

**San José State University**  
**Department of English & Comparative Literature**  
**English 2: Critical Thinking and Writing, Section 14, Fall 2018**

**Course and Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Johnny Damm

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**Office Hours:** M/W 10:30-11:30

**Class Days/Time:** M/W 1:30-2:45

**Classroom:** Boccardo Business Center 123

**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

**(Un)American: The Politics of Representation**

In 1995, researchers asked subjects the following question: “Would you close your eyes for second, envision a drug user, and describe that person to me?” 95% of respondents—no matter their race—proceeded to describe an African-American as the drug dealer they pictured. In reality, as Michelle Alexander notes, “the majority of

illegal drug users are white.” Where do these kinds of assumptions come from, and what real world repercussions are their result? In this class, we will examine U.S. popular culture to see how music videos, film, and other media shape and, at times, actively resist our (mis)conceptions of race, gender, and sexuality.

U.S. culture often functions as a type of cultural battleground—a site of battle for representation, for whose story gets told and how. We will study this battle, and through the composition of essays, students will join the fight.

### **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).

### **ENGL 2 Course Content**

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.

Reading Assignments: Expect reading assignments for every class. These reading will provide the material for our discussions as well as material and models for your essays. It is absolutely essential, then, that you keep up with the reading.

Each essay will approach the following subjects from the perspective of our class theme, the politics of representation. Specifically, the four essays will break down as follows:

Essay # 1 (Critical): Analysis of a Music Video

Essay # 2 (Critical): Analysis of a Film

Essay # 3 (Persuasive Argument): Arguing an Issue (Immigration, Criminal Justice Reform, related issues)

Visual Essay (Multimodal): Crafting a Visual Argument on Representation

### Assignment Word Count and Learning Goals

Assignment	Word Count	GELO
Essay # 1	1,250-1,500	2,3,4,5
Essay # 2	1,250-1,500	2,3,4,5
Essay # 3	1,500-1,750	1,2,3,4,5
Visual Essay	N/A	2,3,4,5

## Required Texts

### Textbooks

*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander, ISBN: 978-1595586438

### Other Readings

All other readings are available through Canvas and will be linked through your syllabus. These include, most significantly:

Excerpt *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*, Lisa Marie Cacho  
Excerpt *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal*, Aviva Chomsky

In addition, as a class, we will be analyzing the following films:

*Zootopia*, Howard & Moore

*District 9*, Neill Blomkamp

*13<sup>th</sup>*, Ava DuVernay

*Sorry To Bother You*, Boots Riley

## **Grading Policy**

Essay # 1 25%; Essay # 2 27%; Essay 3 28%; Visual Essay 10%; Participation 10%

Participation includes miscellaneous work and your contributions to class discussion. This is not a lecture course, so you need to be prepared to talk. If you do not attend class, you are not participating.

The revision process is central to this class, so you will be responsible for writing a minimum of two complete drafts (more may be required, but never less) for each essay. While only the final draft will be graded, not turning in earlier drafts on time will result in a deduction of up to one letter grade.

Late papers (including drafts) will be docked up to one full letter grade each day they are late. Students must receive a C- or higher to pass the course

### About Grades

Requirements for particular assignments will vary, but in all cases essay grades will reflect the paper's effectiveness, which is broken down into three major areas: content (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), organization, and expression.

An "A" range 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" range essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an "A" essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It will respond to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical or usage errors.

A "C" range essay will complete the requirements of the assignment, but it will show weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.

A "D" range 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)

## **Classroom Protocol**

You need to participate, be on time, and be courteous to your peers and to your teacher. When we are discussing the readings, you should either have a physical copy or a copy pulled up on a laptop or tablet. Your cell phone should remain in your pocket or bag unless you offer me a convincing argument as to why you need to have it out.

## 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>

Relevant policies for FROSH English can also be found at

[http://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program\\_policies/index.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program_policies/index.html)

## ENGL 2 Section 14: Critical Thinking and Writing, Spring 2018

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 22	Introduction
2	Aug 27	The Politics of Popular Representation READ: Look through <a href="#">“African American Photographs Assembled for 1900 Paris Exposition”</a> (online) In Class: Watch clips from <i>Birth of a Nation</i> and <i>The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross</i>
2	Aug 29	READ: Look through slide show, <a href="#">Sports teams that retired Native American mascots, nicknames</a> (online). In Class: Watch <i>In Whose Honor?</i> In Class: Discuss Prompt for Essay # 1
3	Sep 3	HOLIDAY
3	Sep 5	READ: “Janelle Monae's 'Pynk' is the Female Call to Arms We Need Now,” Wellington (PDF in Canvas); “This Is America': Breaking Down Childish Gambino's Powerful New Music Video,” Rao (PDF in Canvas) In Class: Music Videos
4	Sep 10	READ: Lisa Marie Chacho, Introduction to <i>Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected</i> (1-33; PDF in Canvas) In Class: Music Videos Cont. ESSAY # 1 THESIS DUE
4	Sep 12	READ: <a href="#">“13 Shocking Times Disney Animated Movies Portrayed Racial Stereotypes,”</a> Young (online); “Notes on Requirements for a Textual Analysis Paper” (PDF in Canvas) In Class: <i>Zootopia</i> ESSAY # 1 OUTLINE DUE
5	Sep 17	ESSAY # 1 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE
5	Sep 19	READ: : <a href="#">“A Cartoon Gateway to Real-World Issues,”</a> Glatter (online); <a href="#">“Zootopia wants to teach kids about prejudice...”</a> , VanDerWerff (online) In Class: <i>Zootopia</i> ESSAY # 1 FINAL DRAFT DUE
5	Sep 24	READ: Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , “Introduction” (pgs. 1-19)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		In Class: <i>Zootopia</i> discussion cont. In Class: Discuss prompt for Essay # 2
6	Sep 26	READ: Aviva Chomsky, Introduction to <i>Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal</i> (PDF in Canvas) In Class: <i>District 9</i>
6	Oct 1	In Class: <i>District 9</i>
7	Oct 3	In Class: <i>District 9</i> & <i>Zootopia</i> discussion cont.
7	Oct 8	ESSAY # 2 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE
8	Oct 10	In Class: Introduction to the Visual Essay ESSAY # 2 FINAL DRAFT DUE
8	Oct 15	Photo Essay Examples
9	Oct 17	Photo Essay Examples
9	Oct 22	Visual Essay Presentations
10	Oct 24	Visual Essay Presentations
11	Oct 29	READ: Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Chapters 1-3 (pgs. 20-139) In Class: <i>13th</i>
11	Oct 31	READ: Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> , Chapters 4-6 (pgs. 140-end) In Class: <i>13th</i>
12	Nov 5	READ: <a href="#">“On Becoming a Historic Resident of Oakland,”</a> Winstead (online) In Class: <i>Sorry to Bother You</i>
12	Nov 7	READ: <a href="#">“You Say You Want a Revolution?...,”</a> Gray (online) In Class: <i>Sorry to Bother You</i> In Class: Discuss Prompt for Essay # 3
13	Nov 12	HOLIDAY
13	Nov 14	In Class: <i>Sorry to Bother You</i> discussion cont.
14	Nov 19	CLASS ONLINE; no in-person meeting. WATCH: <a href="#">9500 Liberty</a> (online).
14	Nov 21	HOLIDAY
15	Nov 26	In Class: Discuss <i>9500 Liberty</i>
15	Nov 28	ESSAY # 3 PEER EDITING DRAFT DUE
16	Dec 3	Presentations + Portfolio Prep
16	Dec 5	Presentations + Portfolio Prep
16	Dec 10	Final Class ESSAY # 3 FINAL DRAFT DUE

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
Final	Dec 13	ePortfolio due to Canvas by 12:00 PM