

**San José State University**  
**Department of English & Comparative Literature**  
**English 2: Critical Thinking and Writing, Section 15, Fall 2017**

**Course and Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Belinda Kremer

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**Office Hours:** T & Th 3—4pm

**Class Days/Time:** T & Th 6:00—7:15pm

**Classroom:** BBC 124

**Prerequisites:** GE Areas A1 (Oral Communication) and A2 (Written Communication I) with grades of C- or better

This course is not open to students who have successfully completed ENGL 1B.

**GE/SJSU Studies Category:** GE A3 / Critical Thinking and Writing

**Course Learning Management and MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

**ENGL 2 Course Description**

General Course Description

ENGL 2 is an introductory writing course that focuses on the relationship between language and logic when composing arguments. Building on the skills acquired in ENGL 1A, you will learn to reason effectively and think rhetorically to invent, demonstrate, and express arguments clearly, logically, and persuasively.

Section-Specific Course Description

**“Humans & Technology: Evolving Relationships”**

Emphasizing argument, ENGL 2 refines your ability to write for a specific purpose and a selected audience/set of stakeholders. As opposed to argument synonymous with “fight,” and as opposed to legal argumentation as we are familiar with it through popular culture, especially television and film, this class will focus on a significantly different mode of argument. This significantly different mode of argument defines civil discourse, and is a distinctive form of academic reasoning. In this form of argumentation, no judge or jury provides a final verdict. Since academic problems may have no right or wrong solution, you must convince a reader that you understand the nuances of a problem, including previous efforts to address it and current ones that differ from or resemble your necessarily partial or tentative solution. We live in exciting, challenging, ever-evolving, dynamic times in terms of humans, technologies, and the relationships among them; in ENGL 2, we will explore and argue the tensions, problems, promises, implications, speculations, and scenarios that emerge from these relationships in 2017.

In making an academic argument, you will express a claim/thesis/opinion, but not just any claim/thesis/opinion. In this course, you will analyze (take apart) the basic elements of a problem and then synthesize (reassemble and integrate) selected parts. That process results in your claim—a thesis, or formal opinion. You will learn to ask questions about the thesis that lead to other questions, and you might find new avenues of thought, and you might find your presumptions are overturned. While such changes of direction, focus, or content can sometimes feel unfamiliar, and thus troubling, academic argument evolves from this messy work. Such work is much, much harder—and much, much more interesting!—intellectual work than simply forcing a point, hammering a rigid position with evidence, or blindly defending a gut response or received opinion.

This course asks you to think for yourself, and supports you in that quest. It challenges you to understand why a claim in academic discourse—a thesis, or *informed* opinion—is the “coin of the realm,” or what counts as valid knowledge, and it forces you to ask questions that have no simple answers. We will take at face value that some opinions *are* more valid than others—that is, that informed opinions that meet the demands of academic discourse and argumentation are more valid than uninformed opinions. By developing further your ability to think critically, this course also prepares you for every other course you take in college, refining your ability to learn how to learn.

## **ENGL 2 Learning Outcomes (GELO)**

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Locate and evaluate sources, through library research, and integrate research through appropriate citation and quotation
2. Present effective arguments that use a full range of legitimate rhetorical and logical strategies to articulate and explain their positions on complex issues in dialogue with other points of view
3. Locate, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize evidence in a comprehensive way in support of one’s ideas
4. Identify and critically evaluate the assumptions in and the context of an argument
5. Distinguish and convey inductive and deductive patterns as appropriate, sequencing arguments and evidence logically to draw valid conclusions and articulate related outcomes (implications and consequences).

## Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

<b>Assignments/Projects</b>	<b>Word Count</b>	<b>GELO</b>
Informal Compositions, including reflective writing in the end-of-semester portfolio	2,000	1—5
Project 1	1,000	2—5
Project 2	1500	1—5
Project 3	1500	1—5
Portfolio	Varies*	2—5

\*The word count in the portfolio will vary depending on your selection of texts for it, and the length of the reflective writing you compose. In the main, the portfolio is an assemblage of existing work.

## **ENGL 2 Course Components**

Diversity: SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage in integrated reading, writing, and oral assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues (such as diversity and ethnicity, class and social equity) that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers from different ethnicities, gender, and class.

Writing: You will write a series of essays informed by research and articulating fully developed arguments about complex issues. Assignments emphasize those skills and activities in writing and thinking that produce the persuasive argument and the critical essay, each of which demands analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Writing assignments give you repeated practice in prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 6000 words, at least 4000 of which must be in revised final draft form.

Logic: You will learn methods of argument analysis, both rhetorical and logical, that will allow you to identify logical structures and distinguish common logical fallacies.

Reading: In addition to being writing intensive, ENGL 2 is also a reading course. You will read a variety of critical and argumentative texts to help develop your skills for understanding the logical structure of argumentative writing.

Oral: You will be presenting your arguments orally to class both as an individual and as part of a group.

## **ENGL 2 Course Requirements and Assignments**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, you are expected to 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.

## **Required Materials**

### **Media**

\**Netflix* streaming subscription for 1 month (available as a free trial month), weeks 2—6

\**Note to Self* podcast subscription (free)

\**New York Times* digital access—via subscription, free trial, and/or SJSU and/or Google Scholar databases.

Decide how you'd like to access the *Times*.

(The three media above will be gone over in detail in class.)

### **Readings**

As we gauge, develop, and address your interests, texts (readings and other media) will be posted to Canvas, or you will be otherwise directed to access texts. Such texts will be clearly tied to assignments and due dates. We will often use Announcements as a reminder for such texts. Be sure to take notes in class as assignments develop, and to keep an eye on our course site, including the receipt of notifications and announcements.

### **Technology**

- > Digital device available during class on which you can access, download, and easily read/view/listen to texts; and on which you can also comfortably compose and upload texts.
- > A pair of earbuds or headphones.

### **Grading Policy**

#### **PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES**

#### ***Portfolios***

The ENGL 2 portfolio will focus on the argumentative research paper, which represents the capstone project for this course. Specific elements of the research process, as identified by the GELO, will be addressed in the portfolio.

- Every student must maintain a portfolio of coursework. You will choose pieces from it and submit them electronically at the end of the semester, per very specific guidelines.
- To be included in your end-of-semester portfolio, all work must be complete and on time.

#### ***Attendance and Class Participation***

- As this course is designed in a workshop format, you cannot fulfill the requirements of the course unless you attend regularly and on time. Your questions and contributions are central to our discussions and, therefore, our understandings of readings and the drafting process.
- You are responsible for material covered in class, whether you are present or not. Note that in-class work cannot be made up.
- Three unexcused absences will negatively affect your final grade. Attendance will be visible in Canvas, which automatically calculates your attendance percentage, including calculations of late arrival as 80% attendance for the day. Six unexcused absences amounts to missing 20% of the course, leaving only three grading options: Incomplete, Withdrawal, or an F. Further details are explained in the grading section on page 6.
- In respecting each other's opinions, we will cultivate a classroom environment that fosters communal learning. Accordingly, please turn off any electronic devices such as cell phones, laptops, etc., unless technology is part of a specified classroom activity.

#### ***Time Management***

- For each hour of class, you should anticipate doing about two hours of work outside of class, including a considerable amount of reading for this course. Plan ahead, in whatever way works best for you. Some people read in a block, then review; others break up the reading into daily portions. Whatever works for you is what's best for you. Just make sure to allow the time it will take.
- You will be given a week's notice/reminder before each essay is due in rough form; the due dates for all major essays and their revisions will also be available in the calendar, on Canvas. Again, plan ahead to complete the work for this course. Research confirms what we all would guess: careful time management and academic success go hand in hand. I encourage you to start strong by keeping up or keeping ahead, and to continue that way. If you do find yourself falling behind, please come talk with me; we can work on a solution together.

### **Late Work: No**

### **All Work Must Be on Time to Receive Credit**

Late work will not be accepted. All work must be submitted on time, in whatever format and media have been specified.

**Plagiarism Policy:** As a simple guideline, if you submit your own work, you will avoid all serious types of plagiarism. Nevertheless, a responsible student should also consider the less obvious variants of plagiarism, especially when writing research papers that require citations.

- *Submitting work that is done in part by someone else.* Is seeking help from a friend plagiarism? What about incorporating the advice of a teacher or peer tutor?
- *Paraphrasing or summarizing a written source, including text from the Internet, without footnoting or otherwise referencing the source.* When does another person's idea supplant your own? Who "owns" an idea?
- *Copying a written source, including text from the Internet, without using quotation marks or block indentation.* How can a student paraphrase or summarize without using at least some language from the original source?

Formal definitions of plagiarism might incorrectly suggest that this term is a transparent concept. It's not—at least not in every instance. For that reason, most plagiarism policies distinguish between major and minor offenses to separate deliberate examples of cheating from unintentional ones due to ignorance or perhaps neglect.

For serious instances of absolute plagiarism, such as submitting an essay purchased online or written wholly by any other person, students in this course will automatically fail the assignment, receive a final grade of F, and be recommended for dismissal from the university. There is no excuse for serious plagiarism.

Unattributed citation – verbatim copying of another's person's work without some indication of the source – is also a serious form of plagiarism. In other words, don't insert any text in a paper that is not your own without also noting the source.

If you're uncertain about how to use sources, talk with a librarian, or use the library's help options; check this website: <http://www.library.ucla.edu/b Bruinsuccess/> (or any other similar—we'll look at a number of good options in class); or ask me. Stop by my office during my office hours, or even parenthetically raise the question in your paper. It is your responsibility to comply with principles of academic honesty; it is my responsibility to see that every student receives a fair and accurate grade. We will work together in meeting these goals.

## **COURSEWORK AND EVALUTION**

**Readings:** Each week you will be responsible for readings from course texts and/or for accessing other texts, in various media. You will be directed to access these texts in various media outlets, and/or in Canvas.

**Presentations:** At least two times during the semester, you will present work to the class, with an emphasis on engaging your audience/stakeholders. You will receive clear instructions about presenting, including the level of emphasis on detail. Audio/visual media required, though your hosting style should be conversational—don't rely on your media—it should be supplemental to your speech.

**Journal:** During many class sessions, you will write informally in class. We will refer to these in-class writings as journal entries. The journal is a place to write freely, without worrying about "doing it right": full participation, given the prompt, counts as full success. These in-class writings may be responses to readings; quick creative writing assignments; thought-gathering freewriting; an opportunity to reflect on what you've learned or to speculate about information that might augment your learning. Substantive, thoughtful, well-constructed entries will not only help you become a better writer and learner, they will influence me to award higher grades to students who are borderline between an A and B, B and C, or C and not passing.

**Essays/Projects: Assignments** Assignments will be separated into two categories: Informal and formal. Informal assignments will generally be smaller assignments focusing on a particular skill and are designed to assist you in developing a formal essay. Formal assignments will generally be essays. The total word count for our formal and informal assignments, which will include composition and presentation in various media, will be about 6000 words, with about 4000 of those words developed and revised.

**SPECIFIC NOTE on EVALUATION of ESSAYS/PROJECTS**

Your first submitted version of any text, which should be *your very best possible work at the time*, will receive **qualitative feedback** (you will know how well your text is achieving its purpose). Your essay will receive **quantitative feedback** (a score, %, or grade) after you have revised it at least once (based on your judgment and instructor and/or peer feedback). At the start of the semester, we will review standards for A through F papers, and discuss sample papers or diagnostic exams as examples. Throughout this course, you will have frequent and extensive responses to your writing; you will also have an ongoing record of your course grades. If at any time you are unsure about your standing in this course, please do not hesitate to ask me for an update on how well you are doing.

**Portfolio:** All work for this course should be kept in an electronic portfolio. If work is due in hardcopy, or written by hand in class, keep the paper copies, as well. If you take your course notes by hand, keep those, of course, as well. At the end of the semester, part of your course grade will be based on the contents of the portfolio you will submit, and you will need access to *all* of your coursework to make your portfolio decisions. Details of the portfolio assessment will be explained.

**Presentations:** At several points in the semester, students will (individually or as part of a group) give presentations to accompany, or as, assignments. Audio/visual media will be required.

**Grades:**

Essays/Projects I—III	60%
Class Participation*	15%
In-Class Work	20%
Portfolio	5%

*\*Class participation is not simply attending class. Your contributions/participation may include online activities, classroom dialogues, group work activities, agenda/minutes, discussion preparation and questions, hosting discussions or presentations in class, in-class writings, peer feedback, Q & A, quizzes—and more. Class participation also includes your readiness for each class, with whatever materials, texts, devices are needed for that class session.*

**GRADING RUBRIC**

A+ / A	Excellent Product (Written) or Performance (Spoken). Evidence of significant care given to the construction and delivery of a text. Also meets the highest standards for coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the assigned topic. Evidence of substantive, thoughtful, effective revision.
A-	Superior work, but with occasional minor flaws in execution. Meets the highest standards for evaluation in most but not all categories of coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the assigned topic. Revised effectively but a few minor problems may remain unaddressed.
B+	Above average work that lacks excellence in several categories of coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the assigned topic. Revision improves some features of the text without significantly improving overall quality.
B/B-	Above average work that exhibits few if any features of excellence. Some weaknesses in coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the topic may be circumvented or not addressed. Revision incorporates feedback with some evidence of additional effort.

C+	Average work that is commendable in meeting all baseline standards. Some strong points are apparent in coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the topic, but these strengths are offset by many weaknesses in the text. Although not perfunctory, revision shows minimal effort in responding to feedback.
C/C-	Borderline but satisfactory work. The writer may need to apply considerable effort in meeting baseline standards for coherence, cohesion, style, logic, and discussion of the topic. Revision may be needed in all areas before a text becomes satisfactory, and specific problems may remain that distract a reader. However, in general the text can be read without significant disruptions in a reader's understanding of the writer.
D+	Below average work that does not meet minimal standards in several areas of text construction but will exhibit occasional strengths for future development. Revision is incomplete or inconsequential, and the reader is forced to resolve basic problems of interpretation.
D/D-	Far below average work. This grade typically characterizes inadequate effort rather than lack of development as a writer. Little or no revision has been attempted, and some changes the writer makes may have a significantly negative effect on the overall quality of a text. A reader will have recurring problems understanding the text.
F	Unacceptable work. Assignment is not submitted or does not follow directions. Students receiving an F have earned this grade due to negligence, indifference, or an unwillingness to learn. It should not represent a writer's lack of ability or relative stage of language development.

### Glossary of Key Terms

- (1.) Coherence makes the text easy to understand. Coherence is established when ideas are connected and provide information that is sensible and clear to a reader.
- (2.) Cohesion arranges parts of the text efficiently and effectively. Cohesion is based on how sentences fit together to create an organized idea. Sentence by sentence, it is worth considering a thematic thread and/or transitional phrasing to guide readers.
- (3.) Style makes the text interesting to read and appropriately representative of a writer's identity. All writing exhibits style, including texts that portray content as an objective, neutral representation of facts. There is no best or perfect style, but a writer should choose and control the manner of expression that is appropriate for the intended audience and for the purpose of a writing assignment.
- (4.) Logic explains and supports the problem addressed in a problem-solving thesis. Plausible claims paired with specific evidence are keys to effective argumentation.

<b>Sample Assignment Rubric</b>
<b>CLARITY:</b> Does the paper address the prompt? Is there a clear and concise thesis statement? Is there an outline of what's to come?
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b> Does the paper have a logical, thoughtful, and easy-to-follow structure? Does a thematic thread/rhetorical schema run through the paper? Are there effective topic sentences and transitions?
<b>DEVELOPMENT:</b> Does each body paragraph: 1) provide adequate (quantity and quality) evidence; 2) develop key ideas thoroughly; and 3) move the argument further along?
<b>STYLE/FLOW:</b> Is the author's particular selection of words, construction of sentences, arrangement of ideas, and varied usage of rhetorical strategies engaging and appropriate for the intended audience?
<b>MECHANICS:</b> Does the paper observe standard English conventions in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and documentation?

***Please note: A C- is the minimum passing grade for ENGL 2.***

## **Classroom Protocol**

Mobile phone ringers will be off during class, and we will attend to each other and to our learning with respect and fairness.

## **University Policies**

“University Policies: the link below contains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc.” <<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>>

## **ENGL 2 / Humans and Technology: Evolving Relationships Fall 2017 Course Schedule**

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice, which means time for you to accommodate the changes. Notice will be given in class, as well as through Announcements in Canvas, as well as through updates to Assignment due dates, both in Canvas and on the assignment prompts. Please note that the vast majority of our assignments will be developed from starting points in class, and that this schedule offers just the broadest overview. Consult your course notes and Canvas for detailed information. As we will always follow the interests of the class, and in most cases, each student’s source text(s) will be different for each assignment, you will note that very few specific readings or texts are listed here. Again, you will see the specific texts captured in Canvas as we decide on them.

**Course Schedule:** The course schedule is a separate document from this syllabus front matter, so that you don’t have to access these first 8 pages each time you access the schedule. See “F17 ENGL 2 Syllabus Schedule” in Canvas: at Syllabus &/or in our course Files.