the argumentation essay; please bring 3 copies of your rough draft to class.
13	4/15  4/17	Essay 6, Argumentation, due. Essay #7 assigned, practice final, written in-class 4/24. Course Reader: “I Like Guys” (Sedaris), Confident Writer 368-371: “Leave Your Name at the Border” (Munoz).  Confident Writer: “The Perpetual Adolescent” (Epstein); “Yes, I Follow Islam” (El Sawy). Mandatory workshop for the argumentation essay
14	4/22  4/24	Course Reader: excerpt from <i>The Opposite of Fate</i> (Tan); Confident Writer: p. 329-337; pay special attention to Joe Queenan’s “The World is Watching and No One Cares” (331) <b>Please have read chapter 6 of The Confident Writer (p. 127-152) by 5/1 Grammar homework due. Grammar quiz</b> Essay 7, written in-class, Practice Final. Essay #8 assigned, Revision, due 5/8 (revision of any in-class essay)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
15	4/29  5/1	Course Reader: excerpt from <i>A Thousand Lives</i> by Julia Scheeres.  <b>Please have read chapter 6 of the Confident Writer by today.</b> Course Reader: “A Strange New Cottage in Berkeley” (Ginsberg); “Dealing With the Discovery of Death” (Dorfman),
16	5/6  5/8	Course Reader: excerpt from <i>The Power of Myth</i> (Campbell), “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” (Grimm). Mandatory workshop for the revision essay,  Essay #8 due, Revision. Course Reader: “You are Here” (Sagan). tast words before the final, cookies, and general housekeeping.
Final Exam	Saturday, May 4	8 to ten am, location to be announced.

### Important SJSU dates Spring 2013

Wednesday	January 23	First Day of Instruction – Classes Begin
Monday	February 4	Last Day to Drop Without Entry on Permanent Record
Monday	February 11	Last Day to Add Courses & Register Late
Tuesday	February 19	Enrollment Census Date
Monday-Friday	March 25-29	Spring Recess
Monday	April 1	Cesar Chavez Day Observed - Campus Closed
Monday	May 13	Last Day of Instruction – Last Day of Classes
Tuesday	May 14	Study/Conference Day (no classes or exams)
Wednesday-Friday	May 15-17	Final Examinations
Monday-Tuesday	May 20-21	Final Examinations
Wednesday	May 22	Final Examinations Make-Up Day
Thursday	May 23	Grade Evaluation Day
Friday	May 24	Grades Due From Faculty
Saturday	May 25	End of Academic Year - End of Spring Semester
Saturday	May 25	Commencement
Monday	May 27	Memorial Day - Campus Closed (M)