

San José State University Department of English and Comparative Literature  
English 1A, Composition 1 (GE: Written Communication A2)  
Spring, 2014

Instructor: Ted Shank  
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Office Hours: M/W 9:00-10:00 and by appointment  
Class Days/Time:  
Section 1: M/W. 7:30-8:45. BBC 221  
Section 51: M/W. 10:30-11:45. BBC 124  
Section 27: M/W. 12:00-1:15 BBC 123

**Prerequisites:**

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

**Required Texts/Readings**

\* Kirszner and Mandell. Patterns for College Writing. 12<sup>th</sup> Ed. ISBN: 13: 978-0-312-69958-1

\* Lunsford, Andrea. The Everyday Writer. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. ISBN 978-1-4576-1266-4

\* Additional readings will be distributed in class.

**Additional materials**

- Dictionary
- 3 ring binder w/ paper.
- 3 large blue, yellow, or green composition books. These can be purchased at the Spartan Bookstore or other locations around campus

**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.

**College-Level Composition**

While the development of college-level composition skills are important to our study, it is imperative to emphasize that such skills are only relevant to the content which they express and explore. Our goal this semester, in all that we do, from reading responses, to discussions, exercises, and essays, is to find and explore new ideas and insights about ourselves, and the world around us. College-level composition demands an exploration of the text, to self, to world mode of thinking and reflection. Therefore, our essays will be, on one level, personal in that they will be based on your experiences and observations; however, the essays will also be social and cultural as you-the writer- seek to connect your experiences to themes, concepts, ideas, and insights that transcend the "I" and enter the realm of the "us," the "we." What this all means is that I feel that my job as a college composition instructor is to foster the development of consciousness.

**Course Goals**

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.

## Classroom Protocol

Participation is preparation and it is an inseparable component to learning. To participate means that you prepare and craft all out-of-class essays in conjunction with our in-class exercises and discussions. To participate means that you read all essays closely and carefully, and that you complete all reading responses—before you come to class. To participate means that you are on time and ready to work when class starts. To participate means that you make significant effort to respond to, process, and share insights to questions posed in class. To participate means that you take notes and complete all in-class exercises. To participate means that all of your actions work to create a distraction-free, safe, positive, and comfortable learning environment. To participate means that you adhere to all deadlines and due dates. To participate means that you maintain focus and effort for the duration of our class meeting. Finally, to participate means that you maintain this degree of intensity for the duration of the semester. The above criteria is my expectation for college-level learning, and you must make the decision and commitment to work in this fashion. However, you must make the decision, now and every day for the rest of the semester, to participate and succeed.

Note: Please use common sense when it comes to your personal electronic devices. You cannot fully participate in our class if you are engaging in any form of communication that deters, even momentarily, you from the task at hand. Notice that in the above discussion of participation does not leave room for texting and/or communication with or through an electronic device.

## Assignments and Grading Policy

Grading: A-F. This class must be passed with a C (75%) 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. There is a total 1000 points possible, which follow the traditional percentage breakdown: 90-100: A; 80-89: B; 70-79: C; 60-69: D; 0-59: F.

## Assignments (1,000 possible points)

• Out-of-Class Essays:(SLO 1,2,3,4)Essays 1-3 are worth 125 points, and essay 4 is worth 100 points. Throughout the course of the semester, you will compose 4 out-of-class essays. Essays will focus on different rhetorical modes, all leading to argumentation and persuasion. Our last essay will be a reflective essay. For each essay, you will be given a prompt with specific guidelines for the essay in terms of development and skills you will be applying to that essay. In addition, for each essay, you will attend a peer-response workshop, which requires you to have a completed, formatted rough draft of your essay. Failure to have a completed draft for the workshop results in a 25 point deduction from the final draft of your essay. All 4 out-of-class essays must be completed –and turned in on

time-in order to be eligible to receive a passing score in the class. Essays #1 and #2 have the option of revision for improvement. Criteria for revision will be discussed and clarified in class at the appropriate time.

• In-class essays (SLO 1,2,3,4). 3 total. The first in-class essay is for diagnostic purposes only, and thus ungraded. Essays #1 and #2 are worth 50 points each. After we compose our diagnostic in-class essay, we will compose two additional in-class essays. Each essay will focus on a specific skill set and will utilize elements we have been working on with our out-of-class essays as well. Furthermore, these essays will prepare you for our final exam. You will be given a rubric to help determine how to approach these essays, and we will have some specific in-class preparation.

• Reading Responses (SLO4): 10 @ 10 points each. For 10 of the essays we will read this semester, you will compose a reading response. Reading responses are due in class immediately after they are discussed/used. The responses are designed to get you thinking about the reading before you come to class, strengthening your ability to complete the exercises for the day. If your response demonstrates care and concern for the task, it is worth full credit. If it shows a lack of care and concern, it is worth no points. I will help you better understand the expectations, but for now think of each response as about 30-40 minutes of thinking and writing. Reading responses will be between 1-2 pages, typed, and single spaced. Late or hand-written responses will not be accepted.

• Course Binder @ 100 points. Throughout the course of the session, you will be keeping and developing a course binder consisting of all in-class exercises. You will be numbering, dating, and keeping these exercises in your course binder. Keeping up your course binder is your responsibility. I strongly advise you to revise and clarify each exercise outside of class. Not only is this a good study habit, but it will help you process and retain what we have been working on, very important during summer session. See your schedule for when your binder is due.

• Letter of Introduction @ 25 points. Very early in the semester, you will be assigned a letter in which you will introduce yourself to your instructor. Of course, this assignment is to allow me to get to know you a bit, but it is also a chance for me to get to know your out-of-class writing a bit. If you do this assignment and meet the simple requirements outlined on the assignment sheet, you will earn 25 points. However, I want you to craft and compose what you consider to be your best sentence and paragraph level writing at this time. In addition, this assignment is part of how I assess the strengths and weaknesses of the class as a whole.

• Mandatory Departmental Final Exam (SLO 1,2,3,4): 200 points. On Saturday, December 7 we will compose our final exam, which will be an in-class essay. Basically our whole semester will prepare you for this task. I will inform you of the room number and time as soon as it is available to me. The final exam is mandatory, meaning that you must sit for the exam in order to be eligible to earn a grade in the course.

• Everyday Writer readings and exercises. You will be required to read a series of sections from The Everyday Writer. The purpose of these readings is to, first, generate familiarity with the writing handbook that will guide you through the remainder of your career at SJSU. In addition, you will read through a series of writing fundamentals. On scheduled dates (see our schedule) we will discuss and clarify “highlights” of the readings. It is important to note that it is your responsibility to be reading your handbook outside of class. These discussions will include exercises that will become part of your course binder. This will allow you to come by my office and talk about concepts and questions as they arise. If you put off this reading until the night before you are supposed to have it finished, you will NOT gain the intended benefits of this portion of our class. In the past, students have formed out-of-class study groups to meet weekly and discuss sections of this reading.

### Late Work Policy

Out-of-class essays #1,#2, and #3 have a one class meeting grace period, meaning that, if something happens, you can turn in the essay at the beginning of the next class meeting for no point deduction. After that time, the essay will not be accepted. Remember, all 4 essays must be turned in on time, meaning between the due date and the grace period. There is no exception to this policy, regardless of validity or severity. Out-of-class essay #4 has no grace period and cannot be turned in late. In-class essays can be made up during office hours up to one week after the initial date, if prior arrangement of at least two class meetings is made. Reading responses cannot be turned in late. To repeat, there are no exceptions to any aspect of this policy, regardless of validity or severity. If you prepare and treat due dates as serious commitments, this will not be a problem for you. If you know that you will be missing a due date, you can turn work in early. I DO NOT ACCEPT ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS OF ANY WORK PRODUCED FOR THIS CLASS.

## Promptness

There is a direct correlation between promptness, attendance, and success in this class. It is your responsibility to be on time and attend each class session. There will be something of record either due or to be done on nearly every day of class, much of which cannot be made up. Not only will your score suffer with poor attendance, but it is impossible to learn and develop if you are not on time, in class, and actively engaging and participating in the material.

## SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-Division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our 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. The Writing Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>. One of the purposes for our diagnostic essay will be for me to determine which students will benefit from services offered at the Writing Center.

## Additional Information 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

## Spring 2014 Schedule of Due Dates and Assignments

Dates and assignments are subject to change according to our class needs. You will be notified in class if any changes are made. You will also receive email notification if there are any changes to this schedule.

### Week One

*Monday, January 27*

- \* Course introduction/syllabus overview
- \* Letter of Introduction assigned

*Wednesday, January 29*

- \* Diagnostic in-class essay
- \* Master list of reading responses distributed

### Week Two

*Monday, February 3*

- \* Introductory Exercises: Becoming writers
- \* Letter of Introduction due

*Wednesday, February 5*

- \* Read, "The Dog Ate My Disc and Other Tales of Woe" (Patterns 460-465)
- \* Reading Response #1 Due
- \* Basic writing terminology reviewed and defined
- \* Note: You need to start reading/studying the sections from Everyday Writer due on February 19

### Week Three

*Monday, February 10*

- \* Essay #1 assigned
- \* Read "Narration" (Patterns 97-108)
- \* Invention exercises

*Wednesday, February 12*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Importance of detail and analysis
- \* Read, "My First Conk" (Patterns 281-285)
- \* Read, "Only Daughter" (Patterns 111-115)
- \* Reading Responses 2 and 3 due

#### Week Four

*Monday, February 17*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Creation of Purpose
- \* Read, "My Mother Never Worked" (Patterns 121-125)
- \* Read, "38 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call Police" (Patterns 127-132)
- \* Reading Responses 4 and 5 due

*Wednesday, February 19*

- \* Continue and conclude exercises from 2/17
- \* Thesis thinking exercises

#### Week Five

*Monday, February 24*

- \* Peer-Response Session #1: Complete formatted draft of essay #1 due in class

*Wednesday, February 26*

- \* Final Draft of Essay #1 Due
- \* Out-of-class essay #2 assigned
- \* Read "Description" (Patterns 151-169)
- \* Analysis of sample paragraphs (these will be handouts distributed in class)
- \* Wednesday's reading distributed in class

#### Week Six

*Monday, March 3*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Connecting sensory description, dominant impression, and subject
- \* Read, "Breakfast" (handout)
- \* Reading Response #6 due
- \* Note: You need to start reading/studying the sections from Everyday Writer due on March 19

*Wednesday, March 5*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Understanding and using descriptive viewpoint
- \* Read, "Ground Zero" (Patterns 182-187)
- \* Reading Response #7 due

#### Week Seven

*Monday, March 10*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Repetition, emphasis, and larger subject
- \* Read, "Once More to the Lake" (Patterns 194-201)
- \* Reading Response #8 due

*Wednesday, March 12*

- \* Preparation for in-class essay #1

### Week Eight

*Monday, March 17*

- \* Compose in-class essay #1
- \* must have a large green or yellow composition book, blue or black ink for your in-class essay. You may only use a paper dictionary.

*Wednesday, March 19*

- \* Getting to know The Everyday Writer
- \* For today's class, you need to have sections 25 a through 30b of Everyday Writer

### Week Nine

*March 24-26: Spring Break. No Class*

### Week Ten

*March 31: Cesar Chavez Day. No Class*

*Wednesday, April 2*

- \* Peer-Response Session #2: Complete formatted draft of essay #2 due in class
- \* Reading for Departmental Reading Assessment distributed

### Week Eleven

*Monday, April 7*

- \* Final Draft of Out-of-Class Essay #2 Due
- \* Introduction to essay #3
- \* Read, "Argumentation" (Patterns 525-550)
- \* Introduction to/Review of rhetorical appeals
- \* Preparation for Monday's reading

*Wednesday, April 9*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: "Letter from Birmingham Jail" comprehension
- \* Read, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (Patterns 566-581)
- \* Reading Response #9 due

### Week Twelve

*Monday, April 14*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Understanding and using rhetorical appeals
- \* We will continue using "Letter from Birmingham Jail" for this exercise.

*Wednesday, April 16*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Range of examples and exploring possible positions
- \* Read, "Just Walk on By" (Patterns 240-245)
- \* Reading Response #10 due

### Week Thirteen

*Monday, April 21*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Exploring positions and asking questions
- \* You will need to review, "Just Walk on By," "My First Conk" and "Only Daughter." Depending on our class needs, there may be additional exercises to review: Details to be announced in class.
- \* We will also be reviewing refutation today

*Wednesday, April 23*

- \* Lesson and Exercises: Incorporation of the outside essay. For this lesson, materials will be provided for you in class.
- \* Reflective Essay assigned

Week Fourteen

*Monday, April 28*

- \* Peer-Response Session #3: Complete formatted draft of essay #3 due in class

*Wednesday, April 30*

- \* Final Draft of Essay #3 Due
- \* Review for in-class essay #2. This review will be conducted in the context of our upcoming final exam

Week Fifteen

*Monday, May 5*

- \* Compose in-class essay #2

*Wednesday, May 7*

- \* Analyze in-class essay #2
- \* Course Binder details distributed and discussed

**Saturday, May 10: Departmental Final Examination. 8:00-10:00. Room TBA**

Week Sixteen

*Monday, May 13: Last Day of Class*

- \* Reflective Essay Due
- \* Course Binder Due
- \* Details concerning final course grade and returns discussed