

**San José State University**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature**  
**English 1A: First Year Writing, Section 24, Fall 2017**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Eli Hansen
<b>Office Location:</b>	FOB 108
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924-4316
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:eli.hansen@sjsu.edu">eli.hansen@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-1:00pm and by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-2:45pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	Sweeney Hall 444
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Successful completion of <i>Reflection on College Writing</i>
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	GE Area A2 Written Communication

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**Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging**

This class extensively uses the Canvas learning management system course website. As such, regular access to an internet-enabled computer will be required of all students. If you are unable to reliably access the internet, please notify your instructor ASAP so appropriate arrangements can be made. All assignments can be found under the “Assignments” tab on the Canvas homepage. Assignment instructions will be listed there, as well as their due date and point value. Course readings may be found under the “Pages” tab. You can use Canvas to check up on your grades under the “Grades” tab. Be sure to routinely check the “Announcements” tab for any changes or updates from your instructor.

**Course Introduction**

Argument affects nearly every aspect of our lives, although we are often unaware of how it does so. Argument is what drives us to learn new things. It allows us to form opinions. It spurs us to take action. It guides our moral compass and informs our deepest held beliefs. To no small effect, argument shapes us into the people we are. A thorough understanding of how and why argument works is essential to understanding the world as it is, and as it could be. Upon completing this course you will hopefully have gained insight into the nature of argumentation and come to a better understanding of what you believe and why you believe it.

**Course Description**

English 1A is an introductory writing course that will help students understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, students will develop clear thinking and effective writing that give form and coherence to complex ideas. Students will practice these skills by writing for various audiences and rhetorical situations.

The purpose of this course is to teach writing and argumentation, not grammar, spelling, or syntax. As such, little if any class time will be devoted to studying the mechanics of written English. However, a list of common errors and how to correct them will be available on Canvas. Look under the “Pages” tab for a document titled “Guide to Common Errors.”

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## **GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the ability to read actively and rhetorically.
2. Demonstrate the ability to perform the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing) and demonstrate an awareness of said performance.
3. Articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals.
4. Demonstrate the ability to integrate their ideas and those of others by explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres.
5. Demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical proficiency in writing.

## **English 1A Course Content**

- **Diversity:** SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. Students will engage in integrated reading and writing assignments to construct their own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for this course will include writers of different genders, ethnicities, cultural heritages, and different socio-economic classes.
- **Writing:** Writing assignments shall give students repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, composing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 8000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final form.
- **Reading:** In addition to being an intensive writing course, English 1A is also a reading course. Reading is a crucial component of the class, as one must read effective writing to become an effective writer. During the semester, you will read a variety of rhetorical and professional works on the art and craft of persuasive language.

## **Required Texts/Readings**

Our main text during this course will be *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings, 10th Edition* by John D. Ramage, John C. Bean, and June Johnson. This book is available at the campus bookstore and through online retailers such as amazon.com. It provides a good introductory framework to the various elements of argumentation and contains a substantial appendix of argumentative essays on a variety of subjects, such as sustainable farming, higher education, digital literacy and so forth. Students will be required to select one or more texts from *Writing Arguments* as the basis of an analytical essay. Additional course readings will be distributed electronically via Canvas.

## English 1A Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

This class will consist of thirty-one class meetings and four assignments. Two of your assignments will be written essays exploring various aspects of argumentation. Both essays will begin with a brief (no more than 500 word) proposal to be turned in on the assigned dates (please refer to the schedule at the end of this syllabus). Your proposal should briefly outline the subject of your essay and the rhetorical approach you intend to take. After the instructor has approved your proposal, you will need to prepare a rough draft of your essay and bring two printed copies to class for peer-review before composing and submitting your final draft. Your penultimate assignment will be a multimodal group project in which 4-5 students will take a position on an issue and give a 15-20 minute long presentation on said issue. This presentation must be accompanied by a visual aid such as a Power Point presentation. The final assignment will be a reflective essay in which you will explain what you have learned over the course of the semester and how you have developed as a writer. This essay will accompany a portfolio of your writing to be compiled in-class during our last meeting. In-depth descriptions of each assignment will be available under the “Assignments” tab in Canvas.

Please note that all essays must adhere to proper MLA format. Essays must be double-spaced and typed in 12 point Times New Roman font. The student’s name, the date of the assignment, the course number and section, and the name of the instructor should be located in the top-left corner of the first page of the essay. Each page must be numbered and a word count must be included on the last page. Please see the *Essay Sample* under the “Pages” tab on Canvas for more information on how to properly format your essays. Failure to adhere to proper formatting will result in a grading penalty.

With the exception of printed copies of your rough draft for peer-review, all assignments are to be turned in electronically via Canvas. Do not hand in physical copies of your work. Assignments must be submitted to Canvas by 1:29pm the day they are due or they will be considered late.

### Assignment 1: Exploratory Essay (GELO 1, 2 and 5)

In this assignment students will write a 1,000 word essay (approximately 4-5 pages in length) in which they will explore and investigate a subject or topic they find interesting, engaging or controversial. There are few restraints to this essay and students are encouraged to branch out and get creative in their approach to whatever topic they choose. However, a good exploratory essay should be driven by curiosity and a desire to learn more about a subject. This essay should avoid making clear-cut judgments and rather focus on the ambiguous or problematic aspects of an issue. The purpose of this essay is to raise questions, not provide answers. It is suggested that students choose a topic they either know little about or on which they do not yet have a strong opinion. **PROPOSAL DUE 8/31. ROUGH DRAFT/ PEER REVIEW DUE 9/12. FINAL DRAFT DUE 9/26.**

## **Assignment 2: Analytical Essay (GELO 1- 5 )**

In this assignment students will write a 1,000 word essay (approximately 4-5 pages in length) in which they will analyze a text for its rhetorical features. Texts may be taken from the back of *Writing Arguments* or may be pulled from another source with instructor approval. To receive a passing grade for this assignment, students must be able to identify and analyze the text's genre, intended audience, logical structure (enthymeme, warrant, grounds etc.), use of evidence, use of rhetorical appeals (such as logos, pathos and ethos) and any other feature they feel contributes to the rhetorical success (or lack thereof) of the text. Students will also need to cite their text according to MLA guidelines **PROPOSAL DUE 10/5. ROUGH DRAFT/PEER REVIEW DUE 10/19. FINAL DRAFT DUE 11/2.**

## **Assignment 3: Multimodal Group Project. (GELO 1-4)**

In groups of 4-5, students will take a position on an issue and argue their case to the class. They will also need to address and rebut potential criticisms of their position. Students will need to utilize all they have learned in this course, including awareness of audience and genre, understanding of logical structure, successful employment of rhetorical appeals, and effective use of evidence. Students will also need to include an annotated bibliography with at least five sources of evidence, properly documented in MLA format. Please refer to chapter 17 of *Writing Arguments* for information on how to cite sources in MLA format. You may also visit <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> for more information. Presentations must be accompanied by a visual aid such as a Power-Point slideshow. Each member of the group must work on some aspect of the presentation. Each student will need to submit a brief (about 500 word) written report explaining what they have done to contribute to the project. Presentations should be at least 15 minutes long but no longer than 20. While your final grade on this project will be based upon your presentation, all groups will be required to submit their visual aid to Canvas. **GROUPS ASSIGNED 11/7. IN-CLASS PROPOSAL 11/9. PROJECT REPORT 11/21. PRESENTATIONS 12/5 AND 12/7.**

## **Assignment 4: End of Semester Portfolio and Reflection. (GELO 1-5)**

Per university guidelines, all students in English 1A courses are required to submit a portfolio of their work at the end of the semester, accompanied by a 500-600 word reflective essay explaining what they have learned over the course of the semester. This is so the Department of English and Comparative Literature can better understand and respond to student needs. As all of your assignments will be submitted via Canvas, there will be no need to "hold on" to any of your essays: once they have been submitted to Canvas they will be easily accessible from any internet-enabled device. You will compile and submit your portfolio during our last class meeting on December 19th. Please make sure you've written your reflective essay by then. This assignment will be your "final examination or evaluation" as required by the university. **PORTFOLIO AND FINAL DRAFT DUE 12/19.**

*"There shall be an appropriate final examination or evaluation at the scheduled time in every course, unless the course is on the official List of Courses in which a final is optional."*

## Extra Credit

Students may receive up to 50 points of extra credit by attending two readings at the Center for Literary Arts and presenting a 300-500 word write-up describing the event. Please visit <http://www.litart.org/> for a schedule of readers. Extra credit assignments should be printed and physically turned in, not submitted to Canvas.

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## Grading Information

Grades will be based on four assignments as well as class participation. Students may earn a maximum of 1,000 (or 1,050, with extra credit) points in this class. As each assignment (with the exception of the reflective essay and portfolio) will consist of three parts, each part will receive its own point value. The final score for each assignment will be cumulative, with the maximum number of possible points indicated below.

- Exploratory Essay: 200 Points (20 point proposal, 80 point rough draft, 100 point final draft)
- Analytical Essay: 200 Points (20 point proposal, 80 point rough draft, 100 point final draft)
- Multimodal Project: 300 Points (20 point proposal, 80 point report, 200 point presentation)
- Reflective Essay and Portfolio: 200 Points (final draft only)
- Class Participation: 100 Points
- Extra Credit: Up to 50 points

## Grading Criteria

Requirements for particular assignments will vary, but in all cases grades will reflect the assignment's effectiveness, which is broken down into three major areas: content (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and expression. The following are the criteria by which essays are typically evaluated in writing courses:

- An "A" essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It will show the student's ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- A "B" essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of the areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.

- A “C” essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weakness in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.
- A “D” essay will neglect to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.
- An “F” essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment

A (92-100); A- (90-91); B+ (88-89); B (82-87); B- (80-81); C+ (78-79); C (70-77); C- (70-71); D+ (68-69); D (62-67); D- (60-61); F (<60)

To receive credit for GE Area A2, you must receive a C- or higher in ENGL 1A. If you are UGRM in English, you must earn a D- or higher in ENGL 1A to clear remediation.

## **Classroom Protocol**

Much of this course will consist of in-class lecture and discussion. Failure to participate in classroom activities will negatively affect your final grade. Students are expected to have read all required course material BEFORE THE START OF CLASS. Please bring your copy of *Writing Arguments* to every class meeting, as most lectures and discussions will revolve around ideas presented in the book. Since much of the work in this class will involve Canvas, use of laptops/tablet computers during class is acceptable, though use of such devices for non-class related activities will result in penalty. Late work will be penalized one full letter grade for every day it is late (an “A” paper, turned in a day late, will receive a “B” grade. If turned in two days late it will receive a “C” grade and so forth.) Please note that you must complete all assignments in order to receive credit for this course. Students may bring snacks or beverages to class so long as they don’t make a mess and clean up after themselves. Because this class will largely deal with argumentation, students will be expected to express their ideas and opinions on a variety of subjects, some of which may be controversial. If there are any issues you feel uncomfortable exploring in an academic setting, please let me know so appropriate accommodations can be made. It is the opinion of the instructor that open, honest dialogue about potentially difficult issues is an essential aspect of academia. However, students are expected to conduct themselves with civility and respect at all times. Insults, harassment, or disparagement of any kind will not be tolerated and may result in administrative action up to an including expulsion from the university.

## **Writing Center and Peer Connections**

Students of all writing levels and abilities may seek assistance at the Writing Center or at Peer Connections. The tutors at these centers can help you with everything from grammar and syntax to organization, development and research.

### Writing Center

Clark Hall, Suite 126  
408-924-2308

[writingcenter@sjsu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@sjsu.edu)  
<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>

### Peer Connections

Student Services Center (located beneath the 10th Street Garage), Room 600  
408-924-2587

[peerconnections@sjsu.edu](mailto:peerconnections@sjsu.edu)  
<http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu/>

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/24/17	Class Introduction and Overview
2	8/29/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 1: What Exactly is an Argument?
2	8/31/17	<i>The Omnivore's Dilemma</i> (via Canvas): Defining Argument: Truth-Seeking vs. Persuasion <b>DUE: EXPLORATORY ESSAY PROPOSAL</b>
3	9/5/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 2: Argument as Inquiry
3	9/7/17	<i>Letter from Birmingham Jail</i> (Via Canvas): Genre, Audience, Rhetoric
4	9/12/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 3: Classical Argumentation <b>DUE: EXPLORATORY ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT (BRING 2 PRINT COPIES FOR PEER REVIEW)</b>
4	9/14/17	<i>Allegory of the Cave</i> (via Canvas): The Ideal vs. The Real
5	9/19/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 4: The Structure of Argument
5	9/21/17	<i>Amusing Ourselves to Death</i> (via Canvas): Identifying Argumentative Structure in Media
6	9/26/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 5: Using Evidence <b>DUE: EXPLORATORY ESSAY FINAL DRAFT</b>
6	9/28/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 15: Gathering Evidence and MLA Documentation
7	10/3/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 6: Logos, Pathos, Ethos, and Kairos
7	10/5/17	<i>Encomium of Helen</i> (via Canvas) and <i>TBA in-class video</i> : Information or Propaganda? <b>DUE: ANALYTICAL ESSAY PROPOSAL</b>
8	10/10/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 7: Objecting Views
8	10/12/17	<i>Intelligence Squared: The Catholic Church is a Force for Good in the World</i> (in-class video): Argument as Debate
9	10/17/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 8: Analyzing Written Arguments
9	10/19/17	<i>TBA Newspaper Articles</i> (Via Canvas): Reading Rhetorically <b>DUE: ANALYTICAL ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT (BRING 2 PRINT COPIES FOR PEER REVIEW)</b>
10	10/24/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 9: Analyzing Visual Arguments
10	10/26/17	<i>Killing us Softly</i> (in-class video): Visual Storytelling
11	10/31/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 10: Types of Claims

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
11	11/2/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 11: Arguing What Is and What Isn't <b>DUE: ANALYTICAL ESSAY FINAL DRAFT</b>
12	11/7/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 14: The Call to Action <b>MULTIMODAL PROJECT GROUPS ASSIGNED</b>
12	11/9/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 16: Integrating Evidence into your Essay <b>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: MULTIMODAL PROJECT PROPOSAL</b>
13	11/14/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 12: Why This and Not That?
13	11/16/17	<i>Freakonomics</i> (in-class video): Cause and Effect
14	11/21/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> pages 397-404: Informal Fallacies <b>DUE: MULTIMODAL WRITTEN REPORT</b>
14	11/23/17	Thanksgiving Break: No Class
15	11/28/17	<i>Writing Arguments</i> Chapter 13: Measuring Morality
15	11/30/17	<i>A Modest Proposal</i> (via canvas): How do You Know What's "Good"?
16	12/5/17	<b>MULTIMODAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b>
16	12/7/17	<b>MULTIMODAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b>
17	12/19/17	Final Class Meeting: Preparing and Submitting your Online Portfolio and Reflective Essay. <u>All Students are Required to a Bring a Laptop, Tablet or Other Electronic Device to this Meeting.</u> <b>DUE: REFLECTIVE ESSAY AND PORTFOLIO</b> NOTE: Meeting is in Sweeney 444 from 12:15-2:30PM

**\*\* Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and via Canvas**